



**DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN WORK-RELATED HEALTH REPORT AND
ESTABLISHMENT OF MECHANISMS FOR DISSEMINATION AND COOPERATION
IN THE ACCEDING AND CANDIDATE COUNTRIES (EC 2004101)**

WORK HEALTH - Round Table Series

Bulgaria/ Sofia, December 8th

Hour	Presentation	Speaker/ Person in Charge
08.30	Registration	
09.00	Welcome. Introduction: Workplace health promotion – main focus and expected results of the seminar. Statements of the main stakeholders – partners: MH, MLSP, BIA, CITUB	Prof. Dr. Ljubomir Ivanov, Director, National Centre of Public Health Protection, Sofia. Representatives of the organisations – initiators of BF “HSW”
09.30 – 10.30	European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP)	Dr. Reinhold Sochert, ENWHP Secretariat, Bundesverband d. Betriebskrankenkassen (BKK) Germany
10.30 – 1.15	Health management at Volkswagen AG as example of activities in the field of Workplace Health Promotion	Dr. Uwe Brandenburg, Head of Ergonomics, VW AG, Wolfsburg
11.15 – 12.00	Press conference. Coffee break	
12.00 – 12.20	Organisation of the company policy concerning safe and healthy conditions in “Ideal Standart – Vidima” Ltd. town Sevelievo	Eng. Daniel Koptchev (department head), eng. Ivanka Angelova (activity coordinator), Department “Occupational and environmental Safety and Health”
12.20 – 12.40	Health protection and promotion in “Cumerio Med” Ltd, town Pirdop	Dr. Milena Medarova, Head, Occupational Health Service of “Cumerio Med” Ltd
12.40 – 13.00	Partnership for safety and health in “Druzha – glassware plants” Ltd	Eng. P. Valkanov, Head, SHW Department, Dr. P. Gheoreva, Head, “Occupational Health Service” Ltd, Sofia



Hour	Presentation	Speaker/ Person in Charge
13.00 – 13.20	Personnel age balance – evaluation of the traditional practice in human resource management in company “Energia” Ltd, town Targovishte	Eng. P. Kirov, Head, Department “SHW”, Dr. Z. Zapryanov, NCPHP, Sofia
13.20 – 13.50	Cocktail break. Discussions in small groups	All participants
13.50 – 14.50	Discussion Seminar Session	All participants

For all its Members States ENWHP aims at developing supportive national infrastructures for WHP. In order to initiate this process in all of the New Member States the network develops a series of “roundtable-meetings”. These events, which encompass representatives from businesses, politics, health experts and other stakeholders, are part of the network ambition to improve the dissemination of good workplace health practices and policies in these countries.

Sofia, Dec. 8th --- WORKPLACE HEALTH PROMOTION (WHP) – A TOOL FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS IN HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS IN EUROPE

Under that motto was held the First Bulgarian Specialised Seminar on WHP of the European Network of WHP (ENWHP) during the Second Conference of the Bulgarian Forum “Healthy and Safe Workplaces (BF “HSW”) on December 8th , 2006. The place of the Seminar was the auditorium of the National Centre of Public Health Protection (NCPHP) in Sofia. It was organised in partnership by the ENWHP and NCPHP

according to the time table of the project grant № 2004101 of Public Health Programme of EC “Workhealth II. Development of European work – related health report and establishment of mechanisms for dissemination and cooperation in the new member states and candidate countries” . Coordinator of that activity is BKK Federal Association, Essen, Germany. The Seminar in Bulgaria was the third one in the project schedule (after Lithuania and Cyprus) and was element of the process of harmonisation of Bulgarian practice in the provision of the health and safety at work with that in 15 old EU member states. It is in accordance with the aims stated in the Conceptual paper of the BF “HSW”.

Following the National Implementation Plan the audience invited to participate in the Seminar / Conference consisted of employers and representatives from their organisations, members of company Working Conditions Committees(WCC),



employees and representatives from their organisations, scientists and educators in OSH and WHP area, specialists from Occupational Health Services (OHSer.), experts in social and health insurance organisations, experts and decision makers in OSH at national, regional and company level. The invitation was directed through mass media (two newspapers), Internet (the web sites of NCPHP and of NCO) and by more than 200 personal invitation letters.

The main focus and expected results were formulated in advance:

- Providing knowledge of European Union WHP practice – science and methodology for human resource management, achievement of sustainable health and safety at work and business success in modern market oriented economy;
- Marketing the personal WHP benefit in preventing occupational risks, in organising healthy and safe workplace, in taking responsibility for active participation in health and safety at work activities to achieve personal health, wellbeing, optimal qualification and productivity;
- Strengthening the positions of ENWHP, Bulgarian NCO and Bulgarian Forum

“Healthy and safe workplaces” as competent structures – experienced in WHP;

- Introducing the start of the seventh ENWHP initiative – “Move Europe” Campaign in Bulgaria for a period 2006 – 2009 year.

The foggy weather on December 8th, 2006 created difficulties, but was not an obstacle for 98 participants from the whole country to attend the seminar, including:

- decision makers in OSH at national level and labour inspectors (stakeholder organisations representatives) – 11;
- representatives from employers’ organisations – 3;
- representatives of company management teams / company WCC – 10 (predominantly engineers managing safety and health at work (SHW), 5 from companies – members of the Association “Workplace Health and Safety Promotion” with National Network);
- experts from services in SHW providing companies, mainly from OHSer. – 37;
- scientists and educators from National Institutes on Public/Occupational Health and High technical and medical schools – 35.



At the Seminar were represented leading organisations playing important role in the National System for Provision of Health and Safety at Work (NSPHSW) – founders of BF “HSW”:

1. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP).
2. Executive Agency “General Labour Inspectorate” (EA “GLI”).
3. Ministry of Health (MH).
4. NCPHP.
5. Bulgarian Industrial Association (BIA).
6. Union for Private Economic Enterprise (UPEE).
7. Bulgarian Union of Private Entrepreneurs “Vazrazdane”.
8. Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria (CITUB).
9. Association Workplace Health and Safety Promotion” and National Network of Health and Safety Promoting Companies (A “WHSP” & NNHSPC).
10. Association of Occupational Health Services.
11. Association of Engineers on Safety and Health at Work.
12. National Institute of Social Security.

Following the principles of the BF “HSW” the access to the Seminar and printed materials was free of charge:

1. Bulletin for express information containing translated brochure of ENWHP and

slides of the lectures of Dr. Reinhold Sochert, ENWHP Secretariat, Bundesverband d. Betriebskrankenkassen (BKK) and Dr Uwe Brandenburg, Volkswagen AG, Deutschland. This printed material was produced specially for the ENWHP Seminar in Bulgarian (BEI ISSN 1311 – 2031, v.8, n 2, 2006, 60 pages).

2. Bulletin for express information containing Bulgarian case of WHP practice (BEI ISSN 1311 – 2031, v. 8, n. 1, 2006, 24 pages).
3. “Health” strategy. Healthy workers in healthy companies. Health promotion in your company means good business for everyone (folder in Bulgarian).
4. Healthy workers in healthy organisations. A guide for implementing health promotion in your workplace (folder in Bulgarian).
5. Healthy employees in healthy organisations. For sustainable social and economic development in Europe (brochure of ENWHP in English).
6. Healthy employees in healthy organisations. European Network for Workplace Health Promotion 1996 – 2006 (brochure of ENWHP in English).

After the welcome introduction the Seminar started by statements of the main Bul-

garian stakeholder organisations with responsibilities in SHW presented by:

- Dr. Tentcho Tenev (MH, Chief state health inspector);
- Eng. Vladimir Barutchiev (MLSP, Focal Point of EASHW, Bilbao, Spain);
- Mr. Dikran Tebeyan (BIA, Director);
- Eng. Todor Todorov (CITUB, Executive Secretary);
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alexander Spassov (NCPHP, Chief Scientific Secretary).



All representatives described briefly the activity of their organisation, emphasised their commitment and wish for large – scale collaboration. They outlined the relevance of the Seminar for the country practice in presenting the European practice to ensure healthy, qualified and motivated human factor (capital) in economic activity conditions.

A key event in the programme (see Annex 3) was a lecture of Dr. Reinhold Sochert “European Network for Workplace Health Promotion”. After the information on ENWHP, WHP, Events during 2006 and the Concept of a National forums on WHP, Dr. Sochert gave details on the future Seventh Initiative of ENWHP – the campaign “Move Europe” (2006 – 2009) and possibilities for its implementation in Bulgaria. In fact this part was a public announcement of the seventh initiative of ENWHP in Bulgaria.



At the Seminar were reported four Bulgarian cases of good company practice and of partnership between the management and employees in the area of health and safety at work:

1. Eng. Daniel Koptchev (department head), eng. Ivanka Angelova (activity coordinator), Department “Occupational and environmental Safety and



Health”, “Organisation of the company policy concerning safe and healthy conditions in “Ideal Standart – Vidima” Ltd., town Sevlievo”.

2. Dr. Milena Medarova, Head, Occupational Health Service of “Cumerio Med” Ltd., “Health protection and promotion in “Cumerio Med” Ltd, town Pirdop”.
3. Eng. P. Valkanov, Head, SHW Department, Plovdiv, Dr. P. Gheoreva, Head, Occupational Health Service “TM” Ltd, Sofia, “Partnership for safety and health in “Druzhiba – glassware plants” Ltd”.
4. Eng. P. Kirov, Head, Department “SHW”, Dr. Z. Zapryanov, NCPHP, Sofia, “Personnel age balance – evaluation of the traditional practice in human resource management in company “Energia” Ltd, town Targovishte”.

The conference ended with a discussion in mixed group of labour inspectors, company managers on SHW, experts in health and safety at work, specialists working in OHServices, scientists and educators in OHS area. The topic of this discussion was “current characteristics of the work life in companies in comparison to the criteria in the new legislation (harmonised with EU directives) and perspectives for more

comprehensive implementation of WHP in Bulgaria”.

The commonly agreed statements were:

- Bulgaria as a EU member – state should introduce largely new company culture of partnership to keep at optimal level the health and safety at workplaces. Concerning all interested parties involvement, personal activity and responsibility this long – term process has behavioural dimensions too. WHP is an approach to achieve that goal in market economy conditions. The science and methodology are known and practiced in pilot project by Bulgarian specialists but the large scale practical implementation needs governmentally supported programme. This goal could not be solved easily and in short time, together with other partially unsolved problems in OHS area.
- The actual qualification, consciousness and personal activity of Bulgarian workers are at an average level, at unsatisfactory low level in comparison to European criteria. This situation needs planned systematic approach starting with the vocational education and permanently during the working life.



- It is necessary to update permanently current OHS education of the members of company Working Conditions Councils (WCC) most urgently for WHP.
- The practice of company health and safety policy should be imposed by the state labour inspectorate in order to create platform for all interested parties participation.
- Quality management problem will be increasingly important in the workplace assessment, occupational risk assessment and management; in the storage and exchange of the information on the status of workplaces, safety and health situation and criteria for their evaluation; in the activity of OH-Ser. etc.
- Other problematic aspect is the level of multisectoral collaboration.

The opinions on the same topic were asked by anonymous questionnaire given to all participants at the Seminar / Conference. The response rate was 49%. Experts working in consultancy practices on OHS – mainly OHServices were the majority of respondents (75%).

1. To the first group of questions concerning the workplace and policy situation the answers were:

- 1.1. Working conditions are mosaic (71%) to poor (21%). Reasons:
 - Passive employers, badly motivated employees, inadequate education on general and repetitive topics (13 opinions);
 - Financial problems and old fashioned technologies and technical equipment (12 opinions);
 - Organisational (3 opinions).
- 1.2. 79% of respondents stated that after year 2006 Bulgaria has no state policy on health, safety and wellbeing at work for the next period.
- 1.3. As three main achievements in OSH area in Bulgaria during the period 2004 – 2006 year are considered:
 - in – companies implementation of workplace assessment, occupational risk assessment and management procedures, the documentation of results in company dossier and the implementation of company plan (programme) for ensuring SHW (10 opinions);
 - the organisation and systematic work of national, regional and local committees for tripartite decision – making on SHW (5 opinions);



- the intensive education (1997 – 2006) of the members of company WCC – managers and employees on the new principles and arrangements introduced in the new legislation on HSW by harmonisation with EU directives (5 opinions).

2. The answers to Second group of questions on WHP revealed that:

2.1. 63% of respondents consider the activities protecting and promoting health, safety motivation and productivity of the personnel of prime (21%) or equal (42%) importance in comparison to the management of the business and technology.

2.2. 100% know that WHP is an activity ensuring personnel participation in SHW activities. 25% have this knowledge from practical implementation.

2.3. Only 38% of respondents differentiate in details the specificity of WHP in comparison to labour inspections.

2.4. Only 29% of respondents consider that employers and employees in Bulgaria have conditions, knowledge and skills to plan and organise WHP projects. 46% think, that they have conditions and problems to solve by WHP, but do not have necessary knowledge and skills to practice WHP. The existing training curricula for WCC members could not solve this problem.

2.5. 92% consider the WHP education, social marketing, WHP printed materials production and provision and experience exchange as urgent need for the harmonisation of HSW Bulgarian practice with EU one.

2.6. The list of organisations with important role and responsibility in WHP large implementation is too large according to respondents:

- organisations of employers and employees as a key non governmental educators and implementors (16 opinions);
- Occupational Health Services obliged by the Act on HSWC (15 opinions);
- Company manager on SHW (10 opinions);
- Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (10 opinions for each).





A Press – conference was organised in the day of the Seminar. Theme of the issued for that purpose Press Bulletin was “Workplace Health Promotion. Occupational diseases in Bulgaria – figures and trends”. Speakers were Dr. R. Sochert, Dr. Z. Zapryanov and Dr. Nevena Tzatcheva with a moderation of Dr. F. Tzurakova (PR officer of NCPHP). In the mass media appeared: announcement of Bulgarian Telegraph Agency (distributed for foreign media too and news announcements in radio, TV broadcasts (“Inforadio”, TV channel “Europe”) and newspapers (“Labour”, “Naw”). Two publication in weekly newspapers (E. Markova, “Bulgarian working women are mostly affected by diseases in Europe”, “All for woman”, 14th December 2006, p. 11; T. Leonidova, “Workplace Health Promotion is a social investment”, “Teacher’s work”, 14th December 2006) could be presented at international compe-

tion for competent and interesting presentation of the seminar topic and press – conference content and messages.

The Bulgarian ENWHP Seminar (Second BF “HSW” Conference) successfully gained its aims and expected publicity. Dr. Reinhold Sochert, the representative of ENWHP and lecturer, in a letter dated 12th December 2006 stated “Regarding your seminar and the organisation of it I can only say: Congratulations. From my point of view it was a very, very big success”.

Note: The full text of the Report on WHP Seminar of ENWHP in Bulgaria is published in the Journal “Healthy and Safe Labour”, n 1, 2007 (in Bulgarian)