

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2007/2146(INI)

22.11.2007

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the Community strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work
(2007/2146(INI))

Draftsman: Georgs Andrejevs

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Calls on the Commission to follow closely the implementation of Community legislation on health and safety at work and take the necessary measures in case of non-compliance, and to identify areas of shortcomings where new or revised legislative measures are needed in order to avoid inequalities between the Member States;
2. Calls on all Member States who have not yet done so to draw up national strategies and to establish quantitative objectives for the evaluation of progress in the field of health and safety; further calls on the Member States to evaluate those strategies at regular intervals and report the findings to the Commission;
3. Strongly encourages the Commission to use the Structural Funds, in particular the Social Fund, and any other available instruments as economic incentives for companies, particularly small and medium-sized firms, to go beyond compliance with regulations on health and safety at work;
4. Furthermore, suggests that Member States consider the possibility of incorporating certain health and safety standards when awarding public contracts;
5. Recalls that threats to health and safety at work are not limited to manual labour; calls for better identification of occupational health hazards relating to work in all sectors; calls for more attention to the causes underlying the development of mental illnesses and to mental health, addiction and psychological hazards at the workplace, such as stress, harassment and mobbing, as well as violence; and further calls for greater emphasis to be placed on employer policies for the promotion of good physical and mental health;
6. Calls on the Commission to pay particular attention to technological, organisational and economic developments, e.g. rapid introduction of new technologies and new forms of work, which can lead to the emergence of new risks for health and safety at work;
7. Considering the ongoing social and economic changes, which influence and change also the labour market, calls on the Commission to encourage good employment policies and decent work conditions, and to encourage employers to promote healthy lifestyles at the workplace through occupational health promotion campaigns, enforcement of smoking bans at the workplace and schemes to support smoking employees to quit smoking, and to ensure responsibility and policy coherence with other areas, especially public health;
8. Calls on the Council and Commission to set a timetable for the revision of Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work¹, with a view to including substances toxic to reproduction and setting compulsory

¹ OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 50.

limit values for carcinogens, mutagens and substances toxic to reproduction, which remain difficult to ban;

9. Considers it essential for there to be greater coordination with the new European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) in Helsinki and for a number of issues arising in connection with the relationship between Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)¹ and the other directives concerning health at work to be clarified;
10. Calls on the Commission and Member States to take due account of the simultaneous implementation of the Community strategy and the REACH Regulation: the strategy should seek to complement the REACH Regulation on protection against chemical hazards and should take advantage of the opportunity to enhance preventive action against chemical hazards at the workplace in connection with the implementation of REACH;
11. Urges the Commission to recognise the importance of worker representation in workplace accident prevention policy and to take due account of Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work², which has produced remarkable results in safety and prevention terms in the companies with the best worker representation;
12. Calls for the same commitment to impact assessments on health and safety at work as to those on the environment;
13. Considers that the Commission and Member States should make further efforts to identify not just high-risk production sectors, as has already been done, but also vulnerable groups such as immigrants, young people and older workers;
14. Calls on the Commission to broaden the Community strategy's scope so that it also covers social determinants and not merely occupational accidents or illnesses, given that an individual's state of health is determined by various work-related factors such as type of contract, working conditions and the availability of work; points out that changes in work relations and the decline in job security give rise also to environmental, psychological and social problems that need to be addressed;
15. Calls on the Commission and Member States to take due account of inequalities not just between Member States but also within individual Member States, and to make a commitment to reducing them.

¹ OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

² OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	21.11.2007
Result of final vote	+: 27 -: 2 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Georgs Andrejevs, Margrete Auken, Irena Belohorská, Johannes Blokland, Avril Doyle, Mojca Drčar Murko, Edite Estrela, Jill Evans, Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines, Satu Hassi, Jens Holm, Marie Anne Isler Béguin, Dan Jørgensen, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Linda McAvan, Roberto Musacchio, Riitta Myller, Miroslav Ouzký, Dimitrios Papadimoulis, Dagmar Roth-Behrendt, Karin Scheele, Carl Schlyter, Richard Seeber, Antonios Trakatellis, Thomas Ulmer
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Kathalijne Maria Buitenweg, Philip Bushill-Matthews, Milan Gaľa, Karsten Friedrich Hoppenstedt, Alojz Peterle
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	