



## **Healthy Workplaces Towards Quality and Innovation**

Working Together for a Social and  
Competitive Europe

# **Report**

**on the Current Status of  
Workplace Health Promotion in the  
Public Administration Sector**







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**Dr. Reinhold Sochert**





# Preface

The European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP) comprises organisations such as national occupational health and safety institutes, public health institutions and Ministries of Health and Labour from all Member States of the European Community, the countries in the European Economic Area and a number of candidate countries. The network is being supported by the European Commission within the framework for action in the field of Public Health (No 645/96/EC).

With the passing of the 'Luxembourg Declaration on Workplace Health Promotion' at the end of 1997, the Network agreed on a common understanding of workplace health promotion (WHP). According to this Declaration, WHP is viewed as a comprehensive approach which necessitates a common strategy for all players inside and outside the enterprise.

In two projects carried out by the ENWHP between 1997 and 2000, models of good practice in workplace health promotion in (mainly) larger enterprises and in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) were identified and publicised on the basis of jointly developed good practice criteria for WHP throughout Europe. In 2001 the Network's third joint initiative on WHP in public administrations was launched with the participation of 23 countries. (You may also refer to the brochure: "Models of Good Practice for Workplace Health Promotion in the Public Administration Sector").

This report is a result of an intensive discussion and co-ordination process among the network members and national experts. It consists of 16 national reports and the author's own analysis based on the data produced in the 3rd European Survey on Working Conditions carried out in 2000 by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

Special thanks should be extended to everyone who participated and particularly to the authors of the 16 national reports.

Essen, May 2002



Dr. Gregor Breucker  
National Contact Office of the ENWHP/Germany

## Why the public administration sector?

Since the 90ies at the latest there is a consensus within the European countries concerning the need to modernize the public administration sector, in particular to reduce the “bureaucracy” and “lack of touch” with the public in public administrations. However, there are different views as to the direction of the necessary reforms and their speed.

There are two main issues within the public sector reform debate:

- Scope of public activities
- Effectiveness and efficiency of public administrations

The discussion on the first issue has led to a re-definition of public responsibilities. Over the last three decades a range of different approaches have been used to re-arrange the task profile of public organisations. These have included measures to contain and reduce public expenditure, the privatization of public enterprises, different forms of outsourcing, the introduction of contracting out and open tendering systems as well as the introduction of forms of competition into public administration organisations.

The second issue concerns the way public activities can be organized more effectively and efficiently. This will include discussing the very structure of public organisations including topics such as the level of complexity and hierarchy, possibilities to integrate tasks and team-work, the introduction of decentralized accountabilities of public organisations as well as new forms of relationships with external stakeholders (customatization of internal processes).

At the core of public sector reform debate the role of new management models can be identified. This includes the introduction of management by objectives and results systems and forms of programme budgeting. Human resource management and work organisation are strongly linked with the general debate on how to improve the impact of public investments.

In view of the number of employees, the public administration sector is large as well as being badly arranged and heterogeneous in the way it is organised and provides services\*. For all the differences in the organisation details, the main product is in most cases a service related to people. More depends in this sector on each and every employee than in the more intensive technical production of material

\*An ordinance of the EU Commission dating from 1993 on the “Statistical Classification of Economic Activity in the European Union” (NACE Rev. 1) created a uniform basis for delineating public administration from other economic sectors in Europe. According to this ordinance, public administration embraces all administrative activities of the executive and legislative organs at central, regional and local level. A difference is made between three groups of administrative activities:

- Administration of the State and the economic and social policy of the community
- Provision of services to the community as a whole
- Compulsory social security activities

This definition is also used as a basis in the present project.

Please note: According to the NACE-classification the transport and communication, education and health and social work sectors form separate business classes and thus are excluded.

goods. Whereas the proportion of personnel contributing to value production is between 20% and 50% the proportion in the public administration sector is even higher at 60% to 90%. The employees are the most important resource in increasing competitiveness, creating better contact with the public, providing better service to the customer and implementing change and new ideas. The manner in which employees are managed, motivated and qualified has a considerable influence on their feeling of well-being and their health and consequently on their efficiency and on the quality of the services they provide. This is the field where workplace health promotion strategies and action can provide added value to the public administration reform process.

However, workplace health promotion projects and programmes have been implemented within public administration organisations only to a small extent. There is a need to adapt the successful strategies of workplace health promotion which were mainly developed in the private sector to the specific requirements of public administrations.

With the adoption of the Luxembourg Declaration on Workplace Health Promotion in Europe in 1997 the ENWHP identified core priorities for workplace health policies and future action. As a first step these were implemented for larger enterprises. The results were then adapted to the specific requirements of working with small and medium sized enterprises. Due to the significant economic and social role of the public administration sector this initiative will now complete the main larger settings of workplace health in Europe.

## Development stages of the project

One of the aims of the project was to analyse and document the level of workplace health promotion in public administrations in participating countries. For this purpose a questionnaire was prepared prior to selected experts completing and writing up analysis reports. Experts from Denmark, Germany and Sweden helped to produce the questionnaire.

In addition to preparing these analysis reports, another major task was to find and document two to three models of good practice in each participating country on the basis of criteria developed in the previous ENWHP projects. The aim was to obtain presentation material showing how exemplary workplace health promotion activities can be achieved.

The country reports and models of good practice were then discussed in detail on a workshop attended by a variety of experts in order to assure the quality.

ENWHP's joint project on workplace health promotion in public administrations ended with the "ENWHP Third European Conference" in Barcelona (17 -18 June 2002). Under the heading "Healthy Workplaces Towards Quality and Innovation – Working Together for a Social and Competitive Europe", the project and the results were presented for the first time to a broad international audience.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Objectives and focal points

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of the status in workplace health promotion (WHP) and occupational health and safety (OHS) in the public administration sector (PubAd) in Europe. To pursue this goal, the European Network for Workplace Health Promotion decided to undertake an assessment of WHP and OHS in PubAd from the point of view of the national reporters from participating countries. This led to:

- the production of a national report regarding the state of WHP and OHS in PubAd in each of the participating countries, and
- the production of a consolidated report regarding the state of WHP and OHS in European public administrations based upon 16 national reports.

### *Production of the European report*



The amount of work to be undertaken and the effort required to achieve the objectives in such a short time were recognised from the outset of the project. Therefore, the results were neither intended nor feasible to provide a definitive answer or, moreover, to conduct an international comparison of the European states. The shortage of available data alone and the problems which exist as regards the comparability of the national data and information do not permit such a target to be achieved. Instead, an attempt was made to provide a current snapshot of the state of WHP and OHS in European public administrations. It highlights a part of rather than a comprehensive picture and focuses on the following questions: What are the characteristics of WHP and OHS in PubAd compared with the general situation and what need for action still exists?

To undertake this assessment, the project co-ordinator (BKK) developed a manual consisting of a set of questions that were to be completed by each national reporter and then returned to the project co-ordinator for consolidation. For the most part, the manual is based on the “Manual for Data Gathering in the 15 EU Member States”, developed and used by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in its pilot study: “The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the European Union (Including the Risk Sector Project)”. It was altered and adapted to suit the specific requirements of this project.

Once the manual had been produced, it was left up to the individual National Contact Offices (NCOs) of the ENWHP to decide on the exact method of data collection to be applied in their country.

In some cases external experts were asked to complete the manual, whilst in others, the individual NCO completed the manual after obtaining the relevant data and/or canvassing appropriate expert opinion.

Once all the NCOs had completed and returned the manuals, BKK consolidated the data and prepared this report.

This report comprises six chapters and one Annex. To understand how the report is structured, a summary of each chapter is given below to offer the reader guidance.

#### ■ **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

This chapter presents an introduction describing the aims and the course of compiling the report. Furthermore, a description is given outlining the concept of the manual.

#### ■ **Chapter 2 – Social and economic framework of the public administration sector**

This section deals with the social and economic framework conditions of WHP and OHS in PubAd. It also presents the common understanding and some special features of PubAd. The objective is to describe the social and economic context.

#### ■ **Chapter 3 – The working environment in the public administration sector**

This chapter presents the bulk of the consolidated information for the working environment in PubAd. The layout of each individual subsection is identical and consists of:

- European picture using the data from the 3rd European Survey on Working Conditions (ESWC-data)
- Comparison of EU-data and national data

#### ■ **Chapter 4 – Occupational health results in the public administration sector**

This chapter looks at the consequences/results of the effects of occupational hazards in PubAd workplaces. It considers issues such as work-induced disorders, work satisfaction and occupational sickness absence in order to identify any particular trends or significant findings in PubAd compared with the other sectors.

#### ■ **Chapter 5 – The current practice of workplace health promotion in the public administration sector**

The fifth chapter examines the preventive capacity and dissemination of WHP in the public administration sector. The range and status of WHP activities which are offered voluntarily above and beyond the statutory requirements are requested.

#### ■ **Chapter 6 – Summary and evaluation of workplace health promotion in the public administration sector**

The final section summarises the state of WHP and OHS in the public administration sector. The main aspects of WHP and OHS in the public administration sector, the major strengths and weaknesses as well as the need for action and strategies are described.

#### ■ **Annex – Summaries of the national country reports**

The individual summaries from the 16 countries involved, which you find in the Annex, support and round off this report.

### 1.2 Concept of the manual

As already mentioned above, the manual for data collection in this project is based on a quite similar production prepared by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in Bilbao. Accordingly a number of specific indicators that are best suited to describe the exposure situation at work, the health results and the preventive capacity in European countries were selected. The following indicators were chosen to provide an appropriate picture of the working environment in the public administration sector:

- Posture and movement exposures: e.g. lifting/moving heavy loads, repetitive movements, strenuous working postures
- Physical exposures: e.g. noise, high temperature, low temperature
- Psycho-social working conditions: e.g. high speed work, pace of work dictated by social demand, bullying and victimisation, monotonous work

The following data-gathering procedure applied to most of the above indicators:

1. The NCOs were requested to indicate the 5 exposures within each category with the highest risk in PubAd. In this step existing national quantitative data from e.g. national surveys with larger sample sizes or specific studies were asked to be presented. Tables were provided to present the collected information of the national data in a common way.
2. If the NCOs presented national quantitative data, they were asked to compare their national PubAd data with data from the private business sector by means of two key questions, i.e. “Are there differences between the data from the public administration sector and the data from the private business sector?” and “Does the information from the public administration sector highlight exposures that are not evident from private sector data?”. In addition, the NCOs could give other comments. The objective was to see whether there are specific findings in PubAd compared with the general situation and what they are.
3. The NCOs were then requested to determine which categories (related to gender, age and occupations) are at the highest risk to the exposure indicator. As a basis for the selections, the NCOs could use quantitative information and relevant qualitative considerations, such as expert opinions, inspection reports, national priorities, research studies etc.
4. The NCOs were asked for an opinion about the trends on the number of workers exposed over the last 10 years. Furthermore, they indicated if there were any particular risk categories in gender, age or professions that are expected to deviate from this development.
5. Finally, the NCOs were requested to give an evaluation of the present state regarding the exposure indicator on whether development of additional preventive action is necessary or not.

The same step-wise procedure as was followed for the exposure indicators was used for most occupational health results.

To describe their current practice of workplace health promotion in PubAd, the NCOs were asked to present:

- the percentage of authorities that conduct WHP activities in PubAd
- the kind of WHP activities in PubAd
- the reasons for implementation of WHP measures in PubAd
- the results of WHP activities in PubAd
- the organisations conducting WHP activities

The data collection was based as much as possible on existing data available either on a quantitative or qualitative (reasonable estimates) level.

## 2. Social and economic framework of the public administration sector

### 2.1 Definition and special features of public administrations

It is difficult to accurately define the public sector as its structure differs widely in individual countries in Europe and is very heterogeneous. Another difficulty is that in everyday language no difference is made between the public sector and the public administration sector. The following are therefore included in the public sector as a whole: The administrations at federal level, the states (regions), cities, towns and municipalities, the judiciary, the police, the army, schools, universities, research institutes as well as hospitals, senior citizens' and nursing homes and other public health services.

An ordinance of the EU Commission dating from 1993 on the "Statistical Classification of Economic Activity in the European Union" (NACE Rev. 1) created a uniform basis for delineating the public administration sector from other economic sectors in Europe. According to this ordinance, the public administration sector embraces all administrative activities of the executive and legislative organs at central, regional and local level. A difference is made between three groups of administrative activities:

- Administration of the state and the economic and social policy of the community (L 75.1)\*
- Provision of services to the community as a whole (L 75.2)\*
- Compulsory social security activities (L 75.3)\*

This definition is also used as far as possible as a basis in the current project.

The general framework conditions in the public sector differ in many respects from those in the private sector. These include, in particular, modernisation pressure which has continued relentlessly for several years and which primarily stems from the criticism of the structure and size and the increasing scepticism as regards quality and efficiency of the public sector services.

Modernisation in the European administrations is based on the ideas and strategies of the "New Public Management". Basically, the strategies of the "New Public Management" assume that the public administration sector suffers from a lack of control which results from too great an emphasis on the input (provision of resources) and from a lack of result orientation. In order to counteract this, the modernisation strategies, in many cases based on management concepts from the private sector, rely on the result-oriented control on the basis of decentralised management and organisation structures whose benefits are to be improved through competition mechanisms and greater transparency.

The key elements of such a strategy are:

\* The letters and numbers in brackets relate to the classification levels of the NACE classification.

- Control by objectives (management by results and performance)
- Contract management of administration units which have become independent
- Outsourcing of functions to private enterprises
- Formation of quasi-markets
- Emphasis on customer orientation

The experience gained in the European countries in the application of these strategies is not without an impact on the employees. For example, it has been seen in many cases that the simple transfer of market models to perform public functions leads to cost and quality problems both in the services themselves and in the working conditions.

One of the most important problems is that the modernisation of the public sector is frequently undertaken without the timely inclusion of the employees and that they are not introduced to the new organisational forms and control instruments until they have been introduced. Most of the reforms have therefore hardly paid off from the viewpoint of the employees and have tended to result in frustration and demotivation rather than in empowerment and the assumption of responsibility. As a result, the health situation of the employees and their working conditions in the public administration sector, as described and discussed further on in this report, are also to be evaluated against the backdrop of this modernisation process.

## 2.2 Outlays and employment

On examination of the development of the public sector compared with the private sector in the European countries, other noticeable aspects and trends can be found. As an overall trend, there was initially a sharp rise in total government outlays from 1970 - 1995, particularly in the sector of welfare state functions and the percentage of civil servants in the total employment figure. This overall trend, however, varied greatly in the individual countries.

If the total government outlays are examined in relation to the gross domestic product (see table page 16), there is an average rise in outlays throughout Europe of 35% in 1970 to 51% in 1995. The total government outlays therefore rose within 25 years by roughly half. Most countries have managed to reduce the percentages of government outlays since the mid-nineties, and very significantly by 2000. Economic factors and the institutional framework of the Maastricht Agreements combined to achieve this.

## 2. Social and economic framework of the public administration sector

### *Total government outlays in selected European countries (as a percentage of GDP)*

	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000*
Austria	37.6	47.1	48.6	52.6	49.0
Denmark	40.2	56.2	56.0	59.3	53.4
Finland	28.5	35.7	44.5	55.1	46.0
Germany	38.3	47.9	45.1	49.8	46.8
Hungary	–	–	50.8	–	44.5**
Italy	–	–	53.1	–	50.0**
Netherlands	41.3	55.8	54.1	51.3	47.7
Norway	34.9	43.9	49.7	47.6	47.0
Portugal	–	–	40.6	–	43.5**
Spain	–	–	39.7	–	39.9**
Sweden	44.2	60.1	59.1	65.6	58.5
United Kingdom	38.8	44.8	41.8	44.4	41.1
OECD Europe	35.3	44.8	48.3	51.0	46.6

\* Estimates and projections  
\*\*1997

Source: OECD 1998 and 2000; Naschold, F.; Bogumil, J., 2000

As part of the overall trend, the countries can be classified into four groups at the height of the development of outlays in 1995 :

- The Scandinavian countries with the exception of Norway are in the top group as regards the level of government outlays (between 55% and 66%) and the rates of increase (between 17% and 25%).
- Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Austria are in the middle group with a rate of increase of about 10% and a level of about 50%.
- United Kingdom has the lowest figures for the outlay level.
- No complete series of figures are available for Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Spain. They have different development trends between 1990 and 1997. While Hungary and Italy tend towards the middle group, Portugal and Spain are at a low level and are comparable with United Kingdom.

If the structure of government outlays is examined, three sectors can be differentiated:

- The traditional sector of government expenditure including defence, law and order (the public administration sector in the narrower sense)
- The welfare state sector with its different transfer payments
- The sector of the “mixed economy” with outlays to support the private sector and the debt service.

Accordingly, most countries have a relatively low and stable proportion of public administration sector of 7-9%. In most countries expenditure on defence has been falling by up to 50% since the end of bipolarity. On the other hand, the development of expenditure in the welfare state sector exhibits a much greater spectrum between the individual countries. It has risen substantially in all countries since 1970 and continues to rise considerably in the sector of transfer payments (unemployment, pensions) although no longer quite so dramatically as between 1970 and 1990.



## 2. Social and economic framework of the public administration sector

The data of the development of employment in the public sector overall has by and large a similar pattern (see next table).

### **Public employment in selected European countries (as a percentage of total employment)**

	1970	1980	1990	1997	1998
Austria	13.3	18.7	19.5	18.6	18.4
Denmark	17.0	28.0	29.6	30.3	30.0
Finland	12.1	17.3	20.5	23.4	25.2
Germany	11.2	14.6	15.1	15.3	15.0
Hungary	–	–	–	22.8	22.7
Italy	–	–	–	15.5	15.4
Netherlands	11.5	13.8	13.2	11.9	11.9
Norway	17.7	24.1	28.6	31.1	30.8
Portugal	–	–	12.1	15.5	15.2
Spain	–	–	14.0	15.7	15.5
Sweden	20.9	30.7	32.0	31.5	31.2
United Kingdom	18.1	21.2	19.5	14.2	14.1
OECD Europe	12.8	17.2	18.4	20.2	18.4

Source: OECD 1998 and 2001; Naschold, F; Bogumil, J., 2000

The employment percentages in the entire public sector in relation to total employment are initially much lower than the public expenditure in relation to the GDP. This is mainly due to the low employment level for the state transfer services. The peak was reached in 1997. In the OECD average for Europe the public sector accounts for a total of roughly 20% of total employment. In all countries the rise in the staff development after 1980 is no longer particularly high but declines are not recorded everywhere. The ranking of the countries as regards the employment percentages in the public sector as a whole corresponds approximately to their positions in the table of public expenditure.

This applies in particular to the Scandinavian countries whereas there are differences in the ratio of government expenditure and employment percentages in the public sector overall between Germany, the Netherlands and Austria. In spite of reunification, Germany, viewed overall, lies quite a bit below the average. Sweden, Denmark and Norway have by far the highest employment percentage in the public sector.

One interesting trend in this context is that in most countries the proportion of central or federal government employees appears to have decreased slightly over the years, while that of local or regional government employees is increasing. It can be inferred from this general trend that human resources have been devolved to the service delivery points.

### 2.3 Age and gender

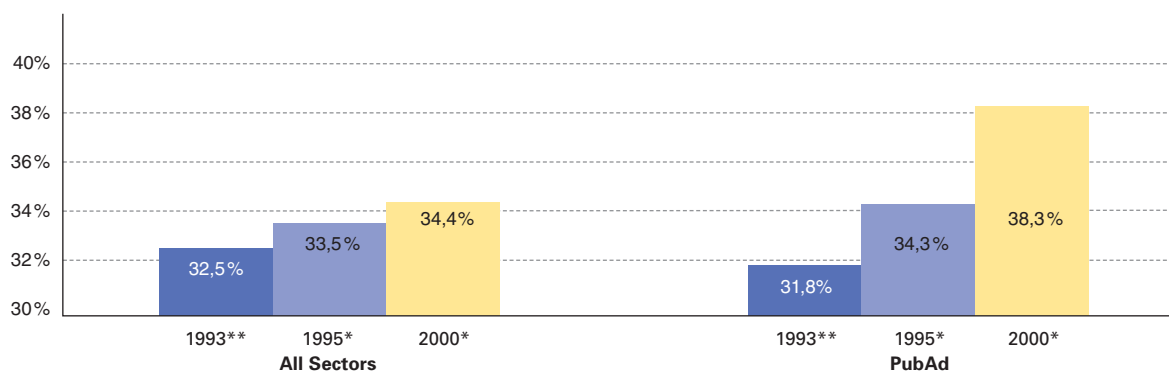
Another interesting development can be found if the employees are also examined according to their ages. Since roughly the early nineties there has been a trend in all European countries towards a fall in the employment of older workers owing to early retirement. The “normal” retirement pension was then no longer the norm but rather the exception.

For example, of those who started drawing a pension in Germany in 1997 only 27% of men and 45% of women were in the category “standard old-age pension” – all the others went into retirement before the “normal” pensionable age. Against the background of state regulations on easing the labour market and the increasing interest of the workforce in stopping work at an earlier age, companies increasingly pursued a strategy of “rejuvenation of workforces”.

If a closer examination is made of what branches and sectors of the economy these corporate strategies to reduce the age of the workforces were pursued with particular enthusiasm, different and reverse trends can be discovered. Whereas in some branches of industry as well as in the services sector the proportion of older workers was reduced by approximately 5-10%, in other sectors there was a significant increase in the percentage of this group of workers. On the one hand, some branches of industry are very noticeable in this respect and, on the other hand, the public administration sector where the percentage of older workers has clearly risen in the last decade.

If all the branches of industry and sectors of the economy are combined and compared with the public administration sector, this observation becomes very clear and evident. The bottom line for all the branches in the private sector during the nineties is that the percentage of older workers (over 44 years old) rose considerably less than in the public administration sector. A comparison between 1993 and 2000 shows for the public administration sector that the growth rate of older workers is about 20% whereas the corresponding rate for the entire economy is only about 6% (see figure).

#### **Share of European working population older than 44 years**



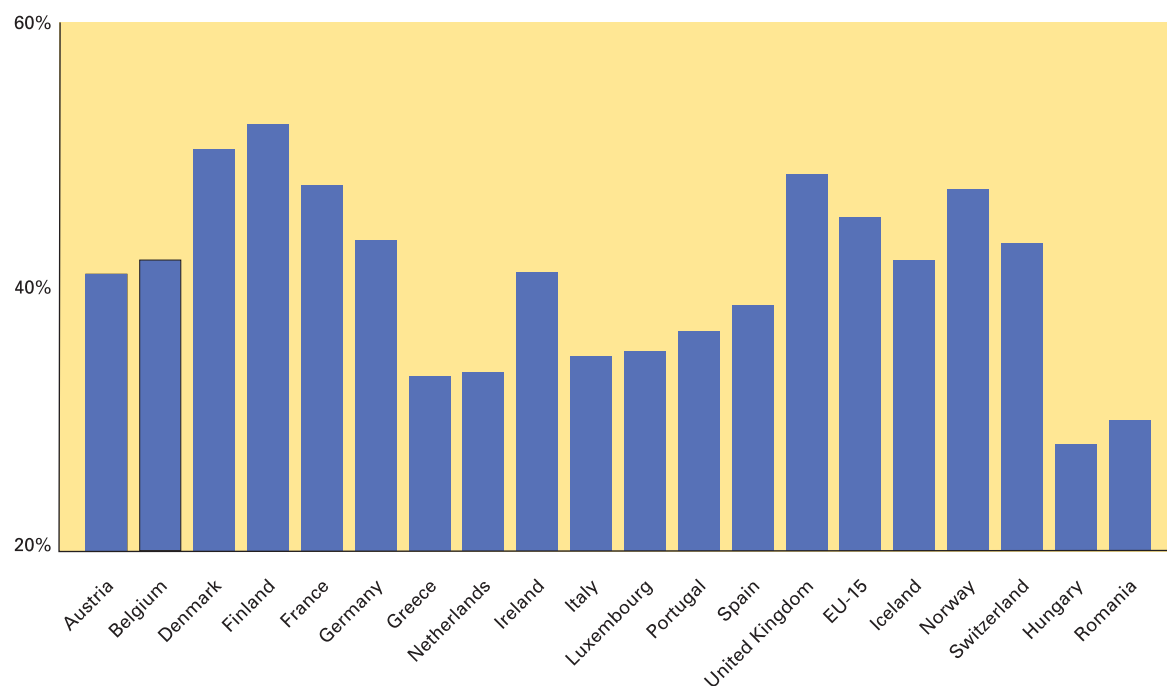
\* EU-15 countries  
\*\* EU-12 countries

Source: Own calculations to labour force survey 1993/1995/2000, Eurostat

## 2. Social and economic framework of the public administration sector

Another characteristic can be seen if the employment of women is examined in more detail. The percentage of women who work in the public sector as a whole increased to a greater extent in the eighties and nineties than in the entire economy. This trend is also reflected in the public administration sector but here it is less pronounced.

### *Proportion of women in the public administration sector*



Source: Labour force survey 2000, Eurostat; Country reports

The proportion of women is well above the EU average in Denmark, Finland, France and Norway whereas it is below average in the southern European countries and the Netherlands.

Despite the increasing proportion of women in the public sector, it appears that the number of women in managerial and senior level posts is still relatively low. In most countries the proportion of women in their respective top occupational group is about 20% or less. Meanwhile, in most cases, more than 60% of posts in the lowest occupational group are occupied by women. However, over the last decade the number of women managers has increased sharply in some countries (e.g. France and UK) and moderately in other countries. This can be explained in part by the fact that steps have been taken to promote equal employment opportunities between men and women. It is also expected that the proportion of women managers in the public administration sector will increase in the future thanks to the equal employment policies which are widespread in many European countries.

### 3. The working environment in the public administration sector

This section contains quantitative and qualitative information on the working environment in the participating European countries. In collating and presenting the following information, it must be appreciated that the method by which each NCO derived responses to particular questions was different. In many cases statistical data was not available. The information provided by individual NCOs merely represents their expert opinion after relevant consultation with identified experts. The consolidation information, therefore, can only be interpreted as a collation of expert opinion.

The key issues regarding the working environment that the NCOs were asked to consider were:

- Posture and movement exposures
- Physical exposures
- Psycho-social working conditions

For each of the above health related issues, the NCOs were asked to indicate the 5 exposures within each category with the highest risk in PubAd and to identify trends within each of the following risk categories:

- Occupations
- Gender
- Age

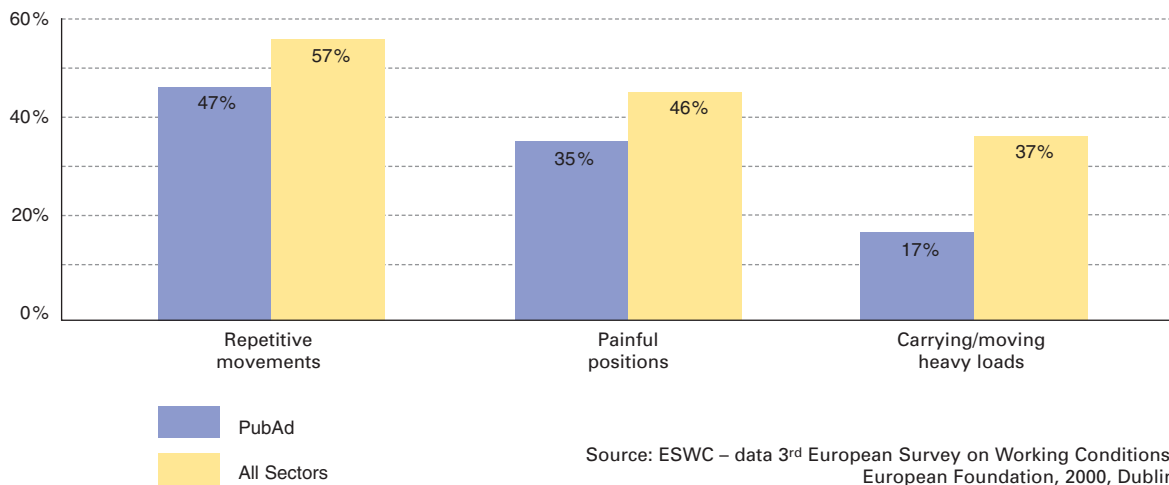
The information presented in the following sections of this chapter is in a predefined format which consists of:

- Tables providing a synopsis of relevant data from the 3rd European Survey on Working Conditions (ESWC-data) which is used to draw a European picture
- Comparison between European and national information

## 3.1 Posture and movement exposures

### Overview

#### Overview – posture and movement exposures



The ESWC-data pinpoints the three most important posture and movement exposures in the public administration sector as repetitive movements, strenuous working postures and carrying or moving heavy loads. 57% of all the workers in the EU-15 Member States are exposed to repetitive hand or arm movements, 46% are working in painful or tiring positions and 37% of all workers job involves carrying or moving heavy loads for at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their working time. The survey clearly indicates that the respective figures for employees within the public administration sector are below average.

### 3.1.1 Repetitive hand or arm movements

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose job involves repetitive hand or arm movements according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	UK
Public administration	47	40	46	46	67	55	36	53	72	32	37	42	59	59	63	53
All sectors together	57	50	49	52	75	63	49	64	67	56	54	49	62	70	65	54

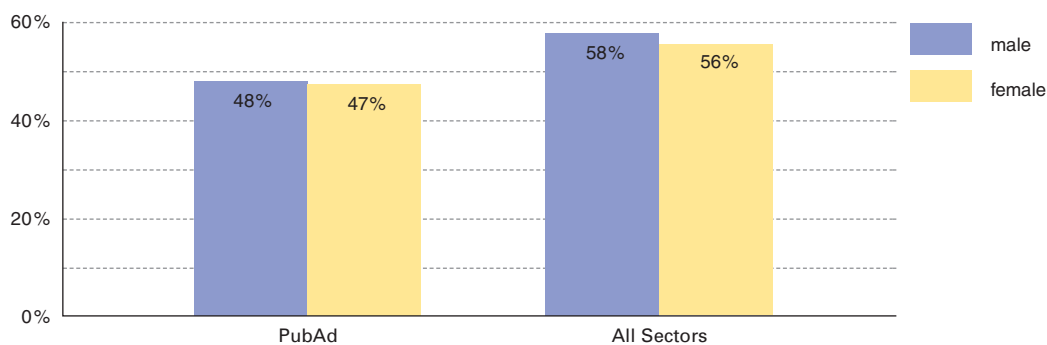
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose job involves repetitive hand or arm movements according to occupation**

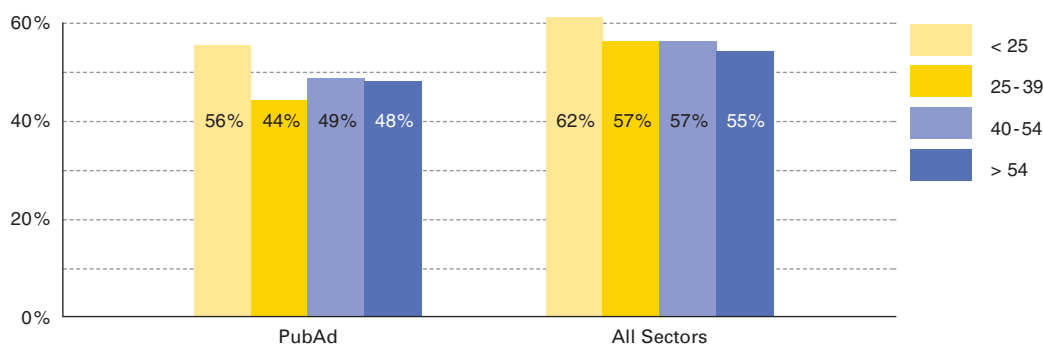
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	47	40	35	48	50	36	64	68	37	64	46
All sectors together	57	43	37	48	54	51	70	75	77	71	39

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

#### Repetitive movements according to gender



#### Repetitive movements according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 57% of all the workers and 47% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to repetitive hand or arm movements for at least ¼ of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector, the information highlights Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden as far above EU-average, whereas in the Netherlands the PubAd rates even higher than the total national average.

A total of eight NCOs presented additional quantitative data extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the trend is, once again with the exception of the Netherlands, the same. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose job involves repetitive hand or arm movements is usually below average. The Netherlands differs in a unique way from this typical European picture. A national study (Arbolans) pointed out that 34% of PubAd-employees compared with 23% of all Dutch workers are exposed to work repeating the same movement or exerting force with arms or hands several times a minute.

Repetitive movements particularly when combined with a rapid workspace such as in computer related work are commonly viewed as important risk factors in repetitive strain injuries (RSI). It was reported that there is an extended and still increasing use in this type of work (key board/mouse operations) requiring special attention especially in the public administration sector.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

Information from the national reports shows that clerical work is the most frequently identified occupation in PubAd considered to be at risk from repetitive movements. A total of four NCOs (Finland, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland) recorded this occupation as being at risk. In the ESWC-data, the occupations highlighted as the highest risk groups in PubAd were "craft and related trade workers", "elementary occupations", "skilled agricultural and fishery workers" and "clerical workers", followed by "armed forces" which are the only group above the average.

##### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, two NCOs (Germany and Sweden) identified females and two NCOs (Denmark and Ireland) identified males to be most exposed to repetitive movements in the public administration sector. Finland, Norway and Switzerland reported that there are no differ-

ences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding repetitive movements at work. The ESWC-data confirms the latter indication of no difference.

##### ■ Age category at risk

Although no firm conclusions can be drawn with respect to age, comments received drew attention to the younger worker. It was reported in the Finnish, German and Irish country reports that the younger worker (under 25 years old) was frequently more exposed to repetitive tasks and young female employees in particular. The same conclusion can be drawn from the ESWC-data.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to repetitive movements over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Decreased trend (1 NCO): Sweden
- Stable trend (2 NCOs): Greece and Netherlands (except for VDU workers)
- Increased trend (3 NCOs): Finland, Germany and Switzerland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* The increase is due to the increase in the computerisation of tasks. This has resulted in more tasks involving data input to computers. The ESWC-data indicates an increase of 7% for workers in PubAd exposed to repetitive movements between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey) while the overall trend remained stable.

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if in PubAd preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or whether the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by three NCOs: Ireland, Netherlands and Sweden
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by five NCOs: Finland, Germany, Greece, Norway and Switzerland.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* Administrations need to be encouraged to allocate repetitive tasks more evenly so that long periods of repetitive movement are not required of individual workers.

### 3.1.2 Painful or tiring positions

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose job involves painful or tiring positions according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	UK
Public administration	35	37	33	36	49	38	32	51	19	24	29	38	42	51	39	33
All sectors together	46	41	40	37	53	58	44	69	32	43	49	41	53	50	52	39

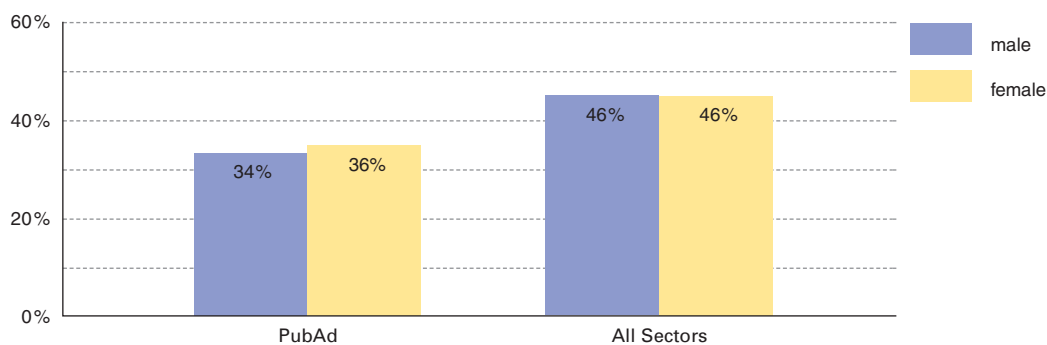
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose job involves painful or tiring positions according to occupation**

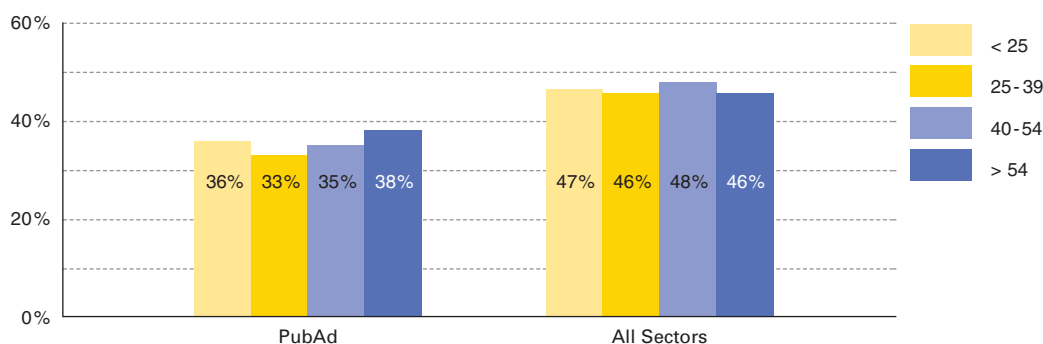
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	35	15	25	31	30	44	55	58	41	59	40
All sectors together	46	29	32	38	30	49	75	65	60	59	44

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

**Painful or tiring positions according to gender**



**Painful or tiring positions according to age**



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin



#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 46% of all the workers and 35% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to strenuous working postures for at least ¼ of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland, Greece and Spain as far above EU-average, whereas in Spain the PubAd rates even higher than the total national average.

A total of nine NCOs presented additional quantitative data extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the trend reported in the national reports is quite similar. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose job involves painful or tiring positions is a good deal below average in each country mentioned above.

Strenuous working postures are of significant importance, especially when combined with lifting of heavy loads and repetitive work tasks. Poor working posture is a well known aggravating factor for causing disorders of the lower spine. Difficult working positions contribute to the potential risk of work-induced musculoskeletal disorders which are also frequently observed in the public administration sector.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

Information from the national reports shows that the most frequently identified occupations in PubAd considered to be at risk from strenuous working postures are “elementary occupations”, “craft and related trades workers” and “skilled agricultural and fishery workers”. A total of three NCOs (Finland, Sweden and Switzerland) recorded these occupations as being at risk. In the ESWC-data, the same occupations were highlighted as the highest risk groups in PubAd.

##### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, three NCOs (Denmark, Finland and Iceland) identified females and one NCO (Ireland) identified males to be most exposed to strenuous working postures in the public administration sector. Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland reported no differences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding strenuous working postures. The ESWC-data confirm the latter indication of no difference.

##### ■ Age category at risk

In their comments the NCOs considered younger worker more likely at risk from strenuous working postures. It was reported in the country reports from Germany, Norway and Sweden that the younger worker (under 25 years old) was frequently more exposed to strenuous postures. Iceland and Ireland commented that the older workers (> 55 years old) are more exposed. From the ESWC-data, it is not possible to draw a firm conclusion.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to strenuous working postures over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (3 NCOs): Greece, Netherlands and Sweden
- Increased trend (4 NCOs): Finland, Germany, Iceland and Switzerland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* The number of persons who are required to remain seated at work for a long period of time is increasing.

The ESWC-data indicates a stable trend in PubAd as well as on EU-average for workers exposed to strenuous working postures between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or whether the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by three NCOs: Ireland, Netherlands and Sweden
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by six NCOs: Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* Administrations need to be encouraged to distribute tasks more evenly so that long periods without adequate changes of posture are not necessary.

### 3.1.3 Carrying or moving heavy loads

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose job involves carrying or moving heavy loads according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	UK
Public administration	17	19	23	18	28	24	14	12	5	14	5	21	15	19	19	33
All sectors together	37	37	33	34	42	42	37	44	28	36	29	27	32	41	44	39

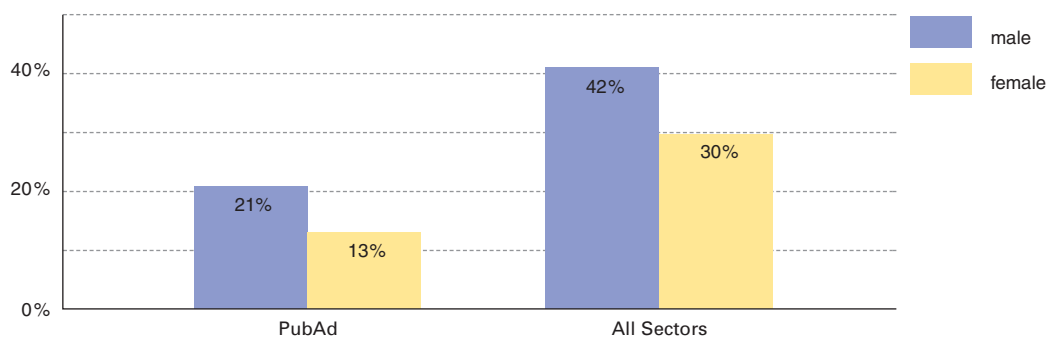
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose job involves carrying or moving heavy loads according to occupation**

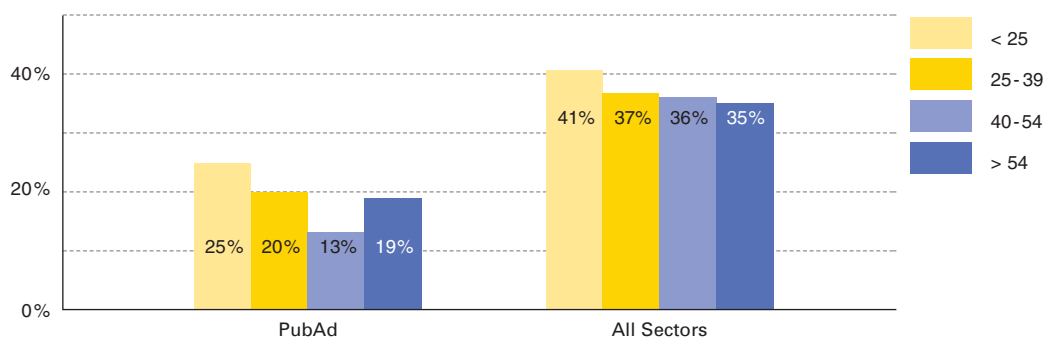
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	17	3	9	8	6	23	44	69	15	60	32
All sectors together	37	28	14	27	12	39	77	60	61	56	26

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

**Carrying or moving heavy loads according to gender**



**Carrying or moving heavy loads according to age**



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 37% of all the workers and 17% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to carrying or moving heavy loads for at least ¼ of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland and UK as far above EU-average.

A total of eight NCOs presented additional quantitative data extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the trend reported in the national reports is quite similar. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose job involves carrying or moving heavy loads is well below average in each country mentioned above.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

Information from the national reports shows that the most frequently identified occupations in PubAd considered to be at risk from carrying or moving heavy loads are “elementary occupations”, “craft and related trades workers” and “service workers and shop and market sales workers”. A total of two NCOs (Finland and Sweden) recorded these occupations as being at risk. In the ESWC-data, the same occupations were highlighted as the highest risk groups in PubAd in which the PubAd-values of “elementary occupations” and “craft and related trades workers” rates even higher than total national average.

##### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, one NCO (Iceland) identified females and two NCOs (Ireland and Sweden) identified males to be most exposed to carrying or moving heavy loads in the public administration sector. Finland, Germany and Norway reported no differences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding the carrying or moving of heavy loads. The ESWC-data clearly indicates that male employees in PubAd as well as in the other sectors are most at risk to this exposure.

##### ■ Age category at risk

No firm conclusion can be drawn with respect to age. In their comments the NCOs considered younger workers (Norway and Sweden) as well as older employees (Finland, Iceland and Ireland) more likely at risk from carrying or moving heavy loads in PubAd. Further more it was reported in the German country report that there are no differences between the age categories. The ESWC-data shows that the younger workers (under 25 years old) are most exposed to carrying or moving heavy loads.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to carrying or moving heavy loads over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Decreased trend (3 NCOs): Finland, Germany and Greece
- Stable trend (2 NCOs): Netherlands and Sweden
- Increased trend (1 NCO): Iceland

The ESWC-data indicates an increase of 4% for all workers in the 15 EU states exposed to carrying or moving heavy loads at work between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey) while the respective numbers in the public administration sector decreased by 2%.

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if in PubAd preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or whether additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

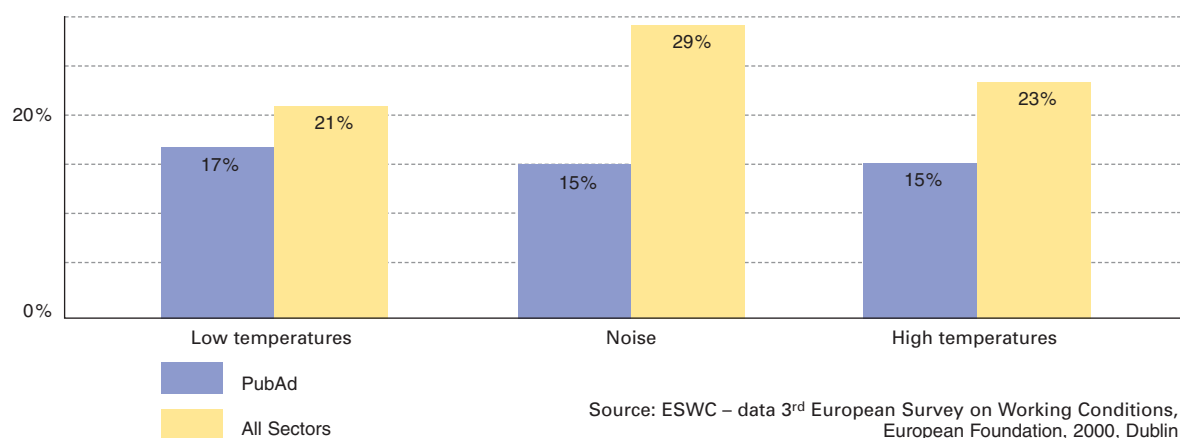
- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by five NCOs: Finland, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands and Sweden
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by three NCOs: Greece, Iceland, Norway



## 3.2 Physical exposures

### Overview

#### Overview – physical exposures



The ESWC-data pinpoints the three most important physical exposures in the public administration sector as low temperatures, noise and high temperatures. 21% of all the workers in the EU-15 Member States are exposed to low temperatures, 29% are exposed to noise and 23% are exposed to high temperatures for at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their working time. The survey clearly indicates that the respective figures for employees within the public administration sector are below average.

### 3.2.1 Low temperature

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers exposed to low temperatures whether indoors or outdoors according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	UK
Public administration	17	16	20	16	31	22	12	20	13	33	5	17	9	26	12	31
All sectors together	21	18	17	19	29	26	17	33	16	25	15	19	14	25	17	26

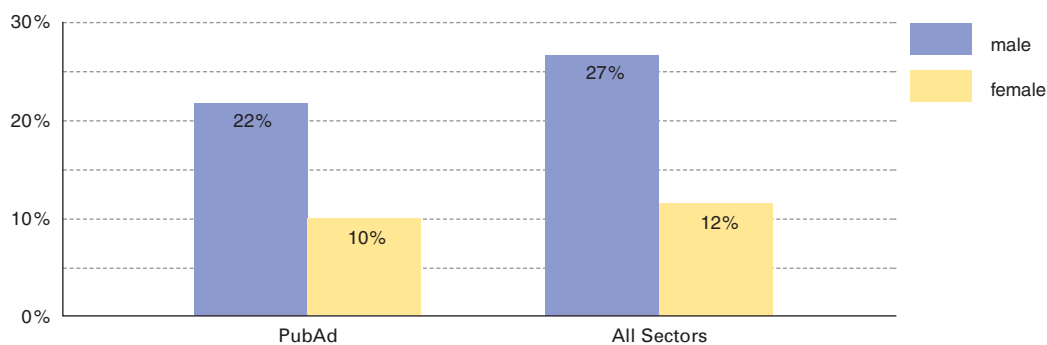
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers exposed to low temperatures whether indoors or outdoors according to occupation**

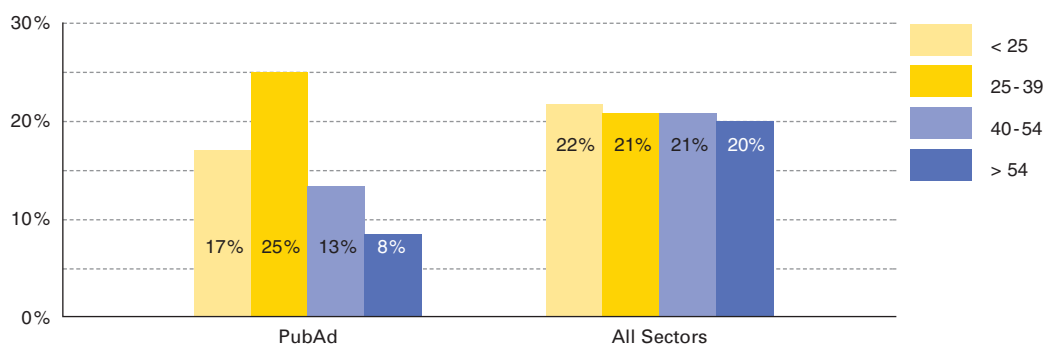
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	17	9	5	13	8	40	60	23	35	36	33
All sectors together	21	17	9	13	9	15	52	33	36	31	37

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

**Exposure to low temperatures according to gender**



**Exposure to low temperature according to age**



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 21% of all the workers and 17% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to low temperatures in their working environments for at least ¼ of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland, Ireland, Spain and UK as far above EU-average, and the PubAd rates even higher in these countries than the total national average.

From the information submitted for this project, five NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Finland, Germany, Greece, Norway and Sweden. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the trend is very clear. The percentage of workers in PubAd exposed to low temperatures whether indoors or outdoors is below average.

Exposure to low temperature conditions can originate from two principal sources. Firstly, low temperatures can be associated with a particular work process, and secondly, it can be due to local weather conditions. Some countries experience extremely cold conditions during winter months. Therefore exposure to low temperature is prevalent in these countries for outdoor work activities (forestry, farming, fishing etc.). All year round exposure to low temperature is generally associated with a particular work process such as chilling and freezing in the food industry (slaughtering, cold storage etc.).

##### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Only Finland and Sweden provided national data. Information from the Swedish report shows that the most frequently identified occupation category in PubAd considered to be at risk from low temperatures is "skilled agricultural and fishery workers" whereas the country report from Finland indicated employees in "armed forces" as most exposed to low temperatures. In the ESWC-data, the occupations highlighted as the highest risk groups in PubAd were "skilled agricultural and fishery workers", "service workers and shop and market sales workers", "elementary occupations", "plant and machine operators" and "armed forces".

##### ■ Gender at risk

In their country reports, four NCOs (Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden) identified males to be most exposed to low temperatures at work in the public administration sector. The ESWC-data confirms this indication.

##### ■ Age category at risk

Although no firm conclusions can be drawn with respect to age, comments received drew attention to the younger workers. It was reported in the country reports from Finland, Germany and Norway that the younger and middle-aged workers (under 50 years old) were frequently more exposed to low temperatures. The same conclusion can be drawn from the ESWC-data. In general: The older individual is considered to be more susceptible to the ill effects of cold conditions and therefore it is probably the younger worker most frequently exposed to the risk.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Has there been a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to low temperature over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Decreased trend (1 NCO): Germany
- Stable trend (2 NCOs): Greece and Sweden

The ESWC-data indicates a slight decrease of 1% for workers in PubAd and of 3% for all the workers exposed to low temperature working conditions between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if the preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or whether additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by three NCOs: Finland, Germany and Sweden
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by one NCO: Greece.

## 3.2.2 Noise

### A European picture

**Percentage of workers exposed to noise so loud that they have to raise their voice to hold a conversation according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	15	14	15	17	25	18	9	22	5	24	12	17	21	16	12	28
All sectors together	29	24	27	30	41	31	29	33	22	34	25	24	28	33	33	29

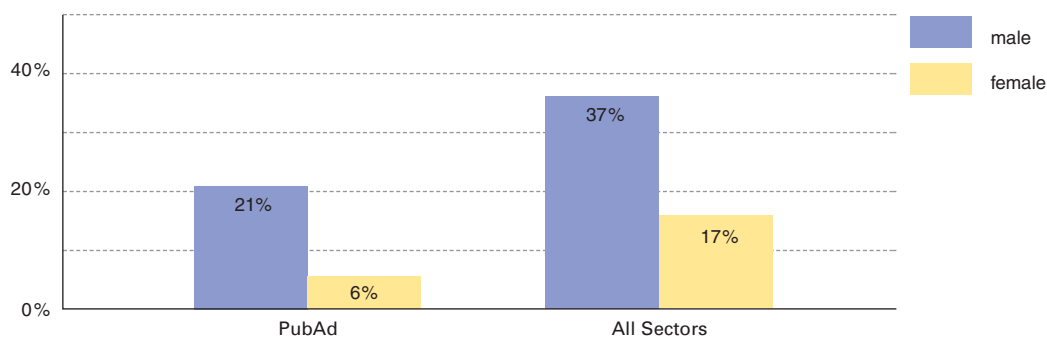
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers exposed to noise so loud that they have to raise their voice to hold a conversation according to occupation**

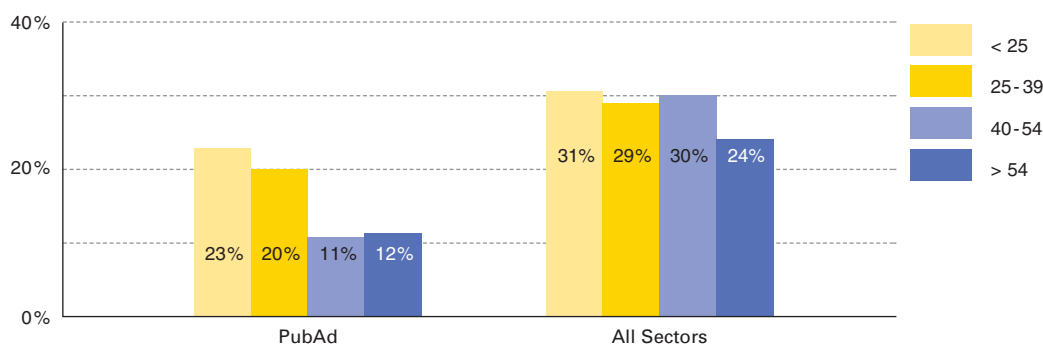
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	15	2	9	11	6	28	31	52	73	23	34
All sectors together	29	20	17	18	7	17	39	60	58	33	38

1 - Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 - Professionals  
 3 - Technicians and associate professionals    4 - Clerks  
 5 - Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 - Craft and related trades workers    8 - Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 - Elementary occupations    10 - Armed forces

### Exposure to noise according to gender



### Exposure to noise according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin



#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 29% of all the workers and 15% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to noise in their workplace for at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and UK as far above EU-average.

In total seven NCOs delivered additional quantitative data regarding exposure to noise, extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed a high correspondence. The percentage of workers in PubAd exposed to noise so loud that they have to raise their voice to hold a conversation is below average in all the countries mentioned above.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

Information from the national reports shows that the most frequently identified occupation in PubAd considered to be at risk from exposure to noise is "armed forces". A total of three NCOs (Finland, Sweden and Switzerland) recorded this occupation as being at risk. Furthermore, Sweden also indicated "craft and trades related workers" and "plant and machine operators" to be at risk from noise exposure. From the ESWC-data, the occupation categories with the highest percentage of workers reporting exposure to noise in PubAd were "plant and machine operators" and "craft and related trades workers" followed by "armed forces". The rate of "plant and machine operators" is higher than the respective average.

##### ■ Gender at risk

In their country reports, six NCOs (Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) identified males as being most at risk from noise exposure in the public administration sector. The ESWC-data clearly confirms this indication.

##### ■ Age category at risk

The younger employees were considered by the NCOs to be most vulnerable to noise exposure in the public administration sector. It was reported in the country reports from Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland that employees between the age of 25 and 55 were frequently more exposed to noise at work. The same conclusion can be drawn from the ESWC-data.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Has there been a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to noise over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Decreased trend (2 NCOs): Germany and Switzerland
- Stable trend (4 NCOs): Finland, Greece, Netherlands and Sweden

- Increased trend (1 NCO): Iceland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* The distribution in sectors and occupations is expected to change as a result of changing work patterns. Many traditionally noisy jobs in industry are being eliminated, or the noise exposure reduced, however, the need for workers to concentrate has increased.

The ESWC-data indicates a decrease of 5% for workers in PubAd exposed to noise between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey) while the overall trend slightly increased by 1%.

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if the preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or whether additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by six NCOs: Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands and Sweden
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by two NCOs: Greece and Switzerland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* The nuisance value of noise and its role in stress-related disorders needs to be more addressed than it has been.

### 3.2.3 High temperature

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers exposed to high temperatures which cause perspiration even when not working according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	15	12	17	5	26	14	14	23	21	17	7	11	8	23	11	25
All sectors together	23	20	21	16	29	25	22	36	22	19	18	18	17	27	17	25

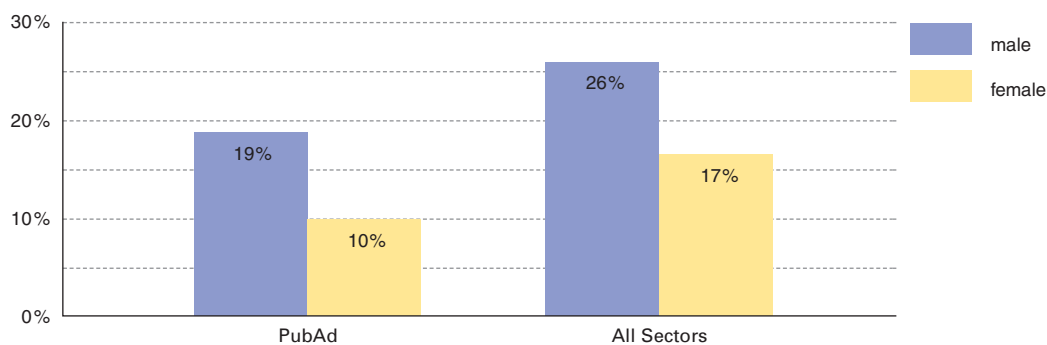
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers exposed to high temperatures which cause perspiration even when not working according to occupation**

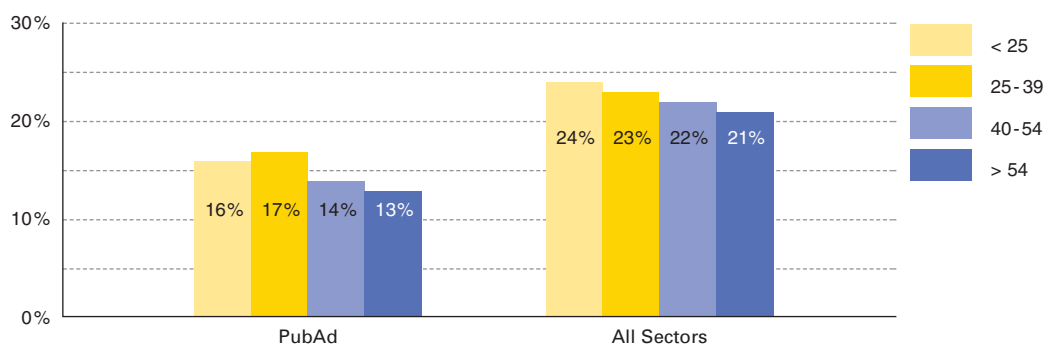
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	15	16	10	15	9	29	53	22	11	26	12
All sectors together	23	17	12	15	9	23	42	35	40	28	11

1 - Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 - Professionals  
 3 - Technicians and associate professionals    4 - Clerks  
 5 - Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 - Craft and related trades workers    8 - Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 - Elementary occupations    10 - Armed forces

#### High temperature according to gender



#### High temperature according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 23% of all the workers and 15% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to high temperature in the workplace for at least ¼ of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland, Greece, Spain and UK as far above EU-average.

From the information submitted for this project four NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Finland, Greece, Norway and Sweden. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed a clear correspondence. The percentage of workers in PubAd exposed to high temperatures which cause perspiration even when not working is below average.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information from the Swedish and Swiss reports showed that in PubAd the most frequently identified occupation category considered to be at risk from high temperatures is “plant and machine operators” whereas the country report from Finland indicated “service workers and shop and market sales workers” as well as employees in “armed forces” as most exposed to high temperatures. In the ESWC-data, the occupations highlighted as the highest risk groups in PubAd were “skilled agricultural and fishery workers”, and “service workers and shop and market sales workers”, in which the number of exposed workers in both groups are even higher than the respective average.

##### ■ Gender at risk

In their country reports, Sweden identified males to be most exposed to high temperatures at work in the public administration sector while Finland, Norway and Switzerland indicated that there were no differences between male and female workers exposed to this risk factor. The ESWC-data clearly shows that male workers were most exposed to high temperatures in the workplace whether employed in the public administration sector or not.

##### ■ Age category at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn with respect to age. It was reported in the Norwegian and Swedish country reports that there were no differences between age categories at risk whereas Finland identified workers between the age of 25 and 55 and Switzerland reported that the older workers (over 55 years old) were frequently more exposed to high temperatures in the public administration sector. From the ESWC-data it is also not possible to draw a clear conclusion.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to high temperature over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (3 NCOs): Greece, Sweden and Switzerland

The ESWC-data indicates a slight increase of 1% for workers in PubAd and of 3% for all the workers exposed to high temperature working conditions between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or whether additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

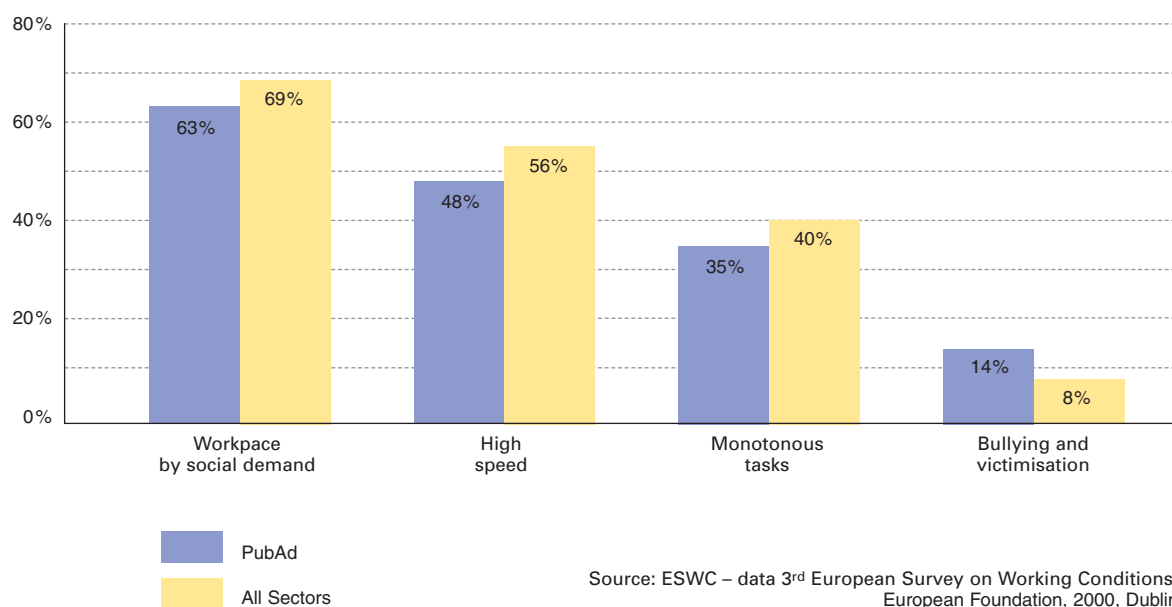
- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by two NCOs: Sweden and Switzerland.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by two NCOs: Finland and Greece.



### 3.3 Psycho-social working conditions

#### Overview

#### Overview – psycho-social working conditions



The ESWC-data pinpoints the four most important psycho-social working conditions in the public administration sector as pace of work dictated by social demand, high speed work, monotonous tasks and bullying and victimisation at work. 69% of all the workers in the EU-15 Member States are exposed to a pace of work that is dictated by social demand, 56% reported exposure to high speed work, 40% of all the workers' jobs involve monotonous tasks and 8% reported exposure to bullying and victimisation in the workplace. The trend in the public administration sector is the same, with the exception of bullying and victimisation: The respective figures for employees within the public administration sector are below average.

### 3.3.1 Pace of work dictated by social demands

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose pace of work is dependent on direct demands from people such as customers etc. according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	63	52	76	65	72	58	53	64	58	67	77	49	48	43	80	82
All sectors together	69	70	70	69	75	71	62	71	67	68	69	64	57	65	76	78

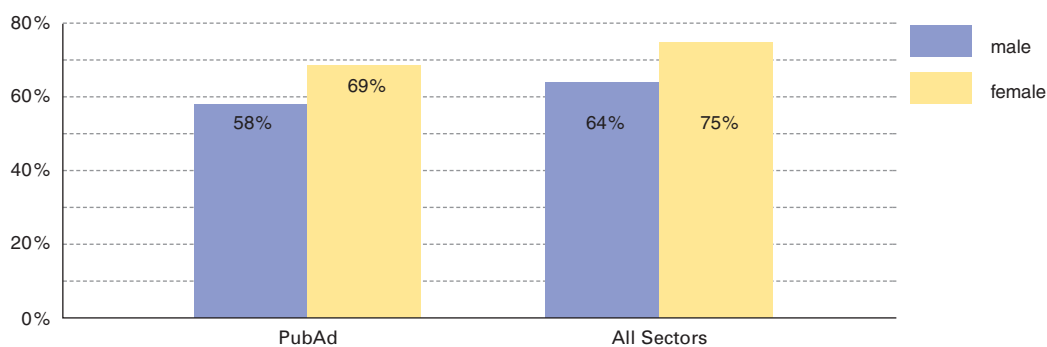
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose pace of work is dependent on direct demands from people such as customers etc. according to occupation**

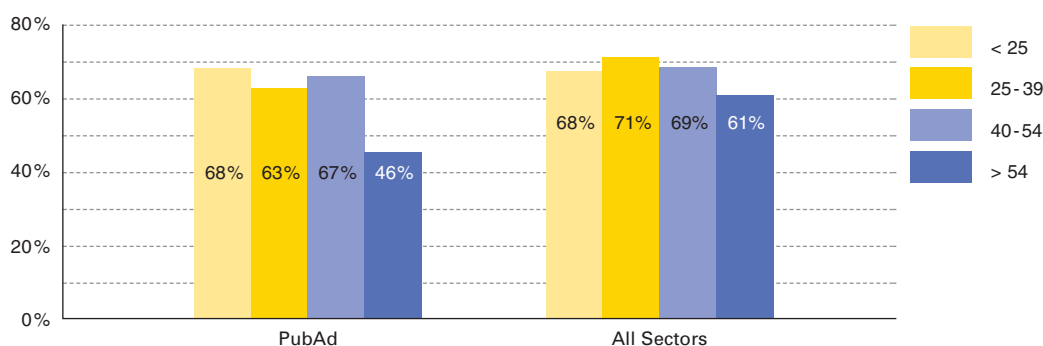
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	63	86	65	61	69	71	88	43	71	33	42
All sectors together	69	83	80	76	75	86	38	57	50	45	52

1 - Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 - Professionals  
 3 - Technicians and associate professionals    4 - Clerks  
 5 - Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 - Craft and related trades workers    8 - Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 - Elementary occupations    10 - Armed forces

#### Pace of work dictated by social demands according to gender



#### Pace of work dictated by social demands according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 69% of all the workers and 63% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to a pace of work that was dictated by social demand. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Belgium, Italy, Sweden and UK as being far above EU-average, in which the PubAd-values of all these countries even are higher than the respective national average.

From the information submitted for this project six NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Norway and Sweden. The questions posed in most of the national surveys in the countries mentioned above do not correspond exactly to the ESWC question though. The ESWC question asks about time constraints at work and specifies the causes (social demands and speed dictated by machines). However in the individual countries the constraints are often not specified by their cause. In the Norwegian Survey on Living Conditions, for instance, the question is related to the possibilities for variation in work (when and how). The questions asked in the survey of the National Institute of Occupational Health in Denmark, in the Finnish Work and Health Survey or in the Swedish Work Environment Statistics relate to the employees own influence on pace of work – if and how they can decide to do their job.

Taking these reservations into account the comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that there were slight differences between national and European sources. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose pace of work is dependent on direct demands from people such as customers or whose pace or amount of work cannot be decided is almost average.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

Information from the national reports shows that the most frequently identified occupations in PubAd considered to be at risk from pace of work dictated by social demands are “clerks”, “service workers”, “technicians” and “professionals”. A total of three NCOs (Finland, Sweden and Switzerland) recorded these occupations as being at risk. From the ESWC-data, “skilled agriculture and fishery workers”, “legislators, senior officials and managers”, “plant and machine operators”, “service workers” and “clerks” are the occupation categories with the highest percentage of workers reporting exposure to pace of work dictated by social demands in PubAd.

##### ■ Gender at risk

In their country reports, six NCOs (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) identified females to be most exposed to pace of work dictated by social demands in the public administration sector. The ESWC-data confirms this indication.

##### ■ Age category at risk

No firm conclusions can be drawn with respect to age. It was reported in the country reports from Germany, Norway and Sweden that the younger and middle-aged workers (under 50 years old) were frequently more exposed to pace of work dictated by social demands whereas Finland identified the older workers (over 55 years old) as the most exposed age category. There can be no proper conclusion drawn from the ESWC-data either.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Has there been a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to pace of work dictated by social demand over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (1 NCO): Greece
- Increased trend (4 NCOs): Finland, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland

The ESWC-data indicates a decrease of 5% for workers in PubAd whereas the over all trend increased by 2% between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAD are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Development of additional preventive action was indicated by six NCOs: Finland, Germany, Greece, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* There is a need for redistributing tasks and suitable solutions in work organisation.

### 3.3.2 Working at very high speed

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose job involves working at very high speed according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	48	55	45	62	61	28	53	64	74	47	49	35	53	35	81	53
All sectors together	56	63	52	59	75	54	59	67	75	48	58	53	50	46	80	48

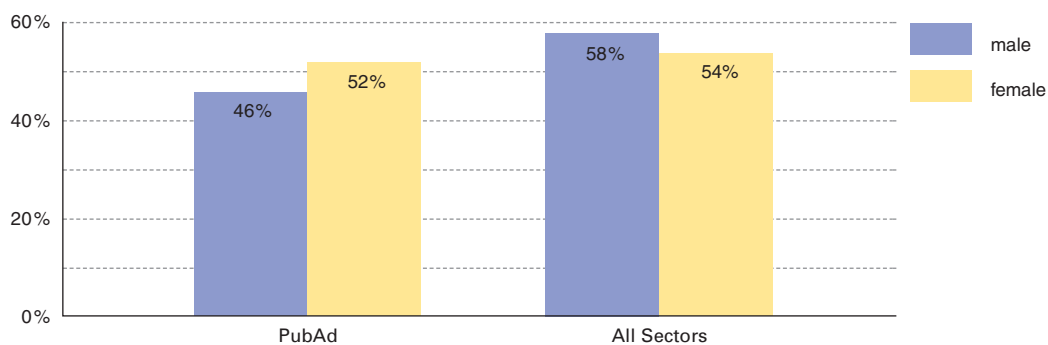
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose job involves working at very high speed according to occupation**

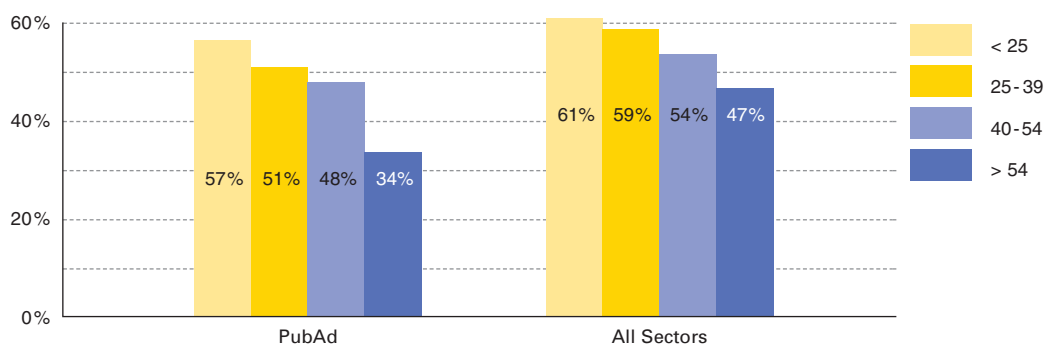
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	48	64	46	64	45	52	21	45	37	27	50
All sectors together	56	52	50	57	54	54	60	63	61	54	56

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

**Working at very high speed according to gender**



**Working at very high speed according to age**



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin



#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 56% of all the workers and 48% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to working at high speed for at least ¼ of their working time. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Denmark, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands and Sweden as being far above EU-average, in which the PubAd-values of Denmark and Sweden (also Portugal and UK) even are higher than the respective national average.

From the information submitted for this project nine NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The questions posed in several of the national surveys in the above-mentioned countries do not correspond exactly to the ESWC question though. Often the questions asked in the national surveys or statistics are related to time pressure, working pressure, stressful work etc. which is close to the concept of high speed work. In the Norwegian Survey on Living Conditions, for instance, the question is related to the time to do the work properly. The question asked in the survey of the National Institute of Occupational Health in Denmark relates to the high quantitative demands and in the Swedish Work Environment Statistics the question relates to employees with such stressful work that they cannot talk or think about anything else.

In spite of these reservations the comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that there were very few differences. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose job involves working at very high speed is slightly below average, with the exception of the Netherlands and Norway. National surveys of the Netherlands and Norway pointed out that PubAd-employees are exposed to high speed work at a higher level than their respective national average.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

Information from the national reports shows that the most frequently identified occupations in PubAd considered to be at risk from high speed work are "legislators, senior officials and managers", "professionals", "technicians" and "clerks". A total of three NCOs (Finland, Sweden and Switzerland) recorded these occupations as being at risk. From the ESWC-data, this indication is more or less confirmed.

##### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, two NCOs (Denmark and Finland) identified females and one NCO (Germany) identified males to be most exposed to high speed work in the pub-

lic administration sector. Norway, Sweden and Switzerland reported that there are no differences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding this risky working condition. The ESWC-data identified female employees in PubAd as the group with the highest percentage of workers exposed to high speed work.

##### ■ Age category at risk

Neither can any firm conclusions be drawn with respect to age. It was reported in the country reports from Iceland, Norway and Switzerland that the younger and middle-aged workers (under 50 years old) were frequently more exposed to high speed work, whereas Finland identified the older workers (over 55 years old) as the most exposed age category. Germany, Ireland and Sweden indicated that there appear to be no differences between the age categories. The ESWC-picture clearly shows that the younger working generation is most at risk to the listed exposure indicator.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to high speed work over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (2 NCOs): Netherlands and Switzerland
- Increased trend (4 NCOs): Finland, Germany, Greece and Sweden

*Comment derived from the country reports:* A decrease in the amount of high speed work in the manufacturing sector has been offset by an increase in the financial sector. The ESWC-data indicates an increase by 4% for workers in PubAd and the over all trend increased by 2% between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by one NCO: Netherlands.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by six NCOs: Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* Administrations need to be encouraged to redistribute tasks so that long periods of high speed work are not required. Investigation of solutions in work organisation should also be encouraged.

### 3.3.3 Monotonous tasks

#### A European picture

*Percentage of workers whose job involves monotonous tasks according to country*

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	35	32	21	32	55	38	21	50	10	48	31	35	39	65	19	55
All sectors together	40	26	31	37	49	41	26	57	27	53	35	29	43	60	26	57

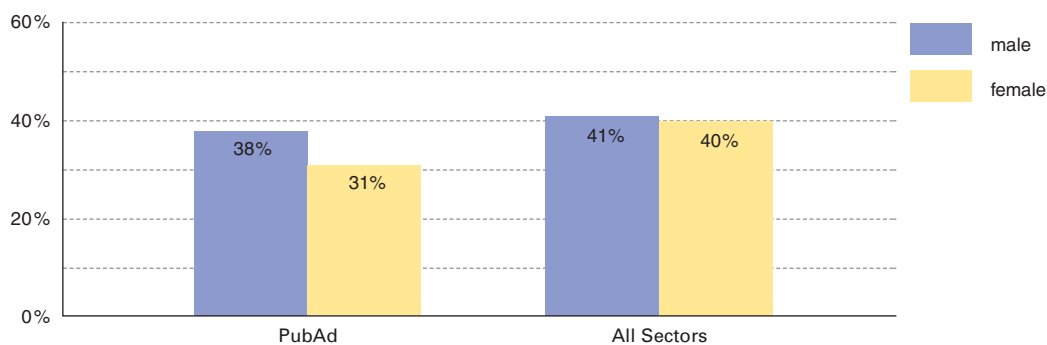
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

*Percentage of workers whose job involves monotonous tasks according to occupation*

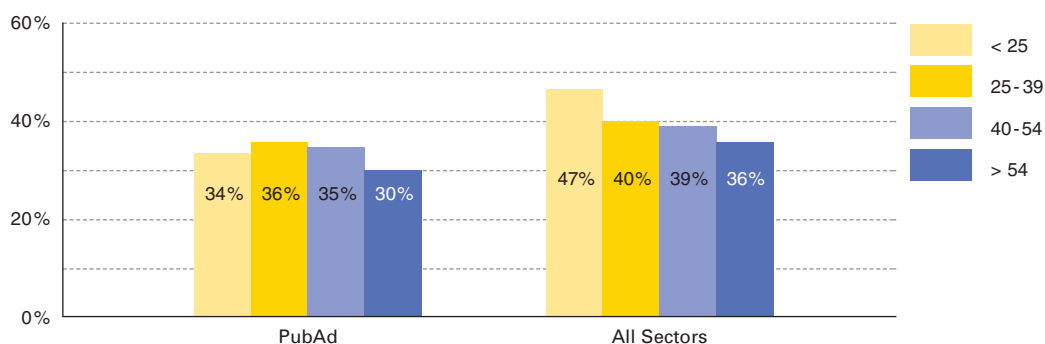
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	35	17	24	27	39	40	13	45	25	51	47
All sectors together	40	37	25	28	43	39	46	44	56	56	39

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

#### *Monotonous tasks according to gender*



#### *Monotonous tasks according to age*



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 40% of all the workers and 35% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to monotonous work in the workplace. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland, Greece, Spain and UK as far above EU-average, whereas in Finland and Spain the PubAd rates even higher than the total national average.

A total of five NCOs presented additional quantitative data extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the picture is quite similar. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose job involves monotonous tasks is below average.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information was only presented from Switzerland. It showed that the most frequently identified occupation categories in PubAd considered to be at risk from monotonous tasks are “clerks” and “elementary occupations”. In the ESWC-data, the occupations “elementary occupations” and “armed forces” were highlighted as the highest risk groups in PubAd.

##### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, two NCOs (Germany and Switzerland) identified females to be most exposed in the public administration sector to monotonous tasks. Norway reported that there are no differences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding this exposure indicator. The ESWC-data identified male employees in PubAd as the group with the highest percentage of workers exposed to monotonous tasks.

##### ■ Age category at risk

Neither can any firm conclusions can be drawn with respect to age. It was reported in the country reports from Germany and Norway that the younger workers (under 25 years old) were frequently more exposed to monotonous work whereas Switzerland stated that there seems to be no differences between the age categories. There is no proper conclusion to be drawn from the ESWC-data either.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to monotonous work over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (3 NCOs): Germany, Greece and Switzerland

The ESWC-data indicates a decrease of 3% for workers in PubAd and the over all trend decreased by 5% between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by one NCO: Norway.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by two NCOs: Greece and Switzerland.

### 3.3.4 Bullying and victimisation

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers that, over the last 12 months, when at work, have been subjected to intimidation according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	14	7	20	6	18	16	15	11	17	15	3	3	3	13	28	25
All sectors together	8	6	11	8	15	10	7	5	14	10	4	7	4	5	12	14

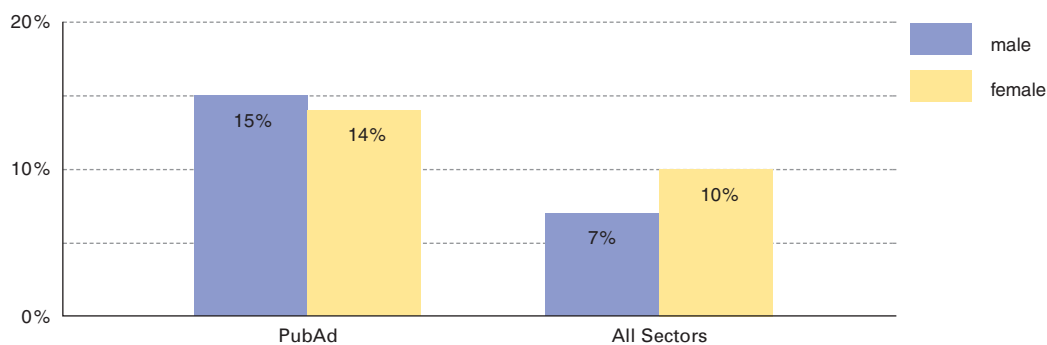
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers that, over the last 12 months, when at work, have been subjected to intimidation according to occupation**

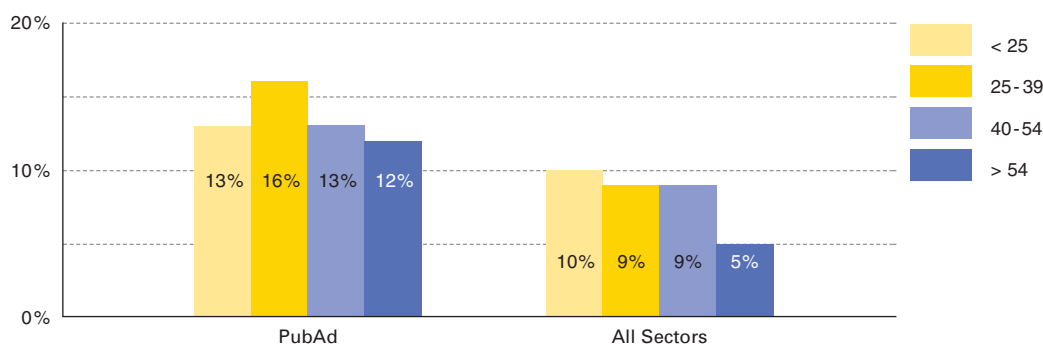
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	14	17	12	19	10	38	7	13	2	11	4
All sectors together	8	11	9	10	8	13	2	5	7	9	3

1 - Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 - Professionals  
 3 - Technicians and associate professionals    4 - Clerks  
 5 - Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 - Craft and related trades workers    8 - Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 - Elementary occupations    10 - Armed forces

#### Bullying and victimisation according to gender



#### Bullying and victimisation according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

#### Comparison between European and national information

##### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 8% of all the workers and 14% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed reported exposure to bullying and victimisation in the workplace over the last 12 months. Among all the sectors the public administration sector is most at risk from bullying and victimisation. The information from the European survey highlights Belgium, Sweden and UK as far above EU-average within the public administration sector.

From the information submitted for this project only two NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Greece and Norway. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that there were differences between national and European data sources. The percentage of workers that, over the last 12 months, when at work, have been subjected to intimidation in PubAd is below average in each of the countries mentioned above.

##### ■ Occupations at risk

It was not possible to draw any firm conclusion from the national reports with respect to occupation. Information from Switzerland stated that the occupations in PubAd considered to be at risk from bullying and victimisation are “clerks” and “professionals”. According to the ESWC-data the occupation categories “service workers” and “technicians and associate professionals” are the groups with the highest percentage of workers exposed to bullying and victimisation in PubAd.

##### ■ Gender at risk

Neither can any firm conclusions be drawn with respect to gender. Two NCOs (Norway and Switzerland) reported that there were no differences between male and female employees in PubAd exposed to the listed exposure. The ESWC-data confirms this expert opinion.

##### ■ Age category at risk

A similar unclear picture is given concerning the question which age group is most at risk from bullying and victimisation. It was reported in the country reports from Norway and Switzerland that there were no differences. The ESWC-data shows that the younger workers (under 40 years) seem to be most at risk to the listed exposure indicator.

##### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd exposed to bullying and victimisation over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Decreased trend (1 NCO): Greece
- Increased trend (2 NCOs): Netherlands and Switzerland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* There is an increase in attention currently focused on this issue but long term data are not available to establish whether a trend actually exists.

The ESWC-data indicates a slight increase of 1% for workers in PubAd and the overall trend remained stable between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

##### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by three NCOs: Greece, Netherlands and Switzerland.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* Little attention has been focused on this issue up to now. Only few studies are underway to better evaluate the incidence and distribution. There is a need for research and development of preventive measures.

## 4. Occupational health results in the public administration sector

This chapter looks at the consequences and results of the effects of occupational hazards in PubAd workplaces. Just as previous it contains quantitative and qualitative information from the participating European countries and it must once again be emphasised that the method by which each NCO derived responses to particular questions was different. In many cases statistical data was not available and the information provided by individual NCOs merely represents their expert opinion after relevant consultation with identified experts.

Information about the following occupational health outcomes will be presented:

- Work-related disorders
- Work satisfaction
- Occupational sickness absence

For each of the above occupational health related issues, the NCOs were asked to provide information for PubAd in their countries, to compare the results with the general situation and to identify trends within each of the following risk categories:

- Occupations
- Gender
- Age

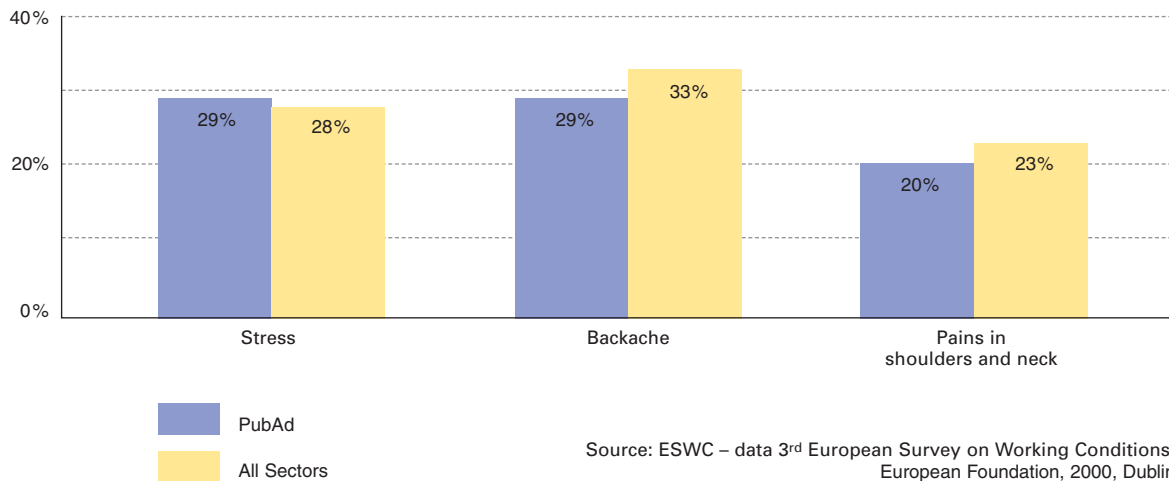
The information presented in the following sections of this chapter is in the same way as before and consists of:

- Tables providing a synopsis of relevant data from the 3rd European Survey on Working Conditions (ESWC-data) which is used to draw a European picture
- Comparison between European and national information

## 4.1 Work-related disorders

### Overview

#### Overview – work-related disorders



The ESWC-data pinpoints the three most important work-related disorders in the public administration sector as stress, backache and muscular pains in shoulders and neck. 28% of all the workers in the EU-15 Member States interviewed in the survey reported experiencing stress, 33% is suffering backache and 23% of all the workers complains about muscular pains in shoulders and neck whilst at work. The survey indicates that the respective figures for employees within the public administration sector are, with the exception of stress, slightly below average.

## 4.1.1 Stress

### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose job causes stress problems according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	29	21	38	24	46	26	19	58	32	15	40	21	30	29	45	67
All sectors together	28	19	30	26	35	33	25	53	25	12	33	38	18	29	37	23

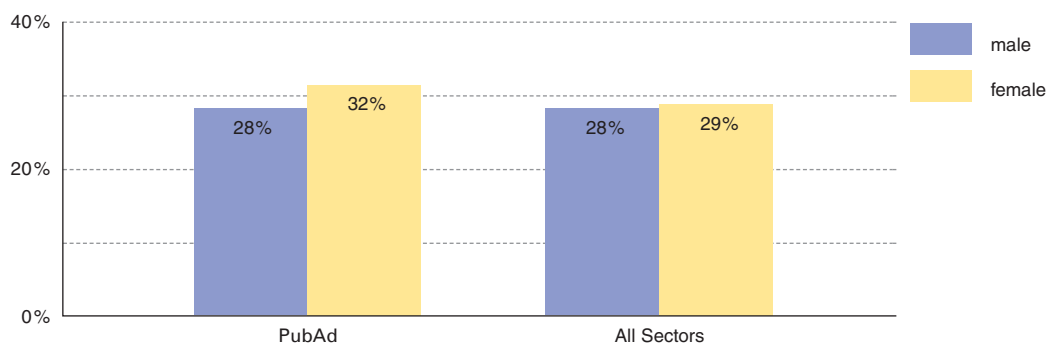
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose job causes stress problems according to occupation**

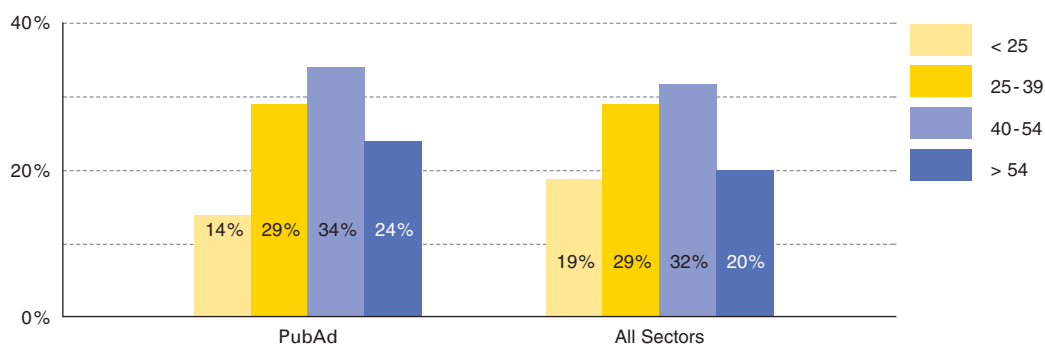
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	28	39	35	37	25	45	20	18	24	14	21
All sectors together	29	32	40	35	25	27	18	23	29	17	17

1 - Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 - Professionals  
 3 - Technicians and associate professionals    4 - Clerks  
 5 - Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 - Craft and related trades workers    8 - Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 - Elementary occupations    10 - Armed forces

### Stress according to gender



### Stress according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin



### Comparison between European and national information

#### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 28% of all the workers and 29% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed in the survey reported experiencing stress at work. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Finland, Greece, Italy, Sweden and UK as being far above EU-average.

From the information submitted for this project six NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Germany, Greece, Iceland, Netherlands, Sweden and UK. The questions posed in the national surveys of the above-mentioned countries sometimes do not correspond exactly to the ESWC question though. The question asked in the Icelandic survey, for instance, is related to mental exhaustion after shift, and the Arbomonitor survey in the Netherlands relates to psychological strain. However, in a broad sense the findings obtained are roughly the same as in the European picture.

The percentage of workers in PubAd whose work causes stress problems is well above average in all the countries providing national data.

#### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information was only submitted from Sweden. It showed that the most frequently identified occupation categories in PubAd considered to be at risk to stress in the workplace are "professionals", "legislators, senior officials and managers", "service workers" and "clerks". From the European picture, the ESWC-data highlights the occupations "service workers", "legislators, senior officials and managers" and "professionals" as being most at risk to stress at work in PubAd.

#### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, most of the NCOs reported that there are no differences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding stress related problems at work. Only Sweden indicated females to be most at risk from stress in the public administration sector. The ESWC-data identified female employees in PubAd as the group with the highest percentage of workers reporting stress at work.

#### ■ Age category at risk

Neither can any firm conclusions be drawn with respect to age. It was commented in the country reports from Iceland that stress frequently affects the younger and middle-aged workers (under 50 years old). The ESWC-picture clearly shows that the working generation in the age of 25-54 is most at risk to the listed exposure indicator.

#### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd suffering stress over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (1 NCO): Greece
  - Increased trend (3 NCOs): Germany, Sweden and UK
- The ESWC-data indicates that both, the trend for workers in PubAd and the over all trend as well, remained stable between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

#### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by one NCO: United Kingdom.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by three NCOs: Germany, Greece and Sweden.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* With regard to the increase of stress related problems at work you find an alarming development. One has to put special efforts on work organisation and public leadership and management.

## 4.1.2 Backache

### A European picture

#### Percentage of workers whose job causes backache according to country

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	29	38	26	24	28	34	31	21	16	8	23	17	27	42	26	24
All sectors together	33	29	27	30	38	40	34	43	26	11	36	34	34	43	35	23

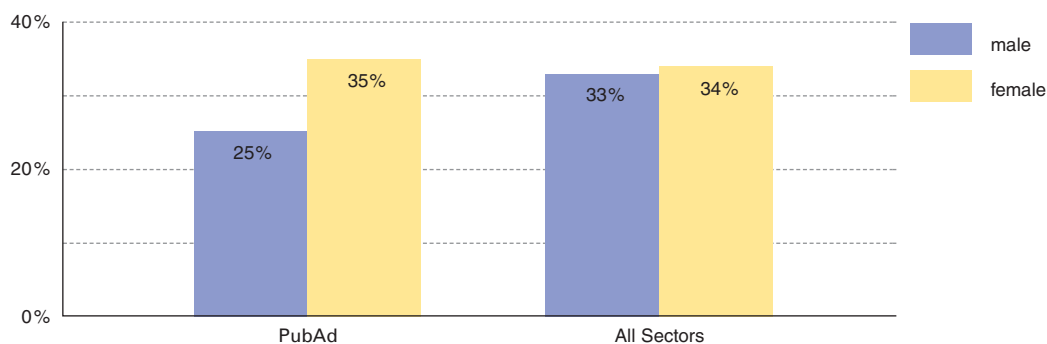
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

#### Percentage of workers whose job causes backache according to occupation

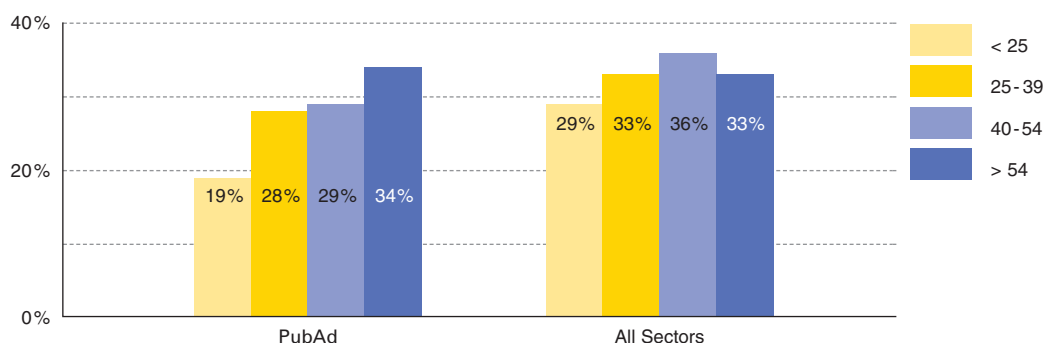
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	29	28	25	20	27	31	53	35	38	49	25
All sectors together	33	22	23	31	23	31	57	45	44	40	20

1 - Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 - Professionals  
 3 - Technicians and associate professionals    4 - Clerks  
 5 - Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 - Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 - Craft and related trades workers    8 - Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 - Elementary occupations    10 - Armed forces

#### Backache according to gender



#### Backache according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

### Comparison between European and national information

#### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 33% of all the workers and 29% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed in the survey reported experiencing backache whilst at work. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Austria, France and Spain as being far above EU-average.

From the information submitted for this project four NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Germany, Greece, Sweden and UK. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the picture is, with the exception of UK, quite similar. The percentage of workers in PubAd whose job causes backache is usually below average. UK stated that the figures for spine/back related disorders are significantly higher in the public administration sector.

#### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information was only submitted from Sweden and Switzerland. It showed that the most frequently identified occupation categories in PubAd considered to be at risk to backache in the workplace are “skilled agriculture and fishery workers”, “elementary occupations” (2x), “service workers” and “craft and related trades workers”. From the European picture, the Swedish and Swiss results could be confirmed by the ESWC-data.

#### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, most of the NCOs reported that there are no differences between male and female employees in PubAd regarding backache at work. The ESWC-data identified female employees in PubAd as the group with the highest percentage of workers reporting backache in the workplace.

#### ■ Age category at risk

Neither can any firm conclusions be drawn with respect to age. It was commented in the country report from Switzerland that backache frequently affects the middle-aged workers (25-54 years old) and in the country report from Germany backache at work seems to raise with age. The ESWC-picture clearly shows that backache is raising with age thus the older working generation (more than 55 years old) is most at risk to the listed exposure indicator.

#### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: “Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd experiencing backache over the last 10 years?”

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (1 NCO): Greece
- Increased trend (4 NCOs): Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and UK

The ESWC-data indicates an increase by 4% for workers in PubAd and the over all trend increased by 3% between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

#### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by two NCOs: Sweden and UK.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by three NCOs: Germany, Greece and Switzerland.

### 4.1.3 Muscular pains in shoulders and neck

#### A European picture

**Percentage of workers whose job causes muscular pains in shoulders and neck according to country**

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	20	19	19	31	59	19	19	17	20	3	17	11	17	27	46	19
All sectors together	23	17	17	33	54	25	21	29	23	8	20	13	21	31	41	17

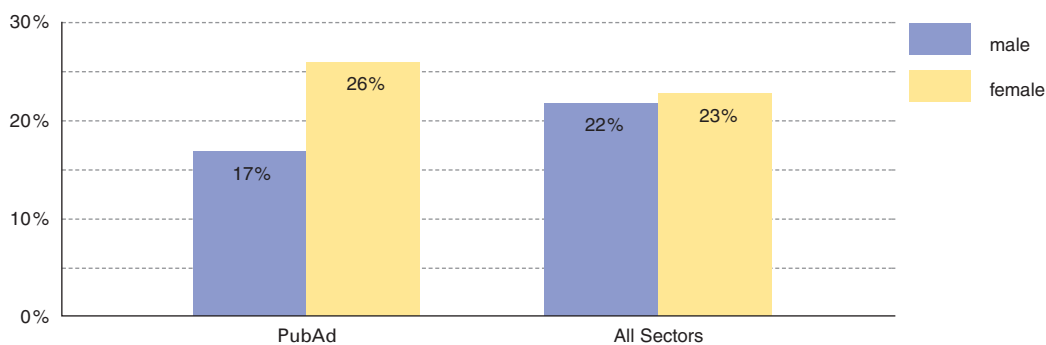
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers whose job causes muscular pains in shoulders and neck according to occupation**

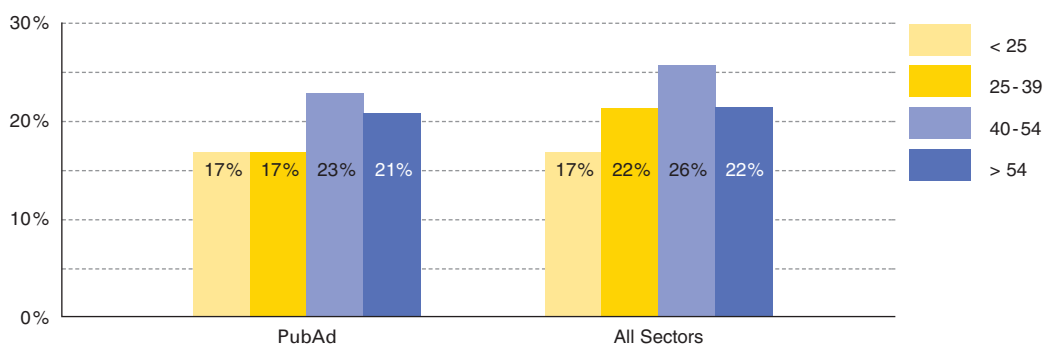
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	20	19	8	21	20	22	5	26	35	41	19
All sectors together	23	15	16	22	18	20	35	30	29	28	15

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

#### Muscular pains in shoulders and neck according to gender



#### Muscular pains in shoulders and neck according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

### Comparison between European and national information

#### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 23% of all the workers and 20% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed in the survey reported experiencing muscular pains in shoulders and neck whilst at work. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Denmark, Finland and Sweden as being far above EU-average.

From the information submitted for this project four NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this exposure category extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Germany, Greece, Sweden and UK. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the picture is different. On the one handside Germany and UK indicated that the percentage of workers in PubAd whose job causes backache is significantly higher in the public administration sector. On the other handside Greece and Sweden stated that the figures for neck/shoulder related disorders are like or below their total national average.

#### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information was only submitted from Sweden and Switzerland. It showed that the most frequently identified occupation categories in PubAd considered to be at risk from pains in shoulders and neck in the workplace are, "elementary occupations" (2x), "skilled agriculture and fishery workers" and "clerks". From the European picture, the ESWC-data highlights the occupations "elementary occupations" and "plant and machine operators" as being most at risk to shoulder and neck disorders at work in PubAd.

#### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, most of the NCOs identified females and one NCO (UK) identified males to be most at risk from shoulder and neck problems at work in the public administration sector. Denmark reported that according to the national survey many female clerks in PubAd have problems with their neck. The ESWC-data also identified female employees in PubAd as the group with the highest percentage of workers reporting pains in shoulders and neck in the workplace.

#### ■ Age category at risk

Although no firm conclusions can be drawn with respect to age, comments received drew attention to the middle-aged and older workers. It was reported in the German, Swedish and Swiss country reports that the older workers

(over 25 years old) were frequently more exposed to shoulder and neck disorders. The same conclusion can be drawn from the ESWC-data.

#### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd suffering muscular pains in shoulders and neck over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Decreased trend (1 NCO): United Kingdom
- Stable trend (1 NCO): Greece
- Increased trend (3 NCOs): Germany, Sweden and Switzerland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* As in all industrialised countries the work population is ageing (as shown above particularly in PubAd) therefore work related disorders are increasing. Musculoskeletal disorders in the workplace increased due to large uptake of computers and is moving towards service sectors.

There is no trend indication available from the ESWC-data.

#### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by two NCOs: Sweden and UK.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by three NCOs: Germany, Greece and Switzerland.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* For the time being there is a lot of attention to work related disorders, particularly to musculoskeletal and mental disorders. Nevertheless it is important in order to develop appropriate strategies and preventive measures to record and analyze through statistical tools the extent of the problem. In many countries there is a significant lack of data, particularly regarding the public administration sector.

## 4.2 Work satisfaction

### A European picture

*Percentage of workers who are satisfied with the working conditions in their job according to country*

Sector	EU-15	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration	86	82	83	96	92	87	93	75	90	89	82	88	81	79	86	81
All sectors together	84	85	88	95	92	81	87	65	87	92	78	87	80	76	85	90

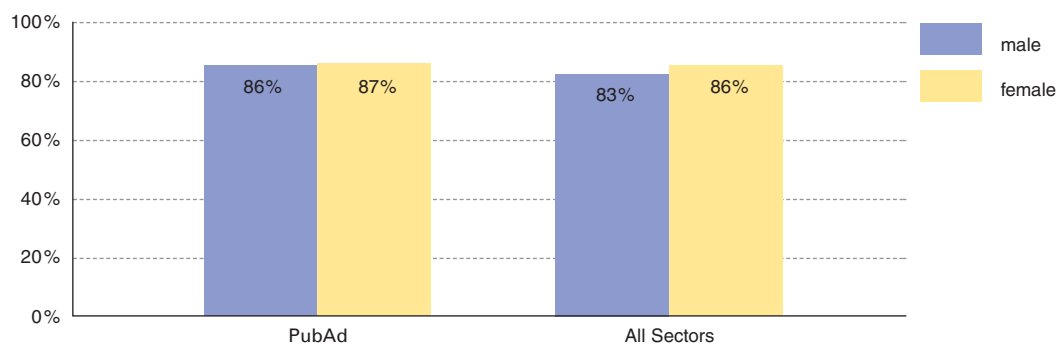
A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

*Percentage of workers who are satisfied with the working conditions in their job according to occupation*

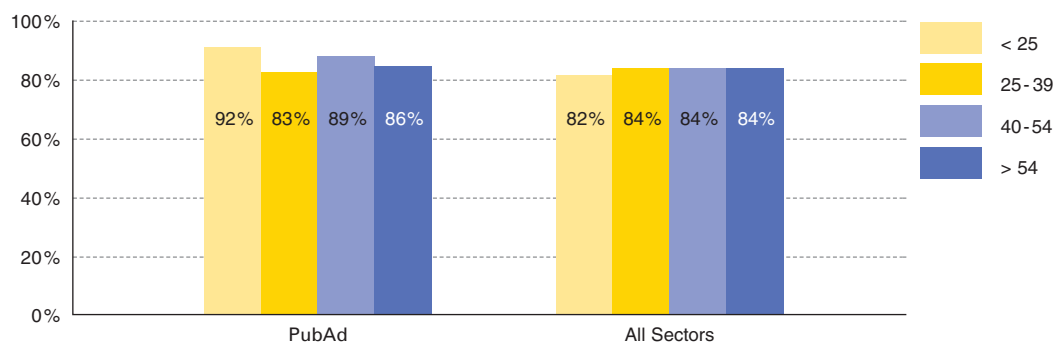
Sector	EU-15	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration	86	87	86	85	88	88	93	88	66	83	81
All sectors together	84	92	90	89	87	84	75	79	76	76	84

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

### Work satisfaction according to gender



### Work satisfaction according to age



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

### Comparison between European and national information

#### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data shows that 84% of all the workers and 86% of the employees in the public administration sector interviewed in the survey expressed a very high or a fair degree of satisfaction with the working conditions in their job. Regarding the public administration sector the information highlights Greece and Spain employees as being the most dissatisfied.

From the information submitted for this project eight NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this health outcome indicator extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Germany, Finland, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and UK. The comparison of ESWC-data and national data showed that the picture is quite similar. The percentage of workers in PubAd who are very or fairly satisfied with their working conditions is usually like or above average. Germany stated that satisfaction with prospect of professional promotion and working atmosphere has a particular low level in PubAd compared to the other sectors. On the other hand the Netherlands commented that public servants are particularly satisfied with secondary working conditions and salary.

#### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information was only submitted from Finland, Sweden and Switzerland. It showed that the most frequently identified occupation categories in PubAd considered to be at particular low level of work satisfaction are "plant and machine operators", "elementary occupations" and "clerks". From the European picture, the ESWC-data highlights the occupations "plant and machine operators", "armed forces" and "elementary occupations" as being most dissatisfied at work in PubAd.

#### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, two NCOs (Sweden and Switzerland) identified females and one NCO (UK) identified males who have a particular low level of satisfaction with their working conditions in the public administration sector. Germany, Iceland and Norway reported that there are no differences in gender. From the European picture, the ESWC-data confirms the latter indication.

#### ■ Age category at risk

It was commented in the country reports from Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Iceland and Norway that older workers in PubAd seem to be more satisfied with their

working conditions while Switzerland identified the older working population as being more dissatisfied. According to the ESWC-data no firm conclusions can be drawn with respect to age.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* Younger employees in the private sector are more satisfied than their colleagues in the public administration sector. Usually employees who are older or/and well educated are more satisfied with their jobs.

#### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Is there a significant trend regarding the number of workers in PubAd with low level of work satisfaction over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (2 NCOs): Finland and Norway
- Increased trend (2 NCOs): Germany and Sweden

*Comment derived from the country reports:* During the 90ies there has been a remarkable reduction of manpower in the public administration sector. One of the most significant changes has been the growth of insecurity in this sector, which before was considered as predictable and stable.

The ESWC-data indicates an increase by 3% for workers in PubAd who are dissatisfied with their working conditions while the over all trend remained stable between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

#### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

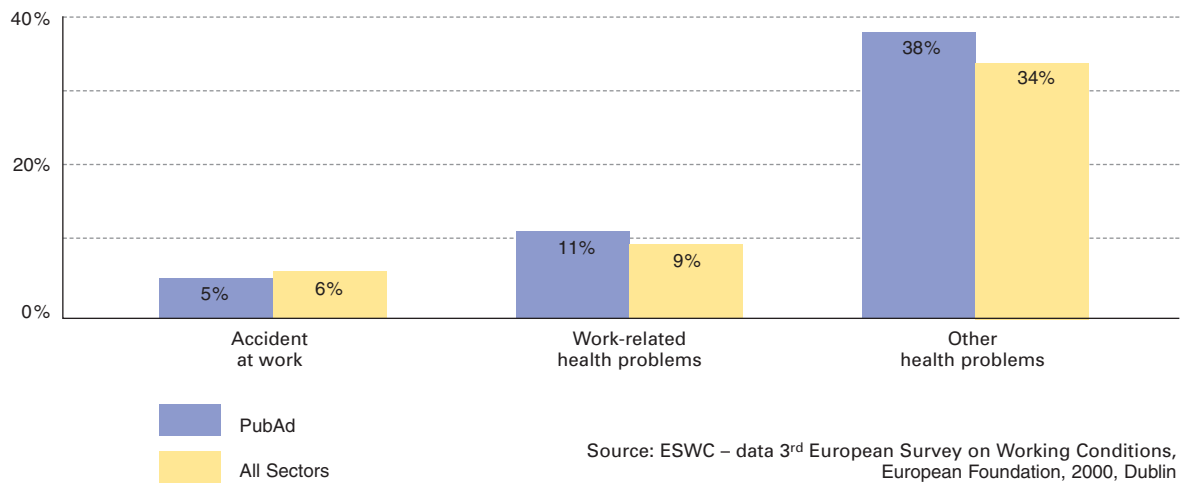
- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by one NCO: Finland.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by two NCOs: Germany and Sweden.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* The number of the employees who were *very satisfied* with their work, has increased in general. Employees working in financial institutions and public administrations are on the top of this list.

### 4.3 Occupational sickness absence

#### Overview

#### Overview – occupational sickness absence



The issue regarding absenteeism in the 3<sup>rd</sup> European survey is split into three questions: Absences due to an occupational accident, absences due to health problems caused by work and absences due to other health problems. The ESWC-data points out that 6% of all the workers in the EU-15 Member States reported absences due to an accident, 9% due to occupational health problems and over 1/3 reported absences due to other health problems. The trend in the public administration sector is the same, with the exception of accidents: The respective figures for employees within the public administration sector are above average.



## 4. Occupational health results in the public administration sector

### A European picture

**Percentage of workers who, over the past 12 months, were absent due to illness according to country**

Sector	EU	Country														
		A	B	DK	FIN	F	D	EL	NL	IRL	I	L	P	E	S	U
Public administration																
– Due to accident at work	5	4	7	1	10	2	7	1	8	4	3	4	1	7	–	8
– Due to work-related health problems	11	6	11	4	16	9	12	7	19	2	6	9	4	16	7	16
– Due to other health problems	38	46	34	61	44	25	43	23	51	37	53	30	30	27	52	27
All sectors together																
– Due to accident at work	6	6	7	7	9	6	9	2	5	4	4	7	4	6	5	5
– Due to work-related health problems	9	13	9	9	18	8	11	5	17	5	7	12	4	8	13	8
– Due to other health problems	35	35	32	53	48	22	40	19	43	33	41	33	21	20	49	32

A - Austria    B - Belgium    DK - Denmark    FIN - Finland    F - France    D - Germany  
 EL - Greece    NL - Netherlands    IRL - Ireland    I - Italy    L - Luxembourg    P - Portugal  
 E - Spain    S - Sweden    UK - United Kingdom

**Percentage of workers who, over the past 12 months, were absent due to illness according to occupation**

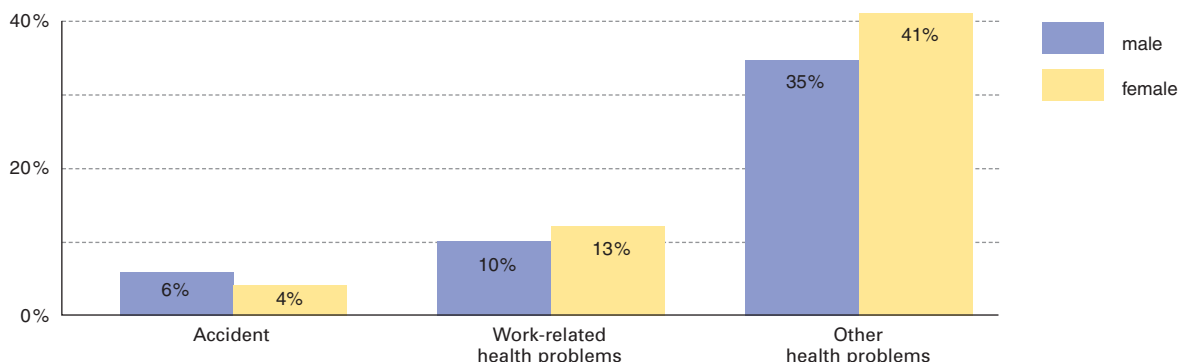
Sector	EU	Occupation									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public administration											
– Due to accident at work	5	7	2	5	2	19	1	8	7	5	7
– Due to work-related health problems	11	21	5	14	10	17	1	10	6	16	8
– Due to other health problems	38	27	46	36	38	36	33	27	75	38	26
All sectors together											
– Due to accident at work	6	3	3	3	3	7	8	11	10	7	6
– Due to work-related health problems	9	6	8	10	6	9	10	11	11	11	7
– Due to other health problems	35	25	36	37	37	32	20	35	35	32	22

1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers    2 – Professionals  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals    4 – Clerks  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers    6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers    8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 9 – Elementary occupations    10 – Armed forces

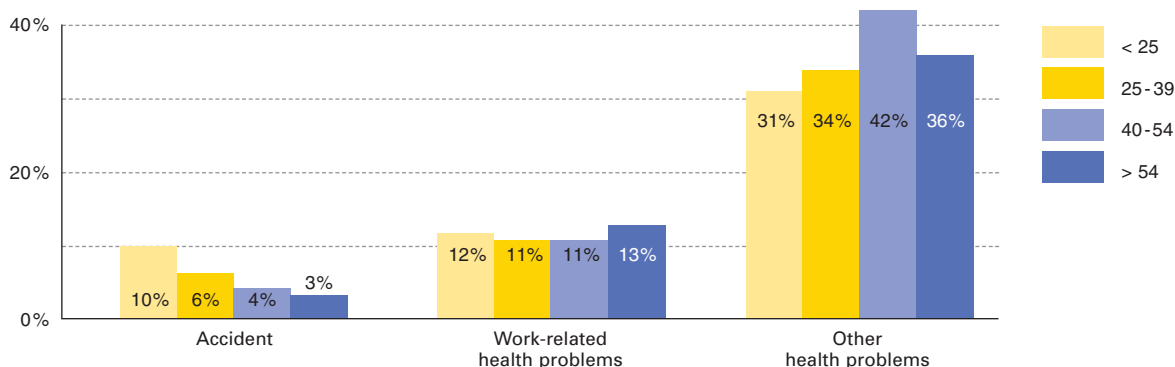
Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

## 4. Occupational health results in the public administration sector

**Absence due to illness according to gender in PubAd**



**Absence due to illness according to age in PubAd**



Source: ESWC – data 3<sup>rd</sup> European Survey on Working Conditions, European Foundation, 2000, Dublin

### Comparison between European and national information

#### ■ General situation

From a European picture, the ESWC-data indicates that the employees in the public administration sector interviewed in the survey were – with the exception of absences due to occupational accidents – more frequently absent from work than their colleagues in the private sectors. Furthermore the information highlights Finland, the Netherlands and UK as being far above EU-average regarding absences due to occupational accidents in PubAd, and Finland, the Netherlands, Spain and UK as being far above EU-average concerning the absences due to occupational health problems in PubAd. Employees of the public administration sector from Denmark, Italy and Sweden seem to be most at risk from sickness absence due to other health problems.

From the information submitted for this project ten NCOs presented additional quantitative data in relation to this health outcome indicator extracted from national statistics or surveys in their country reports: Austria, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and UK. The absence data due to illness delivered from the above-mentioned countries does not correspond exactly to the ESWC-data though. Sometimes the data refers to all sickness absence cases, not only to occupational sickness absence, sometimes the figures are aggregated, that is to say including accidents, childbirth, absence due to personal/family reasons etc., in other cases they are not. On the one hand the data reported by the individual countries reflects the actual illness cases, on the

## 4. Occupational health results in the public administration sector

other hand it is taken from a survey considering the subjective ailments. Due to the differences between the national and European data sources any exact evaluation and comparison is difficult, of course.

However, in spite of these reservations the trend indicated in most of the national reports as well as drawn in the European picture is the same and very clear: The percentage of workers who is absent from work due to illness is, with the exception of accident related absences, significantly higher in the public administration sector than in the other business sectors. Only Norway and Switzerland reported that the sick leave rates for employees in PubAd are below national average.

### ■ Occupations at risk

No firm conclusions could be drawn on this risk category. Information was only presented from Switzerland. It showed that the most frequently identified occupation category in PubAd considered to be at risk from absence due to illness is "clerks". From the European picture, within the public administration sector the occupation categories "skilled agricultural and fishery workers" and "craft and related trades workers" seem to be most vulnerable for having absences due to accidents at work, the occupations "legislators, senior officials and managers", "service workers" and "elementary occupations" were highlighted as the highest risk groups in absences due to occupational health problems and "professionals" and "plant and machine operators" as being most at risk from absences due to other health problems.

### ■ Gender at risk

From their country reports, the picture available is very clear: Most of the NCOs (Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) indicated that sickness absence is frequently more usual among females than among males in the public administration sector. Once again with the exception of accident related absences the European ESWC-data confirms this indication.

### ■ Age category at risk

It was commented in the country reports from Germany, the Netherlands and Portugal that high sick leave rates are more common amongst older workers while Switzerland identified the younger employees in PubAd as being more at risk from absence due to illness. According to the ESWC-data younger people are more vulnerable for accidents at work whereas absences due to other health problems is raising with age.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* As a general pattern there are higher levels of absenteeism among older workers, women and larger organisations. Public admin-

istration workers have a higher level of absences due to illness, explainable by the fact that public employees are older on average. The sickness absence is remarkable high for municipalities compared with the regional and central level.

### ■ Trend

Each NCO was asked: "Is there a significant trend regarding occupational sickness absences in PubAd over the last 10 years?"

The following responses were received:

- Stable trend (2 NCOs): Germany (on a very high level) and Norway
- Increased trend (4 NCOs): Finland, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland

*Comment derived from the country reports:* The amount of sickness absence depends to a large degree on economic prosperity. In times of recession absence rates usually decrease. A trend has, however, been found that although the frequency of small periods of absence decreases, the frequency of lengthy absences increases. This has been interpreted as an indicator that frequent short absences are used as a coping device. When this is no longer utilised the frequency of serious health disturbances increases. There is no trend indication available from the ESWC-data due to the changes in questions between 1995 (2<sup>nd</sup> survey) and 2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> survey).

### ■ Evaluation of preventive actions

NCOs were asked to indicate if preventive actions taken or planned in PubAd are sufficient to deal with the existing related problems or the development of additional preventive action is necessary.

The following responses were received:

- Preventive actions taken or planned are sufficient to deal with the existing exposure related problems was indicated by one NCO: Netherlands.
- A need for additional preventive action was indicated by three NCOs: Germany, Finland and Sweden.

*Comment derived from the country reports:* High priority is given for occupational sickness absences in the Netherlands and Sweden even at governmental level. In the Netherlands the national target is set that sickness absence should decrease from 7,7% to 6,7% by the year 2003. To achieve this goal there is special attention for working pressure, which is to be seen as one of the most important occupational risk factors, and RSI. The Swedish government put forward a so called 11-point-programme to tackle the occupational absence problem. Emphasis in the future should also be directed towards establishing better monitoring methods for sickness absences.

## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

This chapter summarises the main results on the current status of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector. The information provided for this purpose from the individual countries includes a common pool of views and elements which is important for all occupational health and safety systems in Europe:

- Statutory occupational health and safety requirements
- Workplace health promotion above and beyond statutory requirements

### 5.1 Legislation and statutory requirements

Important general conditions for occupational health and safety have changed with the adaptation of the EU-Framework Directive on the “Implementation of Measures to Improve the Health and Safety of Employees at Work” to national legislation during the 90ies. The definition of occupational health and safety and in particular health has become more comprehensive and geared to prevention. The focus is now on preventive and cause-oriented risk avoidance, adaptation of the working conditions to people (not vice versa) and on the development of a comprehensive occupational health and safety policy which is not solely aimed at preventing accidents at work and paying compensation.

Regarding the public administration sector, the EU framework legislation also resulted in important amendments and changes to most of the national occupational health and safety regulations. In many countries no generally applicable occupational health and safety regulations existed for all organisations and enterprises before. For example, some regulations exempted employees in the public administration sector or in enterprises below a certain size from providing occupational health services or from representation regarding occupational health and safety issues.

Implementing the EU directives led to broad-based standardisation in the sense that major national occupational health and safety regulations regarding labour inspection, occupational health services and risk assessment at the workplace now covers more or less all public and private organisations and enterprises, regardless of size and sector.

The reports available from the individual countries confirm that, despite different structures, qualifications, skills and responsibilities of the labour inspectors, their occupational health and safety strategies show more and more similarities (cf. also Piotet 1996; Walters 1997). All countries have a statuto-

ry mandate which goes beyond the traditional tasks of labour inspection. In addition to monitoring the observance and application of statutory occupational health and safety regulations, inspectors' duties have generally been expanded in two directions.

For instance, what is to be inspected and monitored has changed. Now inspectors have to look beyond working conditions which may lead to accidents and occupational diseases and look at work organisation, work content, psychosocial stress etc.

The inspection and monitoring mandate has also been extended to include consultancy and information. The employers, who are ultimately responsible in all countries for occupational health and safety, are to be advised and informed by the inspectors as to how they should carry out their obligations.

However, first of all restrictions in terms of resources stand in the way of the implementation of this new mandate. Almost all national reporters mention the problem of too few staff and insufficient funds to discharge their duties. In all the countries participating, with the exception of Germany, labour inspectors are not assigned specifically to the public sector.

***Inspector resources in European countries***

Country	Number of employees per inspector
Austria	9.831
Belgium	18.857
Denmark	8.438
Finland	5.443
France	13.796
Germany	3.632
Greece	24.288
Iceland	10.000
Ireland	22.071
Italy	5.550
Liechtenstein/Switzerland	10.000
Luxembourg	11.045
Netherlands	18.732
Norway	13.700
Portugal	14.170
Spain	18.973
Sweden	10.000
United Kingdom	3.406

Source: Own calculations to European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2000; Country reports

## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

Due to limited resources, labour inspection is usually concentrated on high-risk work sites in most countries. As the public administration sector is regarded as harmless in this respect, only very few visits of the labour inspection probably occur. However, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden make particular efforts or have programmes and campaigns targeted specifically at the public administration sector focused on the increasing psycho-social working strains in this area. This includes publicising and promoting the new statutory position and alerting people to its implementation.

In most of the countries involved, there is a legal obligation to provide health care for the employees through occupational health and safety services. In Ireland and the United Kingdom employers traditionally have a wide latitude in terms of setting up OHS services and company health care provision for employees is voluntary. In Denmark, occupational safety and medical care in the public administration sector is also regulated on a voluntary basis. On the whole, relatively good care is found in Denmark (70%), Finland (90%), Germany (50-70%), the Netherlands (98%), Norway (60%) and Sweden (72%).

As for the employees in the public administration sector, the situation in most of the countries involved is more favourable than in the private business sectors. This is obvious, for instance, from the proportion of public sector organisations to have conducted a risk assessment or have established health and safety committees and representatives. They are more common in the public administration sector (like in larger companies) according to the country reports from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

### 5.2 Workplace health promotion

Health promotion (according to the criteria set out in the WHO's Ottawa Charter and the Luxembourg Declaration on Workplace Health Promotion in the European Union) clearly goes above and beyond traditional, regulated occupational safety and health. Workplace health promotion includes issues such as job satisfaction, personal autonomy and social relationships. Health-promoting measures must be geared to the enterprise as a whole and should include its technical, organisational, social and communicative dimensions. The key requirements are as following:

- WHP must be characterised by the fact that not only statutory requirements are satisfied but also additional voluntary measures on health promotion are implemented.
- The measures must include activities which are geared both to a healthy work organisation and organisational structure and to a more healthy lifestyle (condition and behaviour orientation).
- The health promotion measures must be based on a thorough analysis of the current situation which is substantiated by health-relevant information, in particular on the employees, e.g. staff survey on subjectively perceived work stresses or health disorders (planning).
- The employees must be involved as much as possible in the decisions, planning and measures (participation).

## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

- The health promotion measures must be integrated as much as possible into the existing authority structures and procedures (integration).
- The results of the health promotion measures must be measured on the basis of verifiable indicators, e.g. staff satisfaction, citizen satisfaction, absenteeism rate, productivity etc. (evaluation); (cf. also the quality criteria for workplace health promotion in the previous projects of the ENWHP).

The implementation of such projects is, however, relatively costly and not very widespread. Results from surveys on the level of dissemination of workplace health promotion measures are only available from Finland, Germany and the Netherlands. With respect to the public administration sector, the trend is the same in the above-mentioned countries: In organisations and authorities of the public administration sector the likelihood of WHP measures being implemented is greater than in private sector companies. Whereas in Germany workplace health promotion is on the agenda in 17% of enterprises in the private sector, the corresponding figure is more than 29% in public authorities and companies. In Finland the respective figures are 74% to 96% and in the Netherlands 27% to 88%.

In the current project the NCOs were requested to answer the following questions on the significance and dissemination of workplace health promotion in the public administration sector in their countries and make a comparison with the private sector:

- What type of workplace health promotion activities are offered in public administration?
- What are the reasons for the introduction of WHP activities in public administration?
- What results/benefits are linked to the implementation of WHP measures in public administration?
- What organisations/people conduct WHP activities in public administration?

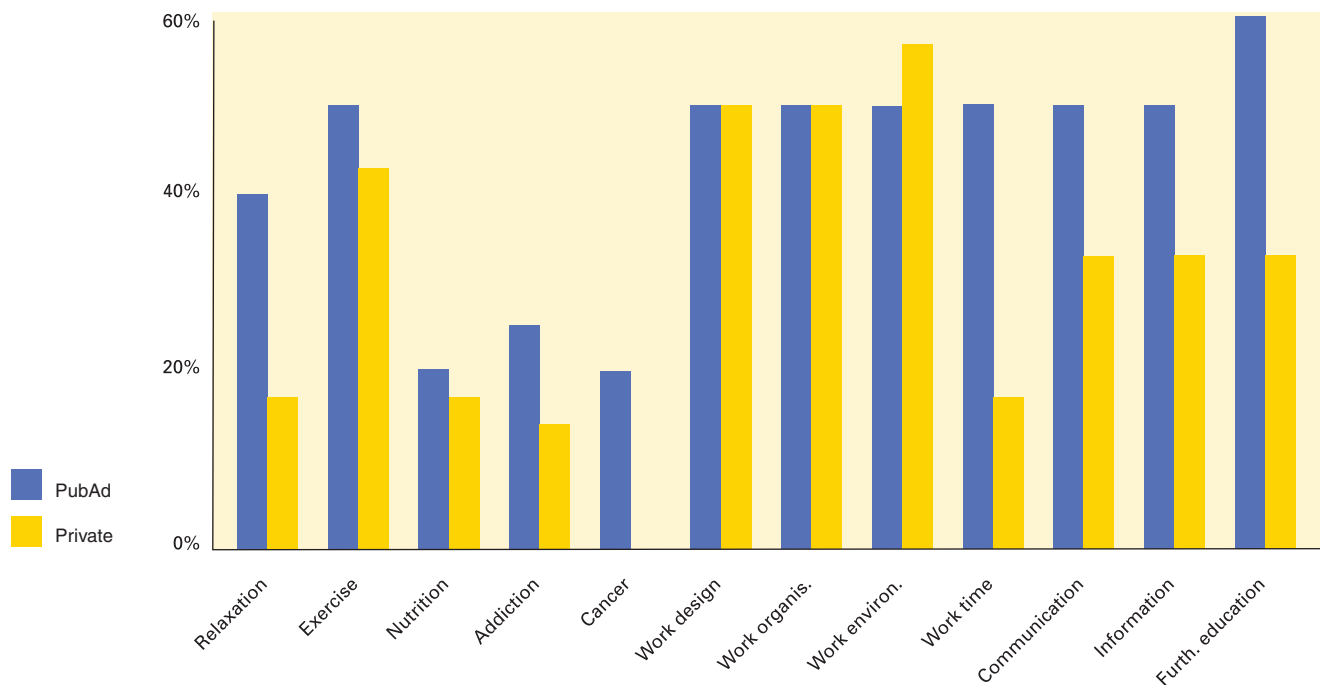
The following 10 countries answered the questions on the dissemination and significance of workplace health promotion in public administration:

Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom.

Whereas the information from Finland, Germany and the Netherlands is based on representative surveys in their countries, the other data are estimates and expert opinions. The percentages in the following diagrams relate to the proportion of answers which are found in the category "predominant". The difference to 100% is made up by the percentage of answers which relate to "never" and "sometimes".

## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

*Type of WHP activities*



As regards the type of workplace health promotion activities conducted, a difference was made between behaviour prevention activities, such as exercise, nutrition, relaxation, further education programmes and information campaigns on health promotion, on the one hand, and circumstantial-oriented concepts which are geared to the healthy design of the working conditions and work organisation, on the other hand.

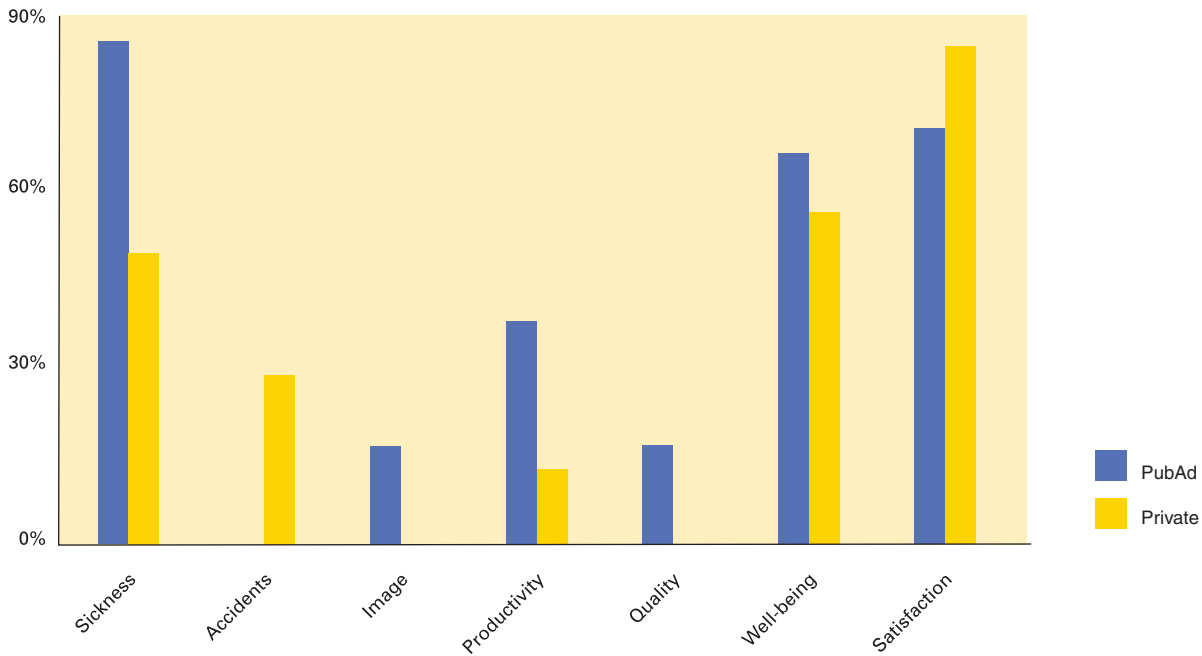
First of all, it is obvious from the answers from the 10 NCOs that health promotion activities – as the aforementioned national surveys in Finland, Germany and the Netherlands confirm – are apparently pursued more frequently in enterprises, companies and organisations in public administration. Merely health promotion programmes which focus on improving the working environment and the impact on the surrounding area are to be found more frequently in private sector enterprises, judging by the answers from the 10 NCOs.

Further education, information campaigns, communications training courses and exercise programmes play the most important role in public administration, on the one hand, and measures geared to improving the working conditions and working time, on the other hand. Nutrition, addiction and cancer prevention programmes appear to play a more subordinate role. Differences between behaviour and condition prevention concepts could not be found.



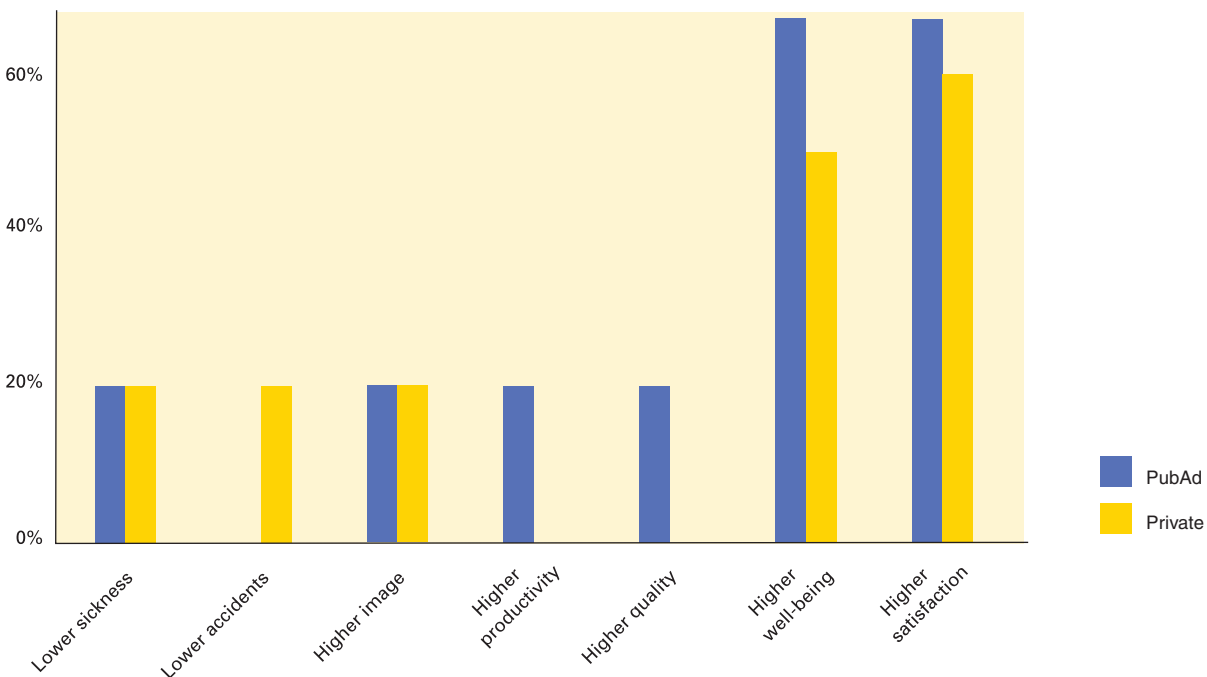
## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

### Reasons for the implementation of WHP activities



If the reasons and benefits which are expected from the implementation of workplace health promotion activities in public administration are examined, a reduction in the sickness rate is clearly the top priority. 90% of the NCOs who returned answers indicated that this aspect was the key factor in deciding on WHP activities. Increasing job satisfaction and personal well-being are also highly significant; in the private sector increasing job satisfaction is the key factor for organising programmes. Reducing industrial accidents plays no role at all in public administration when deciding on such activities.

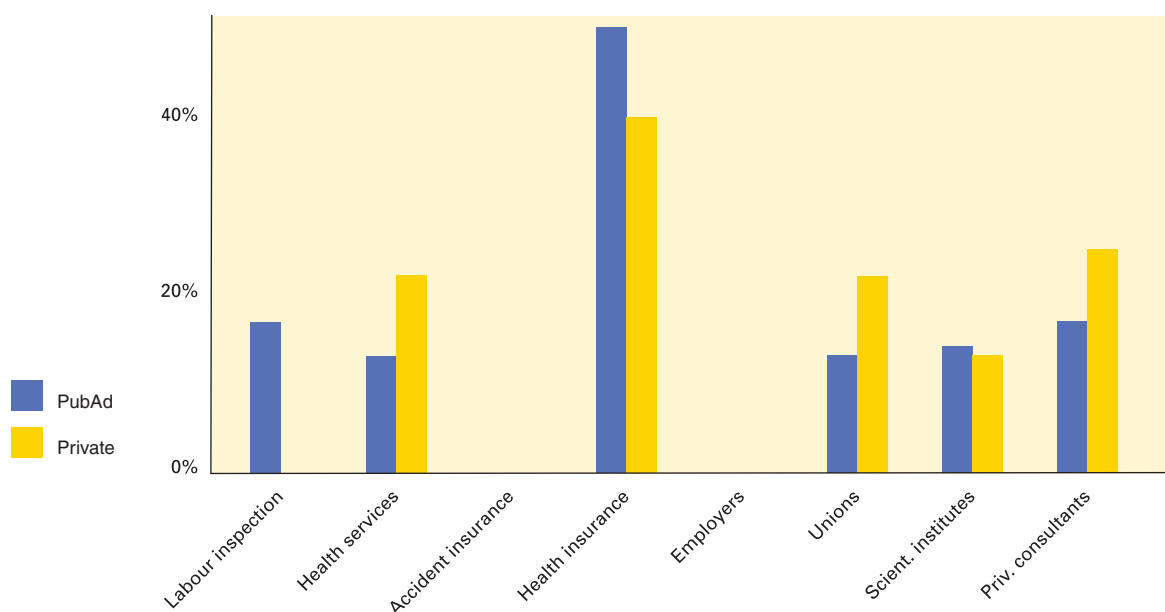
### Results of WHP activities



## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

By contrast, if the question is raised as to what results were actually and verifiably achieved by WHP activities, lowering the sickness rate falls behind job satisfaction and the well-being of the employees. 67% of the NCOs answering the questions indicated that in their countries workplace health promotion activities were found, through appropriate evaluations, to have resulted in greater satisfaction with the working conditions and an increase in well-being at the workplace. This confirms once again that it appears to be very difficult to have a monocausal effect on the complex and multifactor reasons behind the sickness rate through workplace health promotion alone. The motivational and social effects of workplace health promotion on the organisation of the enterprise and its workforce are more substantiated. It is therefore more probable that aspects of work productivity can be positively influenced by WHP activities but not primarily the costs due to a reduction in the sickness rate. At least the latter aspect can be found less frequently and simply.

### *Organisations conducting WHP activities*



In reply to the question about what organisations mainly conduct health promotion activities, most answers of the NCOs related to the health insurance funds. In 50% of cases the health insurance fund is responsible for organising measures in public administration and in 40% of cases in private sector enterprises. Private business consultants, the trade unions or health services are regarded as more important in conducting WHP activities in private sector enterprises.

It can be concluded from the results available that overall the subject of workplace health promotion in public administration plays a more important role than in the private sector. The quality and scope of the activities cannot unfortunately be assessed in greater detail on the basis of our findings.

## 5. The current practice of workplace health promotion and occupational health and safety in the public administration sector

Informative results on this question are only available from the above-mentioned Germany survey. This survey reaches the conclusion that the institutions in public administration (in Germany) have a lamentably low quality level of workplace health promotion compared with enterprises in the private sector even though the activities there are more widespread. This means that systematic health management is only pursued in exceptional cases, the activities are only organised in isolated locations, are hardly networked and limited in time. Sustained activities are the exception.

## 6. Summarising evaluation

Our analysis has clearly showed that since the nineties a far-reaching rationalisation and modernisation process has been under way in public administration which in many respects mirrors private sector concepts for corporate restructuring, from outsourcing concepts and job cuts down to the accelerated reorganisation of workflows and organisational structures. However, it appears as if the level of the job requirements involved and impacts on health do not – or at least not in general – exceed a critical limit. In particular, there are no indications, either on the basis of the evaluations of the 3rd European Survey on Working Conditions or in the opinion of most of the 16 country reports available, that the employees in public administration have suffered a well-above-average degree of deterioration in their working conditions or their health condition. Rationalisation and modernisation of the public administration therefore does not imply per se negative impacts on health which could no longer be countered by the existing system of occupational safety and health and the workplace health promotion activities.

On the other hand, individual results of our analyses also show that special developments and specific conditions in public administration lead to key stresses and risk groups to which special attention should be devoted in occupational safety and health and workplace health promotion.

- For example, it can be shown first of all that public administrations in Europe have hardly made any use of the practice of the “rejuvenation of the workforces” over the last decade as was the case in industry or in the private services sector. Whether the much higher proportion of older employees in 2000 than 10 years previously is attributable more to a certain passiveness in personnel policy is based on special protection regulations of the employees in public administration – as can be seen almost everywhere in Europe there is better social security of the public administration employees than in the private sector – or whether this is due to a conscious and strategic policy of social responsibility towards older employees and therefore, as a general trend, towards staff with health disorders, has to remain unanswered at this point.

Nonetheless, it must be noted in this connection that public administration has a certain “age load” more than any other sector of the economy. This aspect alone produces very far-reaching organisation requirements in the personnel policy of the public employers for the future. Or to put it another way and more clearly: If the aim is to avoid passive “toleration” or increasing incapacity to work owing to illness in public administration and instead rely on the systematic use of concepts to integrate older and less able employees, workplace health promotion concepts and concepts of preventive occupational safety and health strategies are required and demanded.

The excessively high sickness rate in public administration can also be explained by the higher age structure of the employees in this sector.

Exposure/ health outcome	Differences between public administration and private sector	Most at risk in PubAd						Trend		Need for action
		Occupations*		Gender		Age		ESWC	NCO	
		ESWC	NCO	ESWC	NCO	ESWC	NCO			
Repetitive movements	PubAd lower	7	4	-	-	<25	<25	↑	↑	+
Painful positions	PubAd lower	9	9	Female	Female	-	-	-	↑	+
Heavy loads	PubAd lower	7	9	Male	Male	<25	-	↓	↓	-
Low temperature	PubAd lower	6	6	Male	Male	25-39	<50	-	-	-
Noise	PubAd lower	8	10	Male	Male	<25	<50	↓	-	-
High temperature	PubAd lower	6	8	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-
Workpace by social demand	PubAd lower	6	4	Female	Female	-	<50	↓	↑	+
High speed	PubAd lower	1,3	1	Female	-	<25	<50	↑	↑	+
Monotonous tasks	PubAd lower	9	9,4	Male	Female	-	<25	↓	-	+
Bullying and victimisation	PubAd higher	5	4	-	-	25-39	-	↑	↑	+
Stress	PubAd higher	5	1,2,5	Female	-	40-54	<50	-	↑	+
Backache	PubAd lower	6	6	Female	-	>55	>50	↑	↑	+
Pains in shoulders /neck	PubAd lower	9	9	Female	Female	40-54	>40	Not available	↑	+
Work dissatisfaction	PubAd lower	8	8	-	-	-	<50	↑	-	+
Sickness absence	PubAd higher	1,8	4	Female	Female	>40	>50	Not available	↑	+

\* 1 – Legislators, senior officials and managers  
 3 – Technicians and associate professionals  
 5 – Service workers, shop and market sales workers  
 7 – Craft and related trades workers  
 9 – Elementary occupations

2 – Professionals  
 4 – Clerks  
 6 – Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
 8 – Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
 10 – Armed forces

## 6. Summarising evaluation

- In public administration there are stresses and health risks which require special attention. These include in particular the increase in stresses mentioned by several countries as well as bullying and victimisation. Both factors, which are detrimental to health and which have not been fully researched in terms of their effects, are the only ones which lie above the average of the other sectors of the economy (cf. Table page 69).
- Owing to the multifactor and social significance of these stresses at the workplace, workplace health promotion concepts are not only in particular demand but are also equally well suited to provide support to improve the situation (cf. also the Belgian example in our brochure “Models of Good Practice”).

However, a number of other psycho-social stresses also play a role which have increased in significance for the employees in public administration in recent years and will probably continue to increase. These include the pace of work, dictated by social demand, just as much as the related pressure on time and performance (high-speed working) owing to the service nature of public administration.

Furthermore, and not least of all, certain physical strains have come to the fore owing to the specific working conditions in public administration. These include not so much heavy physical work but rather certain repetitive movements and rigid body postures at the computer. The dissemination of computer work has increased from 51% to 64% in public administration over the last 5 years whereas it has only risen in other branches by 3%, from 38% to 41%. This entails particular risks, for example RSIs, which represent a special challenge in workplace health promotion and occupational safety and health.

- Finally, certain employees and professional groups in public administration are exposed more frequently and for longer periods to the work stresses and health disorders mentioned above. These include, in addition to the aforementioned group of older employees, the particularly young employees (under 25) and women who are at particular risk in many respects although the corresponding stresses, when viewed overall, are below average for the public administration sector. The most frequently recorded occupation at risk in the public administration sector was “elementary occupations”, which was identified by the NCOs and the ESWC data together 7 times. Elementary occupations was the most frequently reported category in the following four exposure and health outcome indicators:
  - strenuous working postures
  - carrying/moving heavy loads
  - monotonous tasks
  - muscular pains in shoulders and neck

Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> were “skilled agricultural and fishery workers”, “plant and machine operators” and “clerks”.

According to the results available, workplace health promotion programmes would be particularly successful or promise specially high benefits for these groups of occupations and employees.

A total of 34 models of good practice from altogether 19 countries are presented in our collection of good WHP practice in public administration. They show how the work demands described here and the related health consequences can be successfully managed. We hope that they provide everyone interested and those responsible with ideas to copy themselves. For it is only through widely disseminated and high-quality workplace health promotion and preventive occupational safety and health that the old and new risks in the world of work (not only) in public administration can be effectively countered.

## 7. Annex: Summaries of the national country reports

### Austria

#### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

There have been several changes and reforms in this field during the last few years.

The new occupational health and safety act amendment came into force on 1.1.1995 and was the adaptation of the EU directive on workplace health and safety for Austria. Prevention was the central idea in this adaptation: the main focus is on designing the workplace, work process and materials in a way which minimises any risk.

Statutory occupational health and safety has received new impulses and quality through this development. The considerable reduction of occupational accidents – also in the public sector – shows how successful intensive work on the theme has been. As with some other developments, the public sector has lagged behind in this field, too. Most effort has concentrated on providing comprehensive support for small and medium sized businesses. However, in principle, the amendment has focused more attention on workplace health promotion, and this had a corresponding effect on occupational physicians and safety personnel.

Development has been affected by the new government constellation in Austria. The Ministry of Economy is now in charge of the agenda for occupational health and safety. New discussions are now in progress regarding the amount of time to be spent on application and support.

As far as the public sector is concerned, this will probably mean that development, which is already lagging behind, will be delayed even further. The topic is, however, still relevant in the public sector. This is shown by the relatively high incidence of accidents during transit.

#### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

The concept of workplace health promotion is now well established in many sectors in Austria.

As a result of experiences in large industrial companies, there has been a successful transfer to small and medium-sized enterprises.

The public sector is lagging behind in this development. For a long time measures implemented in the field of health went no further than providing a healthy midday meal.

Activities in the public sector have only recently become visible. It is satisfying to see that the few projects which are emerging in this field are both well structured and are based on a sound concept.

A new development is that the workplace health promotion projects in the public sector are overlapping and networked, both at community and provincial level. Positive examples of this are the two



projects 'Health Promotion in Local Administration' and 'Health Promotion in the Financial Administration of the Province'. This allows both a good widespread effect on the one hand and puts an emphasis on health promotion on the other. Another strength is that these model projects attempt to convey health promotion know-how directly. This is done by the widespread training of health circle moderators, for example.

How far workplace health promotion can become established in the public administration sector will depend to a large extent on the successful implementation and evaluation of these projects.

### **Consequences and need for action**

In summary, it can be said that many developments in the field of occupational health and safety and workplace health promotion are being transferred, although with a time lag.

An additional hurdle is that public administration in Austria has been the target of much criticism from the media and on a political level. The main topics in the public eye are the reduction of personnel and the speeding up of work processes. This is the background of public opinion for the health promotion activities in the public administration sector.

On the other hand there are also some very satisfactory perspectives:

- The few large projects in the field of health promotion in the public sector make use of the principles of networking and building up of internal know-how.
- The interest of the provinces and communities in health management is steadily increasing. Public sector employees at this level often serve as opinion leaders. This development will also take place at federal level, yet with a time lag.
- The topics of work design and work structure will also be important for the public sector in Austria. One important factor for success will be the extent to which positive connections exist between the concepts of new public management and workplace health promotion.

## **Denmark**

### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

One of the strengths in the current practice of statutory OHS in the public administration sector is that it is well organised with safety committees and/or joint safety committees and co-operation committees in every institution and agency.

There is a long tradition of co-operation in dealing with working environmental issues in the public administration sector. This is the case both at state, county, municipal and institutional level as well as at a central level.

One strength is the campaign being run by the National Working Environment Authority targeting the administration sector.

The widespread use of Working Assessment and the ongoing improvement of the methods in use is clearly also a positive factor.

When it comes to weaknesses, cuts in the national OHS system are generally the most worrying as well as those in the public administration sector.

A more sector-specific weakness is that sometimes not enough attention is devoted to working environmental problems in the public administration sector. The severe and conspicuous problems in other parts of the public sector (e.g. elderly care in the municipalities) tend to attract all the attention.

The common attitude that working environmental problems do not exist for employees with a sedentary, clean job is still widespread even among employers and employees within the public service sector.

The working environmental problems that are now starting to emerge in the administration sector due to repetitive computer work – most pronounced in the call centres – clearly indicate the need for a change in attitude.

Another strain is the susceptibility of the public sector to the political situation. The dramatic cuts in budgets, which every part of the public administration sector at state level is facing these days, are bound to influence the working environment in a negative way: uncertainty caused by the cut itself, uncertainty caused by the dismissals, higher pressure of work for the remaining employees, dissemination of a defeatist attitude and less time and money for preventive work.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

The fact that there is a great deal of interest in WHP by all organisations and authorities involved is the most important strength. Interest in the issue is growing.

It can be expected that the envisaged shortage of employees in the years to come will increase this interest further.

The development of the co-operation and safety committee structure in the state, the counties and in the municipalities over the last few years has made a very good foundation for WHP at an institutional level.

Growing interest and focus on the necessity of paying attention to human resource management is important in the broader sense of WHP in the public administration sector.

Valuable experiences have been gained from a variety of local projects addressing specific WHP issues.

Up to now very little effort has been made to gather experiences and results obtained in local WHP projects. This can be seen as a weakness.

The establishment of a national centre of WHP will be very helpful in gathering and spreading these experiences.

Overall efforts made in the field of WHP will be weakened if there is too much focus on individual factors (smoking, lifestyle etc.), thereby diverting attention away from the influence of the working environment.

A lack of understanding and appreciation of the value of WHP by political decision makers is probably the most severe weakness in the current practise (as is actually seen in the case of the Danish state).

### Consequences and need for action

It is very important to deal with WHP and OHS as connected fields. This means avoiding giving priority to WHP as a “single factor”, which can result in necessary OHS efforts being neglected.

Considering the stated working environmental problems in the sector, it is particularly important to consolidate efforts to improve psychosocial working environment conditions and to develop work organisation.

It is important to evaluate and demonstrate results obtained at all levels in order to optimise workplace health management – i.e. both in the short and long term.

It is also important to gather and exchange models of good practice amongst the different parts of the public administration sector and on the labour market as such.

It is important to continue and improve the co-operation between employers and employees on WHP and OHS in all parts and at all levels of the public administration sector.

The cutbacks in the occupational health and safety authorities and institutions make it even more important to ensure that sufficient attention is given to workplace health management in the public administration sector in the years to come.

## Finland

### The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety as well as workplace health promotion among public administrations

In Finland the number of employees in the public administration sector was 120 000 in 1995 and 118 702 in 2000. The proportion of workers in the public administration sector has decreased from 6.2% to 5.3%. Ageing of the Finnish workforce is affecting all sectors including public administration sector; 45% of the workforce was over 45 years old in 2000.

Many structural changes have taken place in the public administration sector since 1995, such as the streamlining of regional level administration, flattening of organisational structures and changes in work profiles. Several statutory tasks that were previously carried out at a regional level have been transferred to local authorities. Swift changes in working life and environment, such as globalisation, IT technology and work in many kinds of networks have permanently changed the way work is organised – this trend can be perceived also in the public administration sector and affects both WHP and OHS.

Occupational health and safety has a long tradition and history in Finnish workplaces and is being increasingly respected by all parties. In Finland current legislation strongly supports the practice of WHP and OHS. Two statutory instruments affecting WHP and OHS are The Act on Occupational Health Care No 1348, which has been approved by Parliament (became effective 1.1.2002), and the Act on Work Safety, which is under discussion and is planned to be implemented at the beginning of 2003.

The methods in OHS still partly follow traditional risk-based thinking and focus on individuals. Differences between the private sector and the public administration sector are mainly connected to the different type of work e.g. public administration sector does not include construction work and therefore accidents are not as common as in the private sector. New methods and means are gradually being introduced to improve collaboration at the workplace, and with other service providers and authorities, such as safety administration. Consultative work, proactive methods, process thinking and quality are some of the features of the new practice in the field of OHS. Measurement development regarding OHS (as well as WHP) is needed.

WHP is quite versatile and popular in the Finnish public administration sector, since the economical benefits and cost-effectiveness of WHP are held in high regard. One strength of the expansion of WHP in Finland has been the attempt to use versatile follow-up measurements and several before-after reports, which have increased interest in WHP and OHS, although high quality scientific studies are scarce.

More provision has been made for ageing workers during the last ten years due to the positive attitude of municipalities towards increasing WHP. On the other hand, criticism of WHP has lately increased in the government sector, which can be considered a weakness. Resources are needed to promote the implementation of measures designed to promote work performance and a positive attitude to WHP must be maintained with repeated action, otherwise WHP cannot be integrated as a normal part of everyday practices. So far too much responsibility for WHP and OHS has been assigned to occupational health care. In addition more time has been given to curative care rather than preventive work. There is also a need to narrow the gap between WHP and rehabilitation, i.e. vocational as well as medical rehabilitation should be identified early enough. Nevertheless, the WHP model has improved collaboration in the field of occupational health care, between employer and employees at workplaces and with regard to OHS and workplaces.

### **Consequences and need for action**

In general, it is difficult to draw conclusions because of the heterogeneous occupations included in the public administration sector. It seems that WHP and OHS have established their position as part of the development of well-being at work. A comparison of jobs involving totally different work does not seem very relevant.

Musculoskeletal exposure is a common office work problem, while four out of five employees use information technology in administrative occupations. There are two major posture and movement exposures in the public administration sector. Firstly neck and upper extremity exposure caused by static posture, and secondly hand exposure caused by "light" repetitive work. The risk of difficult neck positions is highest compared to any other physical exposure type and is increasing in "information" orientated society. Employees are increasingly using computers in the public administration sector. The incidence of neck exposure is about two times higher amongst women compared to men, as women still deal with office "paper" work more than men. Instead, more physical work is mostly carried out by men, for example in the armed forces and in the security services.

The risk of work involving repetitive hand exertion has increased as well, because of the use of computers in public administration sector. Hand and wrist symptoms are related to the time spent using a computer or working with a mouse or keyboard. According to a Finnish study (Ketola et. al, 2000), the

“mouse” is used for about 65% of the working time in computer-aided drawing programs, while the figure for word processing is about 3%. Prevention programs for musculoskeletal disorders are still under development and office as well as information ergonomics is needed. This might be one challenge for the occupational health care field – for example more emphasis should be placed on work intervals, exercise, and ergonomics in the future.

Exposure to physical factors (noise, as well as temperature conditions: cold, draught, and heat) seem to be quite common types of exposure in the public administration sector. This might be partly explained by the inclusion of armed forces and technician-related occupations in the public administration sector, as exposures to physical factors are central to these occupations. Exposure to chemical and biological factors is quite well controlled nowadays. Although such exposure does exist amongst armed forces and security service workers, it is not a common source of exposure in the public administration sector. On the other hand, problems relating to poor indoor air quality, moisture problems in public buildings and offices, moulds, defects in cleaning and maintenance, as well as dust needs decreasing will also need to be addressed in the future. Moreover more effort might be required to measure chemical exposures in general.

Finally, there is a big need for preventive measures with regard to psychosocial working conditions in the public administration sector. Lower mental well-being at work is a common and increasing problem (as in most other sectors as well). Examples of exposure are tight deadlines, powerlessness to control workloads and working hours, insufficient flow of information at the workplace and insufficient feedback from superiors. Information technology and the email postal system, for example, have improved work in many ways, but, on the other hand, they have also dramatically increased the amount of work in the public administration sector. Response to an email is expected almost in real time, which increases the mental overload of work. Moreover, screening the post takes up a lot of time that could be allocated to more relevant work. This negative trend can be counteracted by introducing preventive measures, although measures for promoting well-being at work should not themselves increase the workload and stress. There is a risk of “new exposure” if resources are not properly directed towards intervention and if they are not coordinated properly.

It seems that in the public administration sector training provided by the employer is much more common than in the private business sector. The incidence of accidents at work also seems to be much lower than in the private business sector. The differences between the public administration and the private sector are considered to depend on the small proportion of employees in especially high-risk occupations, such as jobs in construction and industry. The risk of occupational diseases in the public administration sector are approximately as high as in the private business sector, although the number of strain injuries has increased in both sectors, despite the fact that physical work load has decreased during the last few decades. Information from the public administration sector does not highlight any exposures that have not become evident in private sector data. For example, the risk of asbestos-related diseases is assumed to be decreasing, as the use of this exposure is restricted by legislation and safety regulations from the 1970's.

As in all industrialised countries, the population is ageing and therefore work-related disorders are increasing. In order to prevent early retirement, work content and work conditions should be improved so that the impact of the aging trend is taken into account and tackled early enough. Although about 85% of employees in the public administration sector seem to be satisfied with their jobs, it is a fact that insecurity has increased – the public administration sector used to be considered

a predictable and stable workplace. In Finland absence due to sickness in the public administration sector is about 9 days a year per person (according to the data from 2000). Sick leave is related to economic cycles. This trend has been increasing slightly in the public administration sector, although absenteeism is not a major problem at the moment. Nevertheless, if no action is taken, the ageing workforce, early retirement and changes in the population structure will lead to loss of effectivity and productivity which may eventually represent a national economic problem.

### Germany

#### **General conditions of health at work in public administrations**

Out of roughly 36 million employees in Germany, 13,4% work in the public sector as a whole and 8,2% of the German workforce in public administrations. Compared with the European average, the latter figure is slightly above average.

Since the beginning of the nineties, the public administration sector in Germany has been under great pressure to rationalise and modernise. Financial shortages in the public sector budget on the one hand, and loud criticism about bureaucracy and being out of touch with the public have created disquiet and have led to calls for changes in processes in the sector. A comprehensive rationalisation and modernisation process is underway in the public sector under the heading "New Public Management Systems".

Health conditions in the public administration sector are different. On the one hand, health hazards and complaints related to physiological, physical or psychosocial working conditions are – with the exception of a few psychosocial working strains – lower than in private sector companies. Therefore, it seems that the modernisation process carried out in public administrations has not been responsible for all increases in health risks and health-related problems, which was previously observed in other sectors. On the other hand, there are much higher rates of sick leave in the public administration sector. Overall absence levels due to sickness have been consistently high (nearly double) in the public administration sector for years while the trend has been downwards in other business sectors. The following aspects, which apply particularly to the public administration sector, must be taken into consideration when seeking an explanation:

- Much higher proportion of older employees
- Much higher proportion of handicapped or disabled employees

#### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

The occupational health and safety system is dominated by the dualism of the state and statutory accident insurance funds (Berufsgenossenschaften – BGs). There is a separate BG for the public administration sector.

Since 1996 the BGs have also had the mandate to co-operate in the prevention of work-related health hazards with the statutory health insurance system, i.e. the health insurance funds. In turn, these funds have the statutory authority to participate in the prevention of work-related health hazards and to co-operate with the accident insurance bodies.

Owing to the transposition of European directives into German law, occupational health and safety in public administrations has gained in significance. For the first time in Germany a uniform legal basis has been created for all enterprises and administrations. Moreover, the preventive task of the accident insurance system above and beyond industrial accidents and occupational illnesses has been extended to the prevention of all work-related health hazards. The statutory labour inspection, accident insurance bodies and health insurance funds have been obliged to work together closely and to promote the exchange of experience. These are important steps towards eliminating the fragmentation, shortcomings and fragmentary limitation in German occupational safety and health legislation.

Statutory labour inspection, like Berufsgenossenschaften, have, however, a common core of problems relating to their sovereign functions and statutory legitimisation. Their commitment and advice is perceived less as further consultancy but rather as a formal requirement. Another weakness is the (still) minimum co-operation of all those concerned. There is (still) absolutely no pooling of resources to make occupational health and safety effective, to avoid overlapping, to detect shortcomings more quickly and, in particular, to improve the acceptance of these measures.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

In Germany, the main players in workplace health promotion, as defined beyond traditional, statutory regulated occupational health and safety, are the statutory health insurance funds, which were given their own statutory mandate in 1989 in the field of prevention and health promotion, which also covered enterprises and workplaces. From that time on, the health insurance funds rapidly extended their commitment in the field of health promotion and developed workplace health promotion concepts, which, in their most advanced forms, can be understood as a contribution towards the implementation of the WHO health policy.

Results of representative studies show that the majority of health promotion measures take place in public administration companies and authorities. The industrial sector takes second place. In the craft and trade sectors WHP measures are rarely carried out. The WHP measures however are of a regrettably low quality in public administrations. The programmes are usually single efforts, are not sustainable and not integrated into the organisational operations and structures and relate mainly to the lifestyle prevention sector; they are primarily programmes on exercise and relaxation and addiction prevention.

Tools for needs analysis and work design prevention integrated into organisational operations have, on the other hand, still not attracted widespread attention. They have only become accepted to any appreciable extent in few bigger administrations.

### **Consequences and need for action**

- Development of approaches to occupational health and safety and workplace health promotion that are part of and integrated into new public management initiatives.
- Tailor-made support programmes, especially suitable for integration of older and handicapped or disabled employees.
- Changes in vocational and further training for players in occupational health and safety.

## Greece

### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

The strengths of the current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in the public administration sector are:

- The extension of OHS legislation in the public sector
- Modernisation activities which are being implemented in the wider public sector and have been officially acknowledged by the Greek government as a priority include OHS activities such as improving the condition of buildings, upgrading personnel and introducing new technology.
- The existence of models of good practice of OHS and WHP in public administration, which are gradually expanding their activities and are sharing their knowledge and expertise in the wider public sector, such as, for instance, the ETHEL Bus Company, the Hellenic Post, the Greek telephone company (OTE), the Greek electricity company (DEY) and a number of ministries.
- More training, which is offered in OHS issues by a number of governmental and non-governmental institutions, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Hellenic Institution for Health and Safety at Work (EL.IN.Y.A.E).

The weaknesses in the current practice of statutory occupational safety and health are as follows:

- There is no methodology to monitor the implementation of OHS legislation specifically in the public sector
- Occupational diseases and occupational accidents are not recognised or statistically recorded
- There is insufficient information on the conditions of the working environment in the public administration sector
- Employees of the public administration sector have inadequate knowledge concerning OHS matters. This phenomenon is more prominent in rural areas.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in the public administrations**

Workplace Health Promotion is less understood and developed in the public administration sector in Greece, despite attempts made in recent years by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and in particular the Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, which is the National Contact Office for WHP in Greece. A number of ministries and public sector companies conduct WHP activities, which have been positively received by employees. There is a need though for further development as the number of WHP activities in the public sector are limited. The main weakness of the current practice is the limited information public administration employees receive about WHP and the limited number of trained personnel that can design and implement WHP activities in the public sector.

### **Consequences and need for action**

Although there are weaknesses in the practice of both WHP and OHS in the public administration sector, many positive trends are starting to emerge, as mentioned above. The increasing interest of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs concerning the implementation of WHP and OHS activities in



the public administration and also the implementation of modernisation activities in the public sector are expected to bring important results and improve overall the level of OHS of employees in the public administration sector.

## Hungary

### The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations

#### Strengths:

In Hungary, according to the Labour Protection Act and the sectorial decrees, the employer is obliged to provide occupational health care service for all workers employed in organised work and labour protection; representatives can also be elected if there are at least 10 physical workers or 20 white-collar workers respectively. Prior to taking up work, employees have to participate in labour protection training held and documented by the local labour protection head. A basic occupational health care service (consisting of one physician and one nurse) may care for 1000 - 2000 employees, depending on the health risks posed by the work. The work of the occupational health care service consists of the occupational health examination, serving as a basis for risk assessment of the fitness-for-work medical examination and rehabilitation and health promotion/preservation activity. All employees have to be assigned to occupational health categories, depending on the health risks they are exposed to in their job (Category A represents the highest risk, Categories B and C diminishing levels of risk and Category D the lowest risk). The white-collar and manual workers in the public administration sector belong to occupational health categories D and C, respectively. The fitness-for-work medical examination or job and the examination of suitability from the point of view of the personal hygiene of the employees are regulated by 33/1998 (VI. 24), the Decree of MW amended by 27/2000 (IX. 30.) and the Decree of MH, covering all workers employed for organised work. The fitness-for-work medical examination may be pre-employment, periodic, extraordinary or a final examination. In Hungary workers cannot be employed without undergoing a pre-employment fitness-for-work examination; the fitness-for-work examination must be repeated every 6 months – 2 years. Checks are carried out regarding the timing of the examinations. The occupational health physician is most familiar with which stresses and strains the employees are subjected to. The occupational health care service knows and keeps contact with the head of the institution or enterprise served. The occupational health care service participates in labour protection activities. In Hungary the occupational health coverage rate is about 87%. At present the National Public Health Programme in Hungary is ongoing within the framework of NPHMOS, and the work of the occupational health care services is closely related to this programme.

#### Weaknesses:

- Local municipalities with less than 20 employees do spend any money on labour protection or occupational health; their first priority is profitability, and most often they do not elect any labour protection representatives either.

- The fitness-for-work examinations are not performed everywhere.
- The authority inspection, which could threaten penalties if there is a lack of occupational health care, is insufficient.
- Some basic occupational health care services are lacking a quality assurance system and are therefore not comparable.
- Labour protection focuses on classic occupational illnesses, which do not occur in the public administration sector. Mental stress and the MSD group of illnesses are neglected as occupational diseases.
- There is no independent accident insurance for occupational diseases and accidents.
- No occupational health record is kept on the public administration sector at NPHMOS.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

#### **Strengths:**

In Hungary, according to the Labour Protection Act and the sectorial decrees, the employer is obliged to provide occupational health care service for all workers employed in organised work. During the fitness-for-work medical examination the physician from the basic occupational health care service records the employee's lifestyle habits (smoking, drinking, sports and nutrition). The recorded data is regularly analysed. The occupational health care service not only assesses and records the lifestyle habits, but gives information and advises on activity aimed at changing harmful habits. The basic occupational health care service also organises targeted screening examinations and vaccinations. The protection of non-smokers, and the use and marketing of tobacco products is regulated by law. There is no legal regulation of drug use. The occupational health care participated in 20282 presentations on health preservation and 8541 programmes on health preservation in 2001.

#### **Weaknesses:**

- There is no legal regulation regarding health preservation in Hungary.
- Assessments serving health promotion, prepared according to harmonised guidelines, are scarce in occupational health.
- Few training, information materials (written and/or electronic) are available for use in the public administration sector.
- There is no motivation to change harmful habits.
- Compared to the private sector, income levels are much lower in the public administration sector and therefore employees can spend less on health promotion.

### **Consequences and need for action**

- Health promotion and health preservation needs legal regulation.
- The present 87% occupational health coverage in Hungary should be extended.
- Laws restricting drug use should be tightened and should be consistently observed.
- Creation of techniques for motivating people to change harmful lifestyle habits.
- All leaders should be encouraged to support health promotion.
- All civil organisations should be encouraged to support health promotion.
- The media should be encouraged to support health promotion.

- The establishment of an information and counselling communication system for occupational health is needed.
- The establishment of an independent accident insurance system, covering occupational diseases and accidents is needed.

## Iceland

### **The current practice of statutory health and safety in public administrations**

The legally prescribed healthcare issues in public administration sector in Iceland are quite satisfactory. Security managers that are supposed to be co-operating with the OHS should be found in all companies with 10 or more employees, according to the law. In smaller enterprises a shop steward, elected according to trade union rules, should be in charge. Employers should see to it that the security manager receives training in the form of courses held by the OHS about workplace health and safety.

Even though the system is officially established in public administrative sectors in this country, it is clear that the S.M. system functions better in the larger companies. It also functions best in places where the work environment is considered the most difficult from a safety point of view. One may question the merits of not electing security managers in enterprises with less than 10 employees. In fact it would be better to elect S.M.'s in these companies as well, at least where there are five or more employees.

It is clearly a weakness in Icelandic law that it does not take the mental and social sides of work safety factors into consideration. It has proven difficult to implement fines due to their neglect on the basis of the law.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

Health promotion at the workplace is not a legal requirement in this country. There is, however, greater emphasis on health promotion in the work place, partly due to EU/89/301 and partly due to the increased awareness of the work place as a congenial place for health promoting activities. As there is not much information available concerning work-related illnesses and stress factors affecting the workers, the management in the establishments have not made a connection between the employee's well-being and better results for the company.

The selection and documentation of models for good practice of WHP in public administration sector showed that problems with the application of WHP in the public administrative sector mostly occur because the task of working on and taking responsibility for the implications of projects within WHP that have been started is rarely designated to one person. Employees do this work alongside their main job and are reluctant to devote a lot of time to it due to their workload. In the survey it became clear that if the executive management in the company does not see to it that WHP is incorporated into the rest of the management and policy of the company, then the effort will never amount to more than a few short-term projects.

In Iceland a lot of emphasis has been placed on quality management in recent years, as well as registered security systems, and many managers have adopted those management policies. The problem with these systems is that most of the time WHP is not included in them, and tends therefore to be forgotten.

### **Consequences and need for action**

It is clear that larger institutions with access to larger and more specialised workforces are able to use different methods to smaller ones. This must also apply to work that is aimed at health promotion in the workplace. It is therefore very important to develop ways for smaller institutions to promote health in the workplace. An important way is to draw attention to WHP, for example as it appears in the Lisbon and The Luxembourg Declarations.

When the Administration of Occupational Safety and Health (AOSH) became the National Contact Office in Iceland a co-operation group was formed to work with the project, thus linking the other parties of interest to Workplace Health Promotion in Iceland. In the co-operation group there are representatives from the Administration of Occupational Safety and Health, The Directorate of Health and the Ministry of Health. The group has discussed the status of WHP in Iceland and mostly gathered information regarding these matters. The Lisbon and Luxembourg Declarations have been translated and distributed to the Board of AOSH, the Ministries, the employers association, labour unions, health centres and to those companies that are known to be interested in these fields.

The Lisbon statement and the Luxembourg-declaration about Workplace Health Promotion undoubtedly give many Icelanders a new perspective, although no research has been done to see how people interpret the concept. The relationship between management, work organisation and health are important issues that are made visible, to mention only a few examples. An important task awaiting the National Contact Office is to spread a new way of thinking and new methods and to make sure they are established. As there are plans to formally establish OHS services for employees in the near future, new channels will be opening to propagate the ideas of Workplace Health Promotion and strengthen the program.

## Ireland

### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

Current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in the Public Administration sector is hard to evaluate in relation to other sectors for the following reasons:

- There is a general lack of information about the performance of the occupational health and safety system in Ireland
- There is a lack of data specifically with regard to the Public Administration sector

The data that is available would, however, suggest the following:

- Risks due to posture and movement are lower than in the economy as a whole
- Risks due to physical exposures are lower than in the economy as a whole
- Risks due to psychosocial exposures are lower than in the economy as a whole
- Accident rates are lower than in the economy as a whole
- There are too few fatal accidents to compare with the economy as a whole

With regard to the practice of OHS, there is little data available to allow for a definitive assessment of how it functions. Informed opinion would, however, suggest that the following statements are true:

- The public administration sector is not viewed as a high-risk sector by the labour inspectorate
- Trade union membership is higher than in the economy as a whole. This is likely to lead to stronger OHS practice in the sector.
- Some trade union data suggest that OHS practice is stronger than in the private sector

Given this lack of information, it is possible to point to some of the more obvious weaknesses with regard to OHS practice. In the public administration sector it should be noted however, that these weaknesses are not necessarily confined to the sector, as they can be found with reference to many other sectors of the economy as well.

- There is a lack of data available to indicate the level of risk in the sector
- There is a lack of centralised data on the performance of OHS systems in the sector
- Psychosocial risk factors are not dealt with in a preventive manner to any great extent (however, there are some initiatives about to begin which may correct this situation)
- The legislative background does not encourage the widespread take-up of professional OHS services (there is no obligation for organisations to use OHS services)

Despite this relatively negative background, there are probably a number of strengths in the sector that promote better OHS practice. These include:

- High trade union membership
- Better than average culture towards OHS
- Improved availability of methods and tools for preventive OHS
- Increased numbers of trained OHS personnel

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

Workplace health promotion in Ireland has only recently become a more important priority for the parties involved. In particular, the past 12-18 months has seen an increased commitment to providing trained staff with responsibility for WHP by the ten local health authorities. Moreover, there is some (anecdotal) evidence that employers in all sectors are beginning to see WHP as a means of improving staff retention in an economy which has been booming and has effectively reached full employment levels. However, these strengths tend to apply to the economy as a whole, rather than to the public administration sector specifically.

The major strengths of WHP in the economy as a whole at present are:

- Increased commitment to providing WHP staff, especially through the national Cardiovascular Strategy

- Increasing awareness of the possibilities provided by WHP
- Increasing pressure for organisations to retain staff, often recognising that workplace health and well-being is an important element in any successful strategy
- Improving infrastructure for WHP in terms of tools and methods and training
- Initial development of networks for WHP

There are, however, a number of obvious weaknesses in relation to WHP development in the Public Administration sector. This assessment is based on the limited information available and on expert opinion. These weaknesses include:

- There is no centralised data collection on the practice of WHP in the sector, nor in the economy as a whole
- There is no identifiable WHP policy for the sector. There is, however, some evidence that individual local authorities may have some policy in this regard.
- Much of the practice which has been identified as part of this investigation would indicate that it is exclusively focused on lifestyle factors
- The Public Administration sector is not seen as a coherent sector. It is made up of a number of disparate organisations, responsibility for which is dispersed at national level. This makes it unlikely that policy or practice for the sector will be developed for the sector as a whole.

Taken together, these strengths and weaknesses do not suggest that there will be a revolution of practice of WHP in the sector in the coming years. It is, however, likely that there will be an increase in practice, as general economic and labour market factors act as a stimulus to improve the health and well-being of the workforce. In addition, the improved availability of WHP services is bound to have some impact in the coming years.

### **Consequences and need for action**

There are a number of factors which are combining to improve the prospects for integrated workplace health management systems in the economy as a whole in Ireland in the coming years. These include:

- Ageing workforces, especially in the public sector
- Tight labour markets, with serious labour shortages, often in the public sector
- Initiatives to improve integrated workplace health services. For example:
  - development of a pilot integrated workplace health service with local health authorities
  - increased co-operation between health promotion and health and safety policy makers
  - recent launch of a stress-prevention package by health and safety authorities
  - improved recognition of workplace health issues (as opposed to safety issues) by major stakeholders
  - individual projects which are adopting a new and integrated approach to workplace health issues

None of these developments are specific to the Public Administration sector, however. Within this sector it has been hard to identify specific initiatives which are likely to have a major influence on the prospects for WHP development. Unlike many EU countries, Ireland does not have an agenda to reduce the numbers employed in public services, and this factor does not offer opportunities to pro-

mote WHP. In addition, though, there are efforts to improve public services; these initiatives are not seen in the light of WHP, as far as can be told.

However, the above-named factors all are capable of acting as a stimulus to improving the demand for and supply of integrated workplace health services in Ireland. It should be noted that these forces are essentially 'bottom-up' forces, and there are no current plans to make and roll out national plans for the development of integrated workplace health services, either in the public administration sector or elsewhere.

## Italy

### The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations

The same laws that regulate the other sectors of the working world regulate the current practice of statutory occupational safety and health in the public administration.

Following the enforcement of Law 833/78 a number EU Directives on safety in the workplace have been implemented. That culminated in the promulgation of the Decree 626/94 (modified several times, last time 21/12/2001 DL 402/01) incorporating other decrees, including 391/89 (Framework Directive). The Legislative Decree is a collection of general regulations and indications for prevention in the workplace that is divided into levels:

- A *first level* within the company, where the employer is obliged to guarantee the health and safety of his employees. He must do this by identifying and evaluating the risks and considering the preventive measures identified by the "Company Prevention and Protection Service". This is defined as "that group of people, systems and external or internal company means aimed at any activity of prevention and protection from occupational risks within the company". In the case of small enterprises the person in charge of this service can be the employer himself, who is also obliged to inform and train workers on the risks deriving from their jobs.

To oversee health, employers collaborate with the Occupational Physician, who can be a company employee, freelance or employed by a private or government body.

The participation of the employees, a basic criteria for workable prevention, is assured by an "*employees' representative for Prevention and Safety*" (RLS) within the company. This person is required to take an active part in the application of prevention regulations, both in terms of complete collaboration with other people involved in prevention within the company, and also to stimulate the workers themselves, as they should be the recipients of prevention regulations.

- As *second level* the Decree indicates: the Local Health Services (A.S.L.). In particular it indicates the Workplace Prevention and Safety Services that are located in the Department of Prevention, responsible for checking and surveillance of the application of laws related to health and safety according to Legislative Decree 626/94. From this very brief description it appears clear that it is a system based on active participation of all the figures present in the workplace. When this happens the system works, but when one of the figures does not play his part, this makes the system collapse.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

It is quite impossible to point out what strengths and weaknesses exist in the current practice of WHP in the public administration sector for the simple reason very few initiatives of this kind have been carried out. What can be said is that since the publication of the National Health Plan 1998-2000 the concept of health promotion, and in particular workplace health promotion, has become much more familiar in Italy. In fact one of the initiatives that took place right after this by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor (now Ministry of Welfare) was to call in a number of experts from all over the country and from all the stakeholders involved or that must be involved in improving the health of the workers. This group of experts started by analysing the current situation (monitoring system, available data, causes, obstacles, on-going activities, etc.) and finished pointing out a number of solutions. The document presented to WHP is given a very high profile. The Government assumed this document and presented it in a National Conference on Workplace Safety (Genova 3-4-5/12/99). Parallel to this ISPESL and the University of Perugia promoted a series of initiatives (organization of National Information days and National Conferences on WHP, speeches at several national conferences, production of informative material, etc.) in order to reinforce these and other initiatives at European level.

### **Consequences and need for action**

The public administration sector is in a critical situation. The population aspects are mainly from this sector and the national government decided to introduce the concepts used in the private sector, productivity, quality, etc. On the one hand this can introduce several risks, but the experience of the last years tell us that the quality concept goes arm in arm with WHP. Given the aforementioned facts, this observation makes the situation positive yet critical at the same time. Critical due to evolution. The concepts of WHP have only been introduced over the past few years, and in order to facilitate the introduction of this concept (with OSH concept) several steps still have to be made:

- Harmonization of the regulations in force regarding health and safety in the workplace with those for the enacting of European directives;
- Enactment foreseen of the law decree concerning "Amendments to and integration of the Law Decree 494/96";
- Completion of the regulations for high-risk sectors;
- The reorganization of the central institutions and organisms, consistent with the multi-disciplinary organizational model of collective prevention in the workplace, in particular research development, information, and training activities and guaranteeing technical-scientific support to the prevention system.
- Education and training for health and safety in the workplace:
  - Development of a culture of prevention in the life environment and at the workplace by introducing information on health and safety during school activities;
  - Development of safety-protection arguments in professional schools;
  - Development of training activities for the professionals working in the field of security and health in workplaces;
  - Development of specific training for those workers who will occupy the role of "employees' representative for Prevention and Safety" (RLS);



- Development of courses on safety and health for all employees giving particular attention to those who carry out a higher risk activity.
- To back operative services and instruments with adequate human and technical resources;
- Step up controls, making it possible to involve at least 10% of the units p.a. in the fields of highest risk, guaranteeing the involvement of the RLS-RLST;
- Clear definition of the responsibilities of the various public services with regard to the inspection of workplaces and coordination of the activities of the various administrations so as to implement an integrated program of intervention responding to the specific needs of different territories and in following with national regulations;
- To implement new and more effective methodological supervisory models, so as to tie them in with the transformations in the working world, in the country's productive structure and in the new regulations, also with programmatic agreements that have preventive objectives. In particular, supervisory activities must be oriented towards the control of work processes and procedures, in order to give an important contribution to the definition of the levels of prevention possible in different working environments;
- Development of preventive activities by means of adequate measures of information, training and assistance for those interested in the application of the regulations on health and safety in the workplace, aiming at coordination and synergism among the designated administrations (Art. 24, L.D. 628/94 and subsequent amendments and integration) with a view towards the rationalization and systematization of the actions, also by implementing specific decentralized instruments such as the "prevention counter";
- To devise and carry out systems for the surveillance of work hazards and injuries, also through the integrated management of systems for the registration of risks of exposure and of occupational diseases as provided by law.

## Liechtenstein/Switzerland

### The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations

Workplace health promotion is still hardly established in Switzerland. This applies both to public administration and the private sector. Accurate statements on the dissemination, type and scope of workplace health promotion in administration are, however, not possible owing to a lack of systematic data. The following picture of workplace health promotion in public administration is produced for Switzerland on the basis of expert opinions and allowing for information from national and canton institutions and administrations:

- Systematic health management is only pursued in isolated cases.
- Individual and, above all, very large administrations are very active. However, the activities are generally localised. They are scarcely networked and mostly limited in time. Sustained activities are the exception.
- Where prevention is implemented, it is in most cases behaviour-oriented, rarely circumstantial-oriented, i.e. factors of the working environment, the work organisation and the work tasks are only seldom integrated into workplace health promotion concepts. The predominant strategy for WHP is the individual..

In spite of this rather sobering conclusion, there has also been increased interest in issues of workplace health promotion in public administrations in recent years. This trend is to be viewed positively; holistic concepts and the resultant systematic implementation of workplace health promotion measures are, however, still largely a rarity.

### **Consequences and need for action**

#### **Systematic data**

Systematic data to evaluate the status quo of workplace health promotion in public administration is only available to a limited extent. Such data is very important for an assessment of the type and extent of workplace health promotion in administrations. It is only in this way that strengths and weaknesses can become evident and suitable measures derived to improve the company health management. Systematic data should be available both on national and canton level as well as on the level of individual administrations.

#### **Comprehensive concepts**

If the existing measures of workplace health promotion in public administration are considered, the impression is gained that there is no consensus on the definition of the terms health and health management. This results in isolated intervention focal points, which are sometimes selected arbitrarily. Therefore, various measures, e.g. relaxation exercises, smoking and alcohol prevention, exercise motivation and programmes on the ergonomic design of workplaces can be found. Other condition-oriented measures are only met in exceptional cases.

A uniform health definition including physical, mental, psychosocial and organisational factors should be aimed for. Only in this way can comprehensive concepts of company health management be developed. Without questioning the responsibility of the individual for his health, a one-sided behaviour-oriented strategy of company health management should be avoided. A uniform understanding of company health management must also allow for circumstantially oriented measures.

To guarantee quality assurance, thus broaching the subject again of systematic data acquisition, emphasis must increasingly be placed on conducting an evaluation of the action taken. Ideally, an evaluation is not made in isolation but as part of pan-company information systems for the management or in connection with projects relating to job design and organisation development.

#### **Networks**

The federal structure of Switzerland and the related decentralised organisation of the public administrations represent a problem for workplace health promotion. Compared with large institutions, this produces obstacles for small administrations in implementing comprehensive health management concepts, be it due to a lack of resources or shortage of experts. This represents a parallel situation to that in the SME sector. This problem could be countered with more activities in networks, on the one hand, with the aim of sharing information and experience and, on the other hand, for the purpose of selectively exploiting synergetic effects in the development and implementation of workplace health promotion concepts.

## Netherlands

### The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations

The percentage of employees working in the Public Administration Sector is 11% (61% men and 39% women). In general the social and economic framework of the public administration sector does not differ from the business sector. However, the government has a reward advantage of 3% compared to the business sector. In the sectors police and provinces the advantage is even higher. In the business sector full-timers earn more than part-timers. Child care and maternity leave arrangements seem to be a bit better in the Public Administration Sector. The labour market situation in the Public Administration Sector has changed a lot, which has resulted in more attention to working conditions and prevention.

In Europe, The Netherlands is the leader with regard to workload. A survey held since 1974 about working conditions, conducted by Statistics Netherlands (CBS), shows minimal reductions of exposure to physical hazards (noise, polluted air, heat, cold vibrations, carrying heavy loads, and working in tiring positions). Furthermore, there is a clear decline of the share of monotonous work. This share diminished by one third and can be seen as an improvement of quality of working life. This does not differ much between the public and private sector, but physical working conditions seem to be a bit better. On the other hand, however, there is a growing number of employees who report working at high speed and with tight deadlines. In 1977 this was reported by 39%, in 1992 this percentage rose to 56% and in 1997 it was reported by 59% of the workforce. Furthermore, 10% of the workforce shows symptoms of serious psychological fatigue. Policemen, teaching staff, and people working in the printing industry and health care suffer from especially high workloads.

The better physical working conditions (except for RSI) have been mentioned as an important reason (19%) for employees of the private sector to change their job to the public administration sector.

Relatively many employees (57%) of the public administration sector experience their work as heavy mental work. In the private sector this figure is 42%. The work is perceived as emotionally exhausting when the employee cannot influence the content of work. On this aspect the public administration sector has a more positive score but less positive compared with the business service sector.

One of the biggest problems in the Public Administration Sector is the difficulty in defining the output parameters. When are clients sufficiently satisfied? When is the quality of a policy document, a marketing plan, or a research proposal satisfactory enough? Empowered employees, negotiating with independent and emancipated internal or external clients, must set their own goals and increasingly determine the quality level of the required output themselves.

There is a good deal of attention for Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI). For the Public Administration Sector there is a covenant. The target set is a reduction of at least 10% in 2001.

Compliance to legal OSH obligations is better in the Public Administration Sector than in the private sector. In 2000 100% of the workforce worked in organisations in the Public Administration Sector in which a risk assessment and evaluation had been carried out (compared to 46% in the private sector).

In the Public Administration Sector 92% of the organisations have a written policy for reduction of sickness absenteeism (compared to 37% in the private sector).

A new campaign has been launched by the Dutch Government, The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. Conventions are concluded with a number of sectors. The conventions constitute an important element of the policy of the Dutch government in improving working conditions. These conventions can be described as agreements on joint action programmes; the participants in the joint action programmes are the central government (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment) and employers and employee organisations that represent sectors concerned. In the Public Administration Sector the following conventions are concluded:

■ *Intention statements*

Social job creation: lifting, RSI, pressure of work, early reintegration  
Defence activities: lifting

■ *Conventions:*

Central government: pressure of work, RSI, early reintegration  
Municipalities: lifting, pressure of work, RSI, early reintegration, aggression & violence  
Police: pressure of work, early reintegration

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

According to the trend survey of WHP in The Netherlands there is sufficient interest in WHP in the Public Administration Sector, but still a clear knowledge gap of what WHP can contribute to organisations. The Dutch Centre of WHP should therefore keep on focusing on awareness and training OHS-employees in the area of WHP.

Most attention within WHP in the Public Administration Sector has been focused on smoking, alcohol and exercise. There is a wish to do more about working pressure and integrated WHP programmes.

Attention is, as in the private sector, still mainly focused on OHS and on preventing sickness not on promoting health and well-being. There is, however, a trend in the positive direction since public organisations started appearing on the list of "best companies to work for".

In the business sector work is more structural and programmed. Working processes are better managed and controlled. Working with quality systems for example, is much more normal in the private sector than in the Public Administration Sector.

Another difficulty in the Public Administration Sector is the hierarchical structure which means that all processes are much slower. This means that initiatives sometimes die because of slow working procedures.

Working in the Public Administration Sector is less product-oriented but more policy-driven. This means that management is often less interested in WHP than in the private sector.

### **Consequences and need for action**

Raising awareness is the first point of attention. Increasing knowledge and understanding about WHP is important. Most information available at the moment is on occupational safety and health and on legal regulations.

Secondly there should be a change in focus from sickness to health. The budgets now available are

mainly being used for the 8% employees who are ill at home and not on the 92% of the employees who are working. This means that more investment in WHP in public organisations is required.

Developments in the field of WHP in the public sector should be linked to initiatives which already exist in the field of OHS. They should be working together. An example is to include specific WHP needs assessment questions in the obliged risk inventory.

Another item to develop is that the health policy should be one of the items in the collective agreements for public sector. There is a trend to make collective agreements fit more to personal needs. Personal needs in the area of WHP also differ, so it is an opportunity to include health.

In the Public Administration Sector certain WHP aspects deserve attention. Campaigns about conflicts at work, styles of leadership, RSI and working pressure and about health management and quality systems would be very helpful in improving the well-being of employees and organisations.

There should also be a good monitoring system to manage all these processes and to have sufficient information at policy level. In the area of OHS this data-gathering has improved a lot. Data on the determinants of increasing health instead of decreasing health (sickness) are hardly available. One of the methods to define these determinants is to create a database of models of good practice in the Public Sector.

## Norway

### Introduction

In general, legislation and regulations in Norway with regard to the working environment are the same both in private industry and in the public sector. The authorities detailed demands are dependent on the actual production and which types of risk factors the employees are exposed to.

There are differences in the working environment field between branches, small and large enterprises, private and public sectors. These inequalities are documented by several surveys, but we do not have systematic figures for all sectors with regard to exposures for groups such as gender, age, occupation etc. This has been a problem in this report when trying to show and document the situation in the public administration sector and compare with data from the private sector.

This summary will therefore look upon current practise of statutory occupational safety and health and workplace health promotion in general and outline what is coming in near future. From my point of view I do not see any main differences in the private and public sector today and where to go tomorrow.

### The Working Environment Act

The Act regarding factory inspection (1892) forms the basis for the Norwegian working environment legislation, and is traced back to the Norwegian industrial revolution. For a fairly long period of time, it involved awarding the employees basic rights on the one hand, and protecting them from accidents and injuries caused by industrial technology and administration on the other.

Until the 1970s, protection of the workers was mainly an issue of avoiding acute hazards at the workplace. Legislation regarding protection of workers based on juridical, technological and medical reasons and expertise developed from these requirements. The most important tools were the establishment of measurable marginal values and standards as well as detail-oriented control and inspection.

Influenced by knowledge of how important employee participation and co-determination actually is, the Working Environment Act of 1977 came as the main basis for today's occupational and safety work.

Even if the objectives are general, the intention of the law is ambitious. The objectives of the Act state that a continuous improvement of the working environment must take place, independently of the current situation. Thus, the act's dynamic character is being emphasised at the same time, because the work with the working environment gives an impression of being a permanent development initiative in the enterprises.

A basis for the formulation of the regulations of the act is also the view that internal processes in the enterprises are decisive in order to create the development and change that the law aspires to. Discussions regarding work environment issues are to be stimulated at the workplace. The Act is based on the established co-operation in working life between employees, employers and public authorities. It draws limits for the work environment standards as well as the teamwork in the enterprises. It is also based on the parties finding joint solutions to problems at the same time as the employer is held responsible for operating the working environment work in line with the requirements of the Act.

The Working Environment Act draws a strategy for improving the work environment. This implies that the local level will now be the most important arena for development of solutions. The Act is, in this respect, less directed to control from higher levels or outside the enterprise, and more directed to development and learning on the basis of experience and conditions on each workplace.

### **Systematic health, environmental and safety work (HES)**

From the passing of the Act in 1977 to 1991, there was a development towards an increasingly stronger focus on the enterprises' participation in the work with the working environment. In this manner, the tendencies have turned in a way that the enterprises themselves are to initiate systematic protection work by lining out the working environment and formulating plans of action. As a result of this development, a regulation on systematic health, environment and safety (internal control regulation) was passed in 1991. The regulation firmly expresses that the enterprises are to make sure that the work environment factors are to be kept under control through systematic follow-ups on the requirements of the legislation. Simultaneously, employees are to be involved in this work through local co-operation.

To which extent there are authority demands regarding the volume of documentation depends on the enterprise and its activity, production hazards and size. Such documentation and assessments must be carried out by the enterprises themselves and they have to follow up over time.

### **Status quo of the regulation on HES**

The Internal Control Regulation in all enterprises is the main reform of the nineties in the field of HES work. Several surveys and evaluations have been carried out to see if the regulation is implemented and has resulted in appropriate work in the working environment.

One survey in 1999 evaluated HES work in Norwegian enterprises (Skaar, Dahl, Torvatn, 1999). 1800 enterprises in the private and public sectors were assessed with regard to their implementation of the HES regulation and half of the group had fulfilled it. If we look at the figures of the private, state and local authority sectors they were 44, 78 and 63 percent respectively. The private sector turned out as the worst but one aspect could be their high volume of small sized enterprises, which we already know have problems with the authorities' compulsory legislative requirements. Even though this did not explain the complete difference, the conclusion was that the local authority and the state sector have implemented HES to a greater extent.

The report discusses the tension in the regulation between two strategies. On the one hand there are demands based on the Working Environment Act's idea of participation, co-determination and the importance of self-learning and local solutions. On the other hand there is a way of thinking adopted from the engineers, where the regulation is looked upon as a technical/administrative tool for an effective target price. This way of thinking focuses on the tool itself and not on the customers and an area of application.

Confusion and conflicts could be the results and cause managers to lose their commitment and perform the HES work as a compulsory exercise to satisfy the authorities. Some results showed that the enterprises experienced that their systematic HES work is a contribution to a better working environment.

### **Workplace Health Promotion**

The HES professionals and the research institutions together with the social partners are working hard and are determined to achieve a better working environment in the enterprises. The national authorities are following up with legislation and regulations.

There is a focus on the traditional preventive work, applicable to risk factors threatening the environment and the health of the employees. Less attention is paid to the challenges of how to create the health-promoting workplace and how to establish this effort on the agenda and as a natural part of the working environment activity.

In enterprises, both in the private and public sectors, there is great uncertainty with regard to the term WHP. But this can be changed. As said before, the Working Environment Act and the regulation of systematic HES work have a basic demand of participation by the involved employees and their local knowledge at the workplace. They are stakeholders on what is important for their environment and their health.

The misunderstanding that experts can easily prescribe the right solutions is changing. We have now realised the importance of involving the employees actively in the planning and strategy processes. In addition, increasing attention is given to factors outside workplaces, which have influence on the employees' health and where the manager could intervene with appropriate measures.

Several Norwegian enterprises can show measures and processes that fit into the WHP concept. The background is the legislation and regulations within the working environment. This results in expectations for the future and the development of the Norwegian WHP design.

### **Status quo of WHP**

Since Norway attended the European Network Workplace Health Promotion there has been increasing attention and curiosity regarding this concept both from the social partners and the OSH professionals. The press and media have printed interviews and articles on health-promoting workplaces. In addition, the topic has been presented at several conferences and courses and implemented in the training of some OHS professions.

As an effect of raising this attention, a lot of players have moved in and offered managers so-called "health-promoting" services and products. In general these are characterised by the lack of employee participation and are actually just welfare measures for the individual, e.g. massage, aromatherapy, dieting and slimming.

Such "health-promoting" offers will confuse managers who wish to start up the concept of WHP in their enterprise. They might believe that this is something they can buy from outside without starting a participative and involving process in the enterprise itself. We know this is not the way. Involvement and participation are the fundamentals if you wish to succeed with WHP.

Some WHP projects have been started up both in the private and public sectors. This will increase our knowledge and give national experience, which in turn could start the health-promoting wave in the Norwegian enterprises.

### **Needs for new action and new strategies**

In Norway, as in Europe, working life is characterized by increasing international competition, demanding customers and owners, production based on competence and research, more flexible ways of organising the company and staff are more educated and need additional education at the next turn. They act individually and it is necessary to meet their needs in order to keep them in the organisation.

The work has changed. The traditional workplaces in the industry have decreased in number and new types of enterprises are emerging. The new technology and a new way of organising the production are a revolution in working life. The only secure element is the changeover and reorganisation in the enterprise.

The main feature of the nineties is an increasing complexity and growing intensity. The complexity is first and foremost caused by the transparency of the organisations. They appear as open systems doing away with interaction and limits for what is inside and outside.

In addition changes take place at an individual level amongst the staff. They are more educated; have new ideas regarding their working situation and the line between work and private life is sometimes invisible. They are hooked up in demanding and attractive jobs and work 10-12 hours a day. This results in a work overload for a growing number and burn-out syndromes are reported by several surveys and research projects.

In spite of this the majority of the workforce experiences good working days. Last year results from a questionnaire survey showed that 2/3 of the workers agreed on the following statements:

- They are satisfied with their job
- They have nice colleagues, a good atmosphere at work and bullying only to a minimum extent.



- Their work is a source of energy.
- The workload is appropriate.
- They have possibilities to chose their working time and their way of working
- Only a few (1 out of 10) experience work-related health disorders

This is positive, but also states that 1/3 of the workforce does not experience work in this way. There has since been an increase in the sick leave rate in the middle of the nineties and today it is at the highest level ever recorded. This is mainly long-term sick leave (more than 14 days). 7% of the workforce is responsible for 80% of the sick leave and this indicates that a group of the workers experiences heavy workloads in the working environment. There has also been an increase in disability benefit figures – 18% the last five years.

The working conditions can result in reduced health or be an arena for developing good health and personal growth. The survey mentioned earlier came up with 16 circumstances, which hinder or promote health. Exposure of the workers is not dependent on the industry in which he/she works or the work tasks, but how the workplace is organised and the quality of the psychosocial condition.

Good fellowship emerged as a significant health promoter and an effective buffer against unwanted incidents like health disorders and stress.

Both in the private and public sectors there is a growing demand regarding their products and services and the high sick leave rate and disability pension figures are therefore alarming. The social partners and the authorities have been intensively seeking new methods, tools and new alliances within the field of the working environment and sick leave work.

Early this year they signed a so-called “intention agreement” which will change the focus from bad health and absent workers and highlight the possibilities for good health and what the worker can do if he/she is given help and minor necessary changes at the workplace.

This is a breakthrough for the ideas of workplace health promotion in Norway. In November this year the partners of the agreement together with the National Contact Office (the national institute of occupational health) will arrange a national conference. The objectives are to work out the Norwegian design of WHP and to launch this concept as a conclusive strategy and method in the work on putting a stop to the increase in sick leave.

## Portugal

### Introduction

Health at work needs more attention from Government Agencies, Employers Associations and Trade Unions. Specifically in the case of the Public Administration as employer, greater cooperation between all departments and services of Central and Local Administration is necessary to meet workers' health needs and capacity promotion. Major involvement is expected from departments with the ability to plan, inform, train and enforce WHP in the Public Administration and to fund this investment.

We feel that workers' health is so relevant and has such an impact on sustainable development that

the interest and knowledge of occupational health and safety and health promotion should be an attribute of all individuals in any activity and at any level. For this reason the global capacity evaluation of every worker, in particularly those with management functions, should consider this issue of health and safety promotion as a priority like all the other required practical and theoretic qualifications.

### **The current practice of statutory health and safety in public administrations**

We value the importance of a new health and safety culture, which is a basic necessity for self-protection and development of generalised and active participation in OHS.

It is necessary to disseminate information on risk assessment and control (traditional and emergent risks).

The mechanisms of workers' consultation and participation should be improved to achieve the necessary management and staff commitment.

The Labour Inspection is not very active at Public Administration workplaces, and its visibility is essentially limited to the public works where fatal accidents occur.

The recently created Public Administration Inspection is not yet very involved in OHS functionality.

The gap between legal prescriptions and implemented actions should be reduced.

The knowledge and legislation available are the positive points. The lack of dissemination, motivation as well as individual and collective decision are the weaker points.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

We place great value on developing a new health culture to programme and develop WHP in a participative way, with a strong management and staff commitment.

It is necessary to develop information as well as the individual's interest, knowledge and involvement in order to create awareness, self-care and the decision to participate in collective activities.

We note the lack of information on unhealthy behaviour and lifestyles and on up-to-date knowledge of strategies to promote health, among the most relevant difficulties in changing habits and introducing healthy behaviour.

There is a lack of interest at the individual and collective levels to participate in WHP and difficulties to change habits and to introduce healthy behaviour. Those are the weaker points.

Strong aspects of WHP are related to the social and economic results that should be considered and valorised by management.

### **Consequences and need for action**

#### *Main needs*

The situation revision lets us identify some main needs:

- Coverage improvement;
- Consciousness and attitude changes of individuals, employers and community;
- More clear recognition of the economic, social and environment impact;

- Dissemination, including quantified information about the way OHS and WHP could contribute towards a better world by sustainable development.

#### *Future action and final considerations*

In order to motivate the reinforcement of WHP we fully support the Sicily Decalogue prepared specifically by the European Latin and South Countries. The 10 conclusions resulting from this specific project correspond to main lines of action to be implemented.

But, after analysing the consequences of an unhealthy working population and unsatisfactory implementation of Safety and Health Promotion, we justify the value of OHS and WHP accepting those as contributing factors for the satisfaction of global public needs in our modern society.

Nowadays, in a global world that accepts the human development as a goal, *education* and *health* are essential rights of all citizens, and could be classified as global public goods.

- Education, as the base of culture and knowledge, that contributes to continuous competence development, including the areas of creating competence for people's health and safety.
- Health recognised as a priority by all human beings, governments, societies and international organisations.

Accepting education and health as social values, governments, social partners and the society as a whole have to support the related policies with those sustainable development pillars.

The modern society expects OHS and WHP scope enlargement in order to consider the life quality, well-being, human development as well as the new scientific and management areas of OHS.

Workers' health importance has the individual, enterprise, collective and social consensual recognition. We defend the OHS and WHP characterisation as global public goods taking into account relevant concepts and conditions as such:

- Health and safety are essential human rights;
- OHS and WHP influences the worker and the organisations' performance;
- OHS and WHP are an individual and collective obligation, with local, regional and universal interest;
- OHS and WHP have impact on almost everyone's quality of life and capacity, recognisable in every place, region and county;
- OHS and WHP have impact on the environment and on other sustainable development determinants;
- OHS and WHP require the commitment of governments, social partners and individuals;
- OHS and WHP improve social interaction, involvement and participation.

Different areas and subjects of *Management and Workers' Health* have to be studied with special attention in order and as a condition to improve the actual situation.

## Romania

### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

As a general comment, the public administration sector is undergoing a phase of development in which employees' health requirements are not on the list of top priorities.

Nevertheless, employers are mandated to respect the conclusions of the OHS physician and to guarantee the necessary funds for the following services according to ministerial resolutions (resolutions by the Minister of Health and Family No. 615/2001 regarding obligatory OHS):

- recruitment of personnel for appropriate jobs accordingly to their physiological and psychological abilities;
- maintenance and promotion of health as well as the maintenance of employee working capacity;
- prevention of industrial accidents, industrial diseases or work-related diseases.

The OHS departments from the Public Health Directorates are mandated to prepare reports containing data for the national informational system (industrial illness, illness resulting in temporary working incapacity and working accidents etc.)

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

Health promotion is undergoing a period of developing resources and establishing alliances. The national network of health promotion has been reinforced through new legislation. A two-year training programme for health promotion is offered to all members of the network with the necessary abilities to develop such programmes, including those for workplace health promotion.

Workplace health promotion represents a real challenge for the Romanian National Health Promotion Network. Unfortunately, the cooperation between health promotion professionals and occupational health and safety professionals has not been seen as a global joint campaign to implement an integrative approach for health at work. Local programmes have more or less benefited from the multi-disciplinary teams, mainly on the basis of good cooperation within the local communities. Another dimension that has been lacking for an integrative approach is environmental management.

### **Consequences and need for action**

The protection of life, physical integrity and health of employees at the workplace comes under the heading of health safety in Romania. The state only provides the legislative standard framework (the law on labour safety, general standards for labour safety, standards for labour security, methodological standards for applying legislation in the field and specific standards for labour security etc), which forces the leaders of the institutions to draw up and implement instructions for labour safety, taking into account the characteristics of labour processes. These instructions are designed to eliminate the risks of accidents and industrial diseases caused by these characteristics. There is no specific legislation for OHS in the field of public administration. Moreover, the term "public administration" is difficult to define.

Once the CAEN was adopted it became compulsory to report all statistic indicators according to this classification. Unfortunately, most of the available data was included in older classifications (difficult to compare to present classifications). During the process of collecting data there were problems regarding the classification of activities and institutions included in the public administration sector; many of the materials used in the documentation process used their own criteria. On the other hand, most of the data included indicators referring to absenteeism or the number of disabled people etc; there is potential, but they are not centralised at any level.

According to the law on labour safety pertaining to organisational structures, it is compulsory for institutions in the public administration sector to establish two committees. The first one – the Committee for Labor Safety is formed by engineers and is responsible for implementing standards for labour safety. The second one – the Committee for Health and Labour Safety is organized in the institutions with at least 50 employees and its tasks include carrying out medical examinations when employees are hired and periodic medical examinations. Unfortunately, the characteristics of the workplace environment in this field (compared to the private sector or enterprises) determined that the activity of the two committees should only be formal. The preoccupations and knowledge of these committees' members regarding their responsibilities and their obligations regarding employees' health and safety are rather limited. This factor is another reason for the lack of concrete data regarding industrial diseases or those relating to work-related disorders.

At the moment the Romanian Ministry for European Integration is carrying out a PHARE program, whose main objective is to implement OHS components into the organisational structure of institutions in Romania.

In this context the legislative framework from the field of OHS is adapted and maximalised. Order of the MOHF No. 615/ September 2001 regarding organisation and functioning of the occupational health services includes the public administration sector for the first time. The first official request for occupational health / occupational safety evaluation came from the leader of one public administration authority from the City Hall of Bucharest.

## Sweden

### **The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations**

Two fairly significant trends can be discerned regarding the development of working life and the working environment within the public sector – the alarming increase in psychosocial working environment problems, and although not as obvious, the reorientation from illness and treatment to health and prevention and from research on problems to “the power of good examples”.

As is evident from previously presented statistics, employees from the Swedish public sector appear to be exposed to relatively few physical environmental working problems, such as lifting heavy items, and exposure to noise and chemicals. In addition, a highly effective control and amendment system

within this field of work has been established in Sweden for a long time. In contrast, the last 10 – 15 years have shown an alarming negative increase in psycho-social problems amongst public employees in Sweden in terms of numbers of diseases, stress, anxiety, burnout and uneasiness about the working situation. This is particularly true amongst workers in the social services sector, such as health, care and schools. We are touching on more complex issues here regarding the working environment essential for work and research, where knowledge must be increased significantly and where means for public investigation, action and follow-up have still not been fully adjusted.

The second development trend is the move from treatment to prevention. Until now interest within medical research and other research dealing with working life has focussed to a large extent on how and why some people become ill at a certain level of exposure and, to a lesser degree, on why the majority remain healthy afterwards, despite being subjected to various health hazards and working strain. Moreover, one could argue that the OSH strategies so far have been aimed at defensive control, treatment and rehabilitation at the expense of work on public health and prevention. Indications are that the “salutogenetic” (health promotion) perspectives are attracting more interest in research as well as in public debate. One such example is the Government 11 – point programme for a healthier working life, where, among other things, more resources are being allocated to projects that identify and document examples of good working environments and positive processes of change in the area.

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

Primarily one could argue that differences between private and public sectors are minimal in this respect. Generally it can be established that health-promoting and preventive work environment efforts are being made at a limited, even cautious pace. The authority in Sweden that could fulfil an important function in this respect is the Occupational Health Service (Företagshälsovården, FHV). Over the last decade FHV has been subject to significant changes. This includes a change of focus from enforcing working environment regulations from the National Board of Working Environment to customer-orientated attitudes on a “health market” signified by competition between different health care producers. This also means that more emphasis is being placed on efforts within an organisational structure.

Another, and most likely, negative change is that Government subsidies to FHV were cancelled in 1993, meaning that the FHV is totally dependant on the market and that both production and marketing is carried out in competition

With other similar producers of health care FHV thus became a free player on a free and non-regulated health care market. There are obvious signs that the supply of occupational health and safety services has deteriorated and the preventive work tends to decrease.

A major investigation on the FHV is currently underway. The result is likely to be a significant reinforcement of the role the FHV plays in working environment work, including initiatives for prevention and health promotion.

## Consequences and need for action

Due to the alarming increase in psychosocial disorders in recent years and the constantly increasing sickness rate amongst big and important occupational groups in the public administration sector (health, care and schools), increasing efforts are expected by Government authorities to handle these problems. As a matter of fact, this is shown in a lot of official reports. An important driving force behind these ambitions is the fact that there will be a new demand for social service employees over the next five to ten years.

Secondly, awareness is increasing about the need for greater efforts to move from words to action in certain areas of the work environment. Interest is growing to identify good examples of workplace health promotion and positive processes of development to serve as models of good practice in working life. In many parts of the public administration sector a lot of interesting models of good practice are ongoing, examples that have to be more transparent for a larger group of stakeholders than today.

A third trend of development, which is partly due to what has been said above, is the increasing focus on the importance of work organisation, steering and review as well as leadership and the management structure.

## United Kingdom

### The current practice of statutory occupational health and safety in public administrations

Health and Safety has a devolved structure within the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland has its own Health and Safety Executive (the Health and Safety Executive of Northern Ireland), HSEIN, while the Health and Safety Commission and Executive (HSC and HSE) cover England, Wales and Scotland. The Health and Safety Commission are the policy makers while the Executive are the researchers, engineers and inspectors. There are also local environmental officers who perform inspections. These work independently of the HSE or HSC and independently of each other.

Furthermore, there are several methods of data collection, all of them incomplete:

- **LFS** – Labour Force Survey – survey of 60,000 households in Great Britain
- **RIDDOR** – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations – statutory reports
- **IIS** – Industrial Injuries Scheme – on behalf of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – benefits agency.
- **SWI** – Self-Reporting Work Related Injuries – household survey
- **ODIN** – Voluntary reporting by specialist doctors – occupational disease intelligence network
  - MOSS** – Reports from rheumatologists
  - OPRA** – Reports from occupational physicians
  - OSSA** – Reports from audiologist
  - SWORD** – Surveillance of work-related and occupational respiratory disease
  - SOSMI** – Reporting mental illness

(Northern Ireland) 1997 RIDDOR – Reporting accidents and ill health at work is a legal requirement under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

These factors of devolution and varied methods of measurement result in:

- Different national emphasis
- Different local emphasis
- Difficulty in collecting information
- Difficulty in analysing data
- Poorly correlated if not distinctly opposing data sets.

One of the strengths of the HSE is that its prevention activities are widespread with ongoing research and education in all areas. The HSENI is a new authority (1999) and hence its prevention strategies are not as widespread.

Data on Public Administrations sector reflects high work-related mental health data (from HSE annual report, using MOSS and OPRA reporting strategies) in relation to other industries (5th highest out of 18 major industries). 41 out of 100,000 workers (OPRA) per year were reported to have mental ill health in comparison to 10 for all industries (health and social work, gas, electricity and water supply, mining and quarrying being higher).

21 out of 100,00 workers in Public Administration (OPRA) per year reported upper limb disorder in comparison to 12 from all industries (manufacturing, gas, electricity and water supply having significantly larger amounts).

17 out of 100,00 workers in Public Administration (OPRA) per year reported spine/back disorders in comparison with 7 for all industries (6th highest, health and social work, gas, electricity and water supply, mining and quarrying being higher).

### **The current practice of workplace health promotion in public administrations**

Work Health Promotion has an even more devolved structure than Occupational Health and Safety. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all have their own structures. Similarly to Health and Safety, this leads to different national priorities and programs.

- Scotland has the Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS) – smoking cessation, diet, accident prevention and stress management
- England's organisation is the Health Development Agency (HAD) – this is mostly focused on the National Health Service (NHS).
- Wales is part of the assembly and has a national workplace health promotion strategy in public administration
- Northern Ireland has little co-ordinated activity in health promotion.

Great Britain countries all have national award systems in which public administrations have taken part (Northern Ireland has no such system). All the countries, however, depend on local Workplace Health promotion suppliers to deliver programs. This leads to market-based targets with no specific national strategy and makes it difficult to put national programs in place.

Data on workplace health (from the HSE reports) suggests no specific problems in relation to other industry sectors.



### Consequences and need for action

It is difficult to generalise across the four country sectors and discuss trends, particularly for the future. There appears to be no evidence that modernisation has had an influence on WHP or OSH practices. It is difficult indeed to surmise where the influences for WHP are coming from in each sector, except in Wales where the influences are based on need and political motivations. Wales appears to be focusing on the concept of health promotion in small to medium enterprises while Scotland is focusing on stress and England on the National Health Service.

The Investors in People Standard was developed in 1990 in collaboration with the UK's leading businesses both large and small. The Standard provides a framework for improving business performance and competitiveness through good practice in human resource development. This initiative provided rewards to people who improved the work place; although it evolved from HR it also helped in WHP.

The Securing Health Together strategy is an initiative between the Health and Safety Commission, Health and Safety Executive with Dept for Environment, Transport and Regions, Dept of Health, Dept of Social Security, Dept of Education and Employment, Scotland office, Scottish Executive, Wales office and the National Assembly of Wales. This is setting targets for improving workplace health until 2020. This is, however, a strategy for all industry, not just public administration.

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# European Network for Workplace Health Promotion

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