

“Health and Safety at Work”



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal
Opportunities

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions,
Adaptation to change

Unit: Health, Safety and Hygiene at Work

“Health and Safety at Work”



“ Improving quality and productivity at work ”

*A Community Strategy
on Health and Safety at
Work 2007 - 2012*

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Main Conclusions of the previous Health and Safety Strategy 2002-2006 :

- *2002-2006 Strategy has relaunched prevention policies at national level,*
- *presented coherent and convincing arguments in favour of a partnership to achieve common objectives,*
- *obliged interested parties in the prevention field to give strategic consideration to how these objectives might be attained,*
- *it has raised public awareness of the importance of health and safety at work by presenting them as integral parts of quality management*

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Under the Lisbon strategy, the Member States have acknowledged :

- *The major contribution that guaranteeing quality and productivity at work can play in promoting economic growth and employment.*
- *The lack of effective protection to ensure health and safety at work can result in absenteeism, in the wake of workplace accidents and occupational illnesses, and can lead to permanent occupational disability.*
- *This not only has a considerable human dimension but also has a major negative impact on the economy.*

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The Community strategy 2002-2006 has seen a significant fall in the rate of accidents at work :

- *The rate of fatal accidents at work in the EU-15 has fallen by 17%;*
- *The rate of workplace accidents leading to absences of more than three days has fallen by 20%;*

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The latest results of the fourth European survey of working conditions :

- *almost 28% of workers in Europe say that they suffer from non-accidental health problems which are or may be caused by their current or previous job;*
- *35% of workers on average feel that their job puts their health at risk;*
- *Moreover, occupational hazards are not being reduced in a uniform way :*
 - ***some categories of workers are still overexposed to occupational risks;***
 - ***certain types of companies are more vulnerable;***
 - ***certain sectors are still particularly dangerous***

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Challenges identified during the previous reporting period, are continuing to grow in importance :

- *Demographic and the ageing of the working population being change;*
- *New employment trends is increasing in SMEs and in self-employment;*
- *New and larger flows of migrants is increasing towards Europe;*
- *Number of women at work is also continuing to increase;*
- *Certain types of occupational illnesses becoming more common;*
- *The nature of occupational hazards is changing with the innovation, emerging new risk factors.*

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*Objective of the Community strategy
2007-2012 at EU-27 level :*

- *Sustainable and uniform reduction in accidents at work and occupational illnesses continues to be the prime objective : reduce by 25% the total incidence rate of accidents at work*

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To achieve this ambitious goal, the following main instruments are proposed :

- *Guarantee the proper implementation of EU legislation;*
- *Support SMEs in the implementation of the legislation in force;*
- *Adapt the legal framework to changes in the workplace and simplify it, particularly in view of SMEs;*
- *Promote the development and implementation of national strategies;*
- *Encourage changes in the behaviour of workers and encourage their employers to adopt health-focused approaches;*
- *Finalise the methods for identifying and evaluating new potential risks;*
- *Improve the tracking of progress;*
- *Promote health and safety at international level .*

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Putting in place a modern and effective legislative framework :

- *Strengthening implementation of Community legislation ;*
- *Reinforcing cooperation in efforts to monitor the application of the legislation ;*
- *Simplifying the legislative framework and adapting to change.*

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Strengthening implementation of Community legislation :

National strategies should give priority to implementing a package of instruments which guarantee a high level of compliance with the legislation :

- *Dissemination of good practice at local level;*
- *Training white-collar and blue-collar workers;*
- *Development of simple tools to facilitate risk assessment;*
- *Distribution of information and guidelines written in simple language;*
- *Access to external prevention services which are of a high quality and affordable;*
- *Involvement of labour inspectors as intermediaries to promote better compliance with the legislation;*
- *Use of economic incentives at Community level*

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Reinforcing cooperation in efforts to monitor the application of the legislation :

- *The Commission will continue to promote the work of the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC) at Community level;*
- *At national level, appropriate steps should be taken to enable labour inspectorates to ensure that those concerned meet their obligations and are able to exercise their rights;*
- *The new challenges, including migratory flows, justify checks being carried out in a more targeted manner and the knowledge of inspectors being improved.*

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Simplifying the legislative framework and adapting to change :

The Commission will seek to ensure that the legislative framework is adapted to take into account the state of the art and changes in the workplace :

- ***Continue its work, to find ways of improving risk prevention with regard to musculo-skeletal disorders, carcinogens and needlestick infections;***
- ***Adopt a third list of indicative values for chemical agents;***
- ***Evaluation of the implementation of Directives 92/57/EEC, 92/58/EEC, 92/91/EEC, 92/104/EEC, 92/29/EEC and 93/103/EC;***
- ***Evaluation of the measures taken in response to the recommendations concerning self-employed worker, and the European schedule of occupational diseases***

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Evaluating and simplifying the administrative and institutional regulatory framework :

The Commission will :

- *Continue the work to codify the "health and safety" directives, examining the possibilities to simplify the legislation in order to reduce unnecessary administrative charges;*
- *Propose an amendment to the decision establishing the SLIC with a view to reducing the number of its members and improving the way in which it works;*
- *Encourage the establishment of a common methodology for evaluating the directives on health and safety at work in light of the forthcoming directive on simplifying and rationalising the reports on practical implementation.*

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Encourage the development and implementation of national strategies :

- *The Improving the preventive effectiveness of health surveillance;*
- *Taking action to promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of workers;*
- *Dealing with social and demographic change;*
- *Strengthening policy coherence*

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Promoting changes in behaviour :

- *Integrating health and safety into education and training programmes;*
- *Healthier and safer workplaces: improving health and promoting awareness within companies.*

Confronting new and increasing risks :

- *Identification of new risks;*
- *Promotion of mental health at the workplace*

Assessment of progress made

Promotion of health and safety at international level

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- **Council Directive 89/391/EEC (Framework Directive) of 12 June 1989** on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work
- *Official Journal L 183, 29/06/1989 P. 0001*

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Framework Directive (1989/391)

Object

- **Article 1**

The Directive introduces measures to *encourage improvements* in the safety and health of workers at work; contains *general principles* concerning the prevention and elimination of occupational risks, the informing, consultation and training of workers; contains *minimum rules* regarding the safety and health of workers at work.

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- **Article 1, Object**
- **Article 2, Scope**
- **Article 3, Definitions**
- **Article 4, Enforcement**
- **Article 5, General Provisions (employers' responsibility)**
- **Article 6, General obligations on employers**
- **Article 7, Protective and preventive services**
- **Article 8, First aid, fire-fighting and evacuation of workers**
- **Article 9, Various obligations on employers**
- **Article 10, Worker information**
- **Article 11, Consultation and participation of workers**
- **Article 12, Training of workers**
- **Article 13, Workers' obligations**
- **Article 14, Health surveillance**
- **Article 15, Risk groups**
- **Article 16, Individual Directives**

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Scope

- *The Directive applies to all sectors of activity, both public and private (industrial, agricultural, commercial, administrative, service, educational, cultural, leisure, etc.).*
- *The Directive is not applicable where characteristics peculiar to certain specific public service activities, such as the armed forces or the police, or to certain specific activities in the civil protection services inevitably conflict with it*

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- ***Enforcement***

- *Member States shall take the necessary steps to ensure that employers, workers and workers' representatives are subject to the legal provisions necessary for the implementation of this Directive.*
- *Member States shall ensure adequate controls and supervision.*

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•General provision

- *The employer has a duty to ensure the safety and health of workers in every aspect related to the work;*
- *Enlisting competent external services or persons does not discharge him from his responsibilities;*
- *The workers' obligations do not affect the principle of the responsibility of the employer.*

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General obligations on employers

- ✓ *To take measures necessary for the safety and health protection of workers; adapting to change, improvement of existing situations;*
- ✓ *Avoid risks;*
- ✓ *Evaluate the risks which cannot be avoided;*
- ✓ *Principles of prevention; (adapt work to technical progress and to the individual, combating risks at source, substitution, priority to collective protective measures etc.).*

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The employer shall

- ✓ *be in possession of a risk assessment (written form);*
- ✓ *decide on protective measures and protective equipment;*
- ✓ *keep a list of occupational accidents (+ 3 days);*
- ✓ *draw up reports on occupational accidents.*

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- ***Protective and preventive services***

- *The employer shall designate one or more workers to carry out activities related to the protection and prevention of occupational risks;*
- *When in lack of competent personnel in the undertaking the employer shall enlist competent external services or persons;*
- *Combining internal and external services;*
- *Member States may define when the employer, provided he is competent, may himself take responsibility for the measures referred to;*
- *Member States shall define the necessary capabilities and aptitudes required*

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The European Schedule of Occupational Diseases

***Commission Recommendation
2003/670/EC of 19 September 2003.
Official Journal Of the E.U. L 238 of
25.9.2003 (Updates and replaces Commission Recommendation
90/326/CEE of 22 May 199)***

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- *Recommendations addressed to the Member States*
- *Annex I: New European Schedule of Occupational Diseases*
- *Annex II: Additional list of diseases suspected of being of occupational origin*

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- *Prevention and compensation of occupational diseases listed in the Annex I*
- *Right of compensation of diseases not listed in Annex I, but which can be proved to be occupational in origin and nature*

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- *Reporting of all cases of occupational diseases; statistics progressively compatible with the European Schedule (Annex I) and with the works of the European Statistical Program. For each case of O.D.: information on the causative agent, the medical diagnosis and the sex of the patient*

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- *Active role of the national healthcare systems in preventing occupational diseases, in particular by raising awareness among medical staff with a view to improving knowledge and diagnosis of these illnesses*

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Member States shall themselves determine the criteria for the recognition of each occupational disease in accordance with the national laws or practices in force

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- *Member States are requested to inform the Commission, no later than 31 December 2006, of the measures taken or envisaged in response to the Recommendation.*
- *Analysis and follow-up.*
- *Update of the "information notices on diagnosis of occupational diseases"*

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Actions should be developed by the Bilbao Agency (1) :

To help implementation of Community legislation :

- *The EAHSW will ensure that its efforts to raise awareness and promote and disseminate best practice focus to a greater degree on high-risk sectors and SMEs*

To encourage the development and implement of national strategies :

- *The EAHSW is invited to draw up, through its risk observatory, examining the specific challenges posed by the more extensive integration of women, immigrant workers and younger and older workers into the labour market. It will help to pinpoint and monitor trends and new risks and identify measures which are essential*

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Actions should be developed by the Bilbao Agency (2) :

To promote changes in behaviour :

- *The EAHSW will be requested to review the extent to which health and safety aspects have been incorporated into Member States' vocational and occupational training policies;*
- *On the basis of this information and the opinion of the ACSHW, the Commission will consider whether or not to present a proposal for a recommendation to integrate health and safety into education and training programmes;*
- *The Commission requests the EAHSW to collect and disseminate information intended to support the development of occupational health promotion campaigns, in combination with the strategy and Community public health programmes;*
- *The EAHSW will be called upon to develop sectorial awareness-raising campaigns targeted in particular at SMEs, and to promote the management of health and safety at work in enterprises through the exchange of experience and good practices aimed at specific sectors.*

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Actions should be developed by the Bilbao Agency (3) :

Confronting to the new and increasing risks :

- *The EAHSW The European Agency is called upon to encourage national health and safety research institutes to set joint priorities, exchange results and include occupational health and safety requirements in research programmes*
- *The Risk Observatory of the EAHSW should enhance risk anticipation to include risks associated with new technologies, biological hazards, complex human-machine interfaces and the impact of demographic trends*

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Conclusions (1) :

- *For both economic and human reasons, health and safety at work deserve to be given a prominent place on the Community's policy agenda ;*
- *The commitment to increase employment and productivity through greater competitiveness, which is central to the Lisbon strategy, requires an additional effort from all those involved to improve the EU's performance in the field of occupational health and safety ;*
- *Occupational accidents and diseases represent an enormous financial burden for public and private social protection systems and require an integrated, coordinated and strategic response, as well as cooperation between the main parties involved ;*

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Conclusions (2) :

- *The Commission, acting in cooperation with the other parties involved, will give details and the exact schedule of specific measures to be undertaken at Community level in the Social Agenda scoreboard ;*
- *The Commission aims with this Communication to encourage all the parties involved to make a concerted effort to reduce the high cost of occupational accidents and diseases and to make well-being at work a tangible reality for European citizens, one concrete step in developing the Citizens' Agenda adopted on May 10, 2005*

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*Thank you for
your attention*

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