

## **EU-OSHA'S RESULTS IN 2013 AND OUTLOOK FOR 2014**

Exchange of views with EMPL Committee, European Parliament  
22 January 2014.

Bilbao, 13 January 2014.

## 1 Protecting workers in micro and small enterprises - Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA)

Europe's micro and small businesses require practical tools to help them manage their safety and health risks. However, to be successful, the tool has to be free for the end user, sector specific, cost and time effective, and ensure compliance with the relevant legislation. This cannot be achieved with generic tools, parachuted in "from Europe". The tool has to be tailored to national level legislation and to specific workplaces.

The Agency's Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) project has been designed to meet this need by providing the platform, the framework, and support for tool developers, such as national authorities and social partners, to develop and disseminate risk assessment tools tailored to the specificities and needs of European micro and small enterprises.

By the end of 2013, the OiRA platform was already available in 15 languages (with a further three in the pipeline) and being used by a growing community of tool developers to share information, good practices and experiences. The first 12 OiRA tools went online during the year and over 60 more tools were under development.

## 2 Healthy Workplaces Campaign: Raising awareness on occupational safety and health and risk prevention

Raising awareness and promoting good occupational safety and health practice through pan-European campaigns are amongst the Agency's principal activities, the importance of which has been underlined in successive EU strategies on health and safety at work.

Supported by campaign material, websites and media relations in 24 languages, the Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2012-2013, "Working together for Risk Prevention", has focused on **leadership** and **worker participation** - encouraging top managers to actively engage in risk reduction; and encouraging workers, their representatives and other stakeholders to work with managers to reduce risks.

Highlights of the second and final year of the campaign have included the selection of the winners of the 2013 European Good Practice Awards. Award certificates were presented to the winning companies by Commissioner Andor on 29 April at a ceremony in Dublin organised in cooperation with the Irish EU Presidency. In May, the Agency launched a new online campaigning toolkit, which provides practical advice on how to prepare and run successful OSH campaigns and features practical examples of various communication tools with tips and tricks to their use. In June, a benchmarking workshop allowed many of the Agency's 87 official campaign partners to exchange good practices and to lay the foundations for a sustainable benchmarking initiative. A second workshop at the campaign's closing event in November, jointly organised with the Lithuanian EU Presidency, confirmed the willingness of many campaign partners to support such an initiative as part of future Agency campaigns.

Through its European Campaign Assistance Package (ECAP), the Agency has been able to support and stimulate a variety of campaigning activities at member state level. In 2013, in partnership with EU-OSHA's national Focal Points some 100 ECAP-supported events took place. These included seminars and workshops and media and PR activities.

Also in 2013, work continued to prepare for the next campaign to start in 2014. Under the tagline **Healthy Workplaces manage Stress** this two-year campaign will turn the spotlight on psychosocial

risks. By the end of 2013, the communication plan for the forthcoming campaign had been finalised with important input from the Agency's key stakeholders. Likewise the campaign title and branding were agreed and the core campaign products, including a dedicated campaign website and a practical e-guide for micro and small enterprises were being finalised.

### **3 Safer and healthier work at any age – occupational safety and health (OSH) in the context of an ageing workforce**

This project is being implemented as a Pilot Project of the European Parliament on the health and safety of older workers and is being carried out under a delegation agreement with the Commission.

The project aims to assess the prerequisites for OSH systems to take account of an aging workforce and ensure better prevention for all throughout working life. In line with the scope set out by the European Parliament in its decision on the pilot project<sup>1</sup>, the results will assist policy development and will provide examples of good strategies and practices. It is investigating among others: OSH policies, strategies, programmes and actions, also regarding employability and return-to-work, it will collect case studies of support programmes and initiatives, good practice examples, and the views of OSH stakeholders, employers, workers and worker representatives. It includes research reviews of OSH and older workers, gender and OSH and older workers, and available tools. The project aims to highlight as well the main drivers and obstacles to effective implementation of policy initiatives in this area.

The contract began in June 2013 and runs until the end of 2015. Interim drafts have been received of the member state inventories and the state of the art reviews. Intermediary-level and workplace examples for case studies have been selected.

A half day meeting on the progress took place on 2 December at the European Parliament, sponsored by the office of Ms. Beres. Over 60 participants attended. Initial findings from the project were presented and participants had the opportunity to ask questions and put their points of view regarding the project.

### **4 New risks and trends in the safety and health of women at work**

A broad ranging report has been published that aims to:

- Provide a statistical overview of the trends in employment and integration of women in the labour market, and explore how they impact on their occupational safety and health.
- Identify and highlight the main issues and trends in employment characteristics, working conditions, hazard exposure and work-related accidents and health problems for women at work and explore more in-depth selected issues not addressed thoroughly before, such as combined exposures, informal work and the rehabilitation of women into work.
- Identify emerging issues for OSH research and the prevention of occupational diseases and accidents affecting women at work.

This focus on OSH benefits not only women but also men who work, and thus reinforces the considerable potential to be gained by improved workplaces.

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<sup>1</sup> 04 04 16 Pilot project — Health and safety at work of older workers, OJ 29.02.2012, Chapter 0404—Employment, Social Solidarity and Gender Equality, II/230 - II/231)

## 5 EU-OSHA Multi-annual Strategic Programme 2014-2020

The Multi-annual Strategic Programme (MSP) 2014-2020 replaces EU-OSHA Strategy 2009-2013 and will serve as the basis for the management plans from 2014 onwards. Prior to the adoption by the Agency's Governing Board at its meeting in November 2013, the document in its entirety went through external consultations as foreseen in the Agency's founding regulation – in particular the European Commission, the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work, and Eurofound.

The MSP includes the strategic framework (mission, vision, values, challenges and strategic objectives), the activities, and the monitoring and evaluation framework.

The MSP focuses on key activities that are formulated within six priority areas discussed and agreed by the Board:

1. Anticipating change and new and emerging risks to occupational safety and health
2. Facts and figures
3. Tools for OSH management
4. Raising awareness
5. Networking knowledge
6. Networking and Corporate Communications.

The main aim is to focus the resources available on the activities which contribute most to better occupational safety and health in Europe.

The MSP will be implemented via annual management plans to be adopted by the Board. It may be subject to amendments further to the mid-term evaluation 2016-2017 and the possible adoption of a EU-OSH policy framework by the Commission.

The formulation of the MSP is based on a detailed evaluation of the EU-OSHA Strategy 2009-2013 as well as a close involvement of key stakeholders. The MSP has a close link to European policy priorities, in particular the targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The implementation of the activities foreseen in the MSP is based on a 'portfolio' approach, to respond to the differing needs of the Member States.

## 6 Seat Agreement

On 20 December 2013, the Spanish Council of Ministers has passed for signature the draft Seat Agreement between Spain and EU-OSHA that the two parties have been discussing extensively in the past few years. The Agreement is expected to be concluded in early January.

The Agency and its staff will be endowed with a clear and stable regulatory framework, which will certainly support EU-OSHA to reach its objectives. The Agreement is also intended to harmonize the treatment reserved to EU bodies within Spain.

## 7 New premises

Mid last year, the Agency launched a prospection notice to identify new suitable premises in Bilbao.

The procedure concluded successfully and as of 19 December 2013 the Agency has been located in the 5th floor of “Edificio Miribilla”, in a new residential area in the proximity of the city centre.

The floor space is significantly bigger than the previous premises in downtown Bilbao. The move has definitely improved staff’s working conditions and at the same time it generated a significant saving in Title 2, as the rent is much lower.

Bureau and Board meetings can be now hosted in the new offices. This will strengthen even further the relations between the Governing and Steering bodies and the Agency’s staff.