

# Occupational Medicine at the cross-road?

UEMS-OM meeting, Barcelona, 26/10/2012

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# ETUC & ETUI

- **ETUC - European Trade Union Confederation**
  - European trade union umbrella organisation
  - European Social Partner
  - Objectives: Workers interests and Social Europe
  - 32 European Countries
  - 60 millions workers
  - 80 national TU confederations
  - 12 European Industry Federations
- **ETUI - European Trade Union Institute**
  - Independent research and training centre of the ETUC
  - Založena Evropskou odborovou konfederací (EOK, ETUC)

# European Trade Union Institute

## International non-profit organisation

### ACTIVITIES:

- **Research**

studies and monitoring of the European issues with a strategic importance for the world of work and in the same time building bridges between academic and research communities and labour movement

- **Education and training**

& support of programmes and projects strengthening the European trade union identity

- **Working Conditions, Health and Safety    Poskytování technical support and coordination (ETUC, workers representatives in tripartite structures).**

# ETUI – Working Conditions, Health and Safety

- EU policies, EU legislation
- Prevention systems
- Workers representation in H&S
- Work organisation / Precarious work
- Psychosocial risks - Stress, Violence
- MSDs
- Chemicals, Asbestos, Nanotechnologies
- Work equipment safety / CEN
- Enlargement
- Information: Publications - HESA Mail - HESA Newsletter
- Specific role in ACHS, EUOSHA, EUROFOUND, ECHA, EUROSTAT, etc.

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PUBLICATIONS



The reform of the EU's public pro...

Financial transaction taxes in the ...

Work less to pollute less? What co...

What did they expect? Lessons for E...

Transnational collective bargaining...

Occupations and ageing at work. An ...

All publications

NEWS

Quality of work among ageing workers: all are not equal

15 October 2012

Older workers employed in unskilled and manual occupations and those working in certain service sectors risk



Follow the ETUI on:



 E-NEWSLETTERS

EVENTS

30 OCT

30 Oct 2012, ITUH, Bd du Roi Albert II, 5; 1210 Brussels, room B  
ETUI Monthly Forum: Diversity and inequality: working conditions according to age and occupation in Europe

15 OCT

15 Oct 2012, Silken Berlaymont Hotel in Brussels (Boulevard Charlemagne 11-19, 1000 Brussels)  
Panel Debate "Macroeconomic Imbalances and Comparative Advantages in the Euro Area"

15 OCT

15 Oct - 16 Oct 2012, Maison des Associations Internationales, Rue Washington 40, 1050 Bruxelles  
From (un)economic growth to future well-being

All events

## HEALTH & SAFETY

**25% of European workers believe that their safety or their health is at risk because of their work – a figure which shows that working conditions in Europe are not improving. And even though manufacturing employment across Europe is shrinking and losing ground to service jobs, exposure to traditional physical hazards - noise, dangerous goods, heavy lifting, etc. - has not gone away.**

Along with this, a growing number of workers are complaining of the effect their work is having on their psychological health. Ill-being at work can end in tragedy, as evidenced by the wave of suicides that has affected some big French companies in recent years.

New forms of work organization and the increasing time-pressure of work may be partly behind the persistence of traditional risks and the emergence of new ones in firms. Trade unions believe that work intensification is the main cause of the work-related stress and musculoskeletal disorders now seen to be affecting more than one in five workers.

While these may be problems in all countries, industries and occupations, it is clear that the lowest-skilled and manual workers are bearing the brunt. The healthy life expectancy of a 35-year-old manual worker in France, for example, is ten years less than that of a manager. As the talk in many EU member countries turns towards staying working longer, a debate on working conditions and their impact on workers' health is a must. We are stepping into that debate through the following topic studies.

## NEWS

### European companies still don't have procedures for managing psychosocial risks

11 October 2012

## THEMES

HesaMag

+ Asbestos

+ Chemicals and REACH

News

+ Nanotechnologies

+ Standardisation and Safety of Machinery

+ Stress, harassment and violence

+ Occupational cancers

+ Musculoskeletal disorders

+ Safety reps

## EVENTS

26 March 2012 - 27 March 2012 Brussels  
Seminar on Working Conditions surveys

27 February 2012  
ETUI Monthly Forum: Restructuring and health



PERIODICALS

# HesaMag



**Publication date :** 2011

*HesaMag* is a magazine all about health and safety at work, published in English and French. It is profusely illustrated, printed in full color, and designed to appeal to a wide readership. *HesaMag* is published twice a year, and sets out to show that occupational health is not just something for specialists but both a big political issue and a daily concern for millions of workers.

To do that, *HesaMag* offers a wide range of content, much of it articles, reports and interviews written with the non-specialist reader in mind. Each issue includes a special report on a topic with practical implications for workers' health. But it also includes articles on issues that are high on the EU's health and safety policy agenda, an International section, reports on trade union initiatives and book reviews.

The ETUI's aim is for the information put out via *HesaMag* to support the trade union movement's struggle to improve working conditions and reduce social inequalities.

- [Contents of the latest issue](#)

One copy of each issue of the magazine will be sent free of charge to any individual who subscribes in their own name. For orders of more than one copy, please choose the collective option.

- [Individual subscription](#)



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REPORTS

# Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems - When are they good for your health?

Viktor Kempa (ETUI)



**Publication date :** 2011

**Number of pages :** 32

**Author(s) :**

Kaj Frick (Mälardalen University, Sweden)

In the course of trade union debates, occupational health and safety management systems elicit extremely varied responses, running from indignant rejection to enthusiasm. Understandably, because the term "is used to describe all kind of practices. It can cover anything from ambitious continuous improvements towards the utopian goal of no health risks at work, to corporate smokescreens for controlling workers and busting unions", caution Kaj Frick (Mälardalen University) and Viktor Kempa (ETUI) in the opening lines of the report.

The report surveys this booming "market", distinguishing management systems devised by private firms from those promoted by national authorities, the best known and most controversial being the US Voluntary Protection Program.

The authors nevertheless stress that the type of management

RELATED PUBLICATIONS



New scope for the Community health and safety at work strategy 2007-2012  
Laurent Vogel (ETUI)



The impact of safety representatives on occupational health  
María Menéndez (Occupational Health Department, CC.OO, Spain), Joan Benach (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain) and Laurent Vogel (ETUI)

# TUFOD

## Trade Union Forum on Occupational Doctors (Physicians)

NL, BE, FR, EE, LT,  
CY, CZ, IT, PG, SP,  
GR, BG, RO

GE, AT, UK, IE, LU,  
SK, PL, HU, DK, FI,  
SE, MT, LI



# Priorities

## Minimum standard Directive:

- Role of OP in preventive services
- Coverage of workers
- Free choice of OP
- Independency
- Mutidiscipinarity
- Competencies, requirements, training
- Free access of the workers to OP
- Consultations with workers and their Reps
- Link with LI
- Link with a public health care system
- Financing
- etc.

# EU Strategy 2013-2020

- **Evaluation of a current strategy (11/12)**
- **Public debate (1-3/13)**
- **Strategy (?)**

# EU OSHA Strategy 2013-2020

- **Visions, Missions and Values (5/12)**
- **Activities (12/12, OiRA, OSHWiki, ESENER, FORESIGHT, Ageing)**
- **Strategie (?)**

# EU Context

*Discussion paper UEMS meeting Barcelona: Future of OM in Europe: contribution to new strategy, October 2012*  
*Dick Spreewers, Jacques van der Vliet*

- **Increasing competition, work pressure, and violence at work**
- **International transfer of hazardous jobs and technologies**
- **Growing informal economy MMEs**
- **A new work-life balance**
- **Ageing of the workforce**
- **Growing proportion of workers having chronic diseases**
- **Employment as a fundamental component of quality of life**
- **Evidence that having work contributes positively to one's health**
- **Participation in society through a (paid) job**
- **Economic crisis**

# EU Context – more aspects

- Ageing of the workers
- Attacks on wider worker rights
- Austerity/cut backs in government expenditures
- Crises
- Declining trade union membership
- Deregulation
- Economic and financial crises
- Globalization - Multinational Companies
- Intensity and insecurity of jobs
- Migration, informal or undocumented workers
- New jobs and forms of work organisation
- New and emerging hazards + traditional unremoved
- Pay and pension cuts
- Restructuring and reorganisation
- Segmentation - MSEs & SMEs
- Work intensification

... the right of every worker to "working conditions which respect his or her health, safety and dignity" (Article 31(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU). From this viewpoint, the EC and the other European institutions have a duty to improve working conditions.

# Perspectives for a new European H&S strategy

Resolution adopted at the Executive Committee on 7-8 December 2011

- 1. Improving the structures of H&S systems**
- 2. Unions: a key player at all levels**
- 3. Improving prevention of work-related illnesses**
  - 3.1. Using REACH to provide workers with enhanced protection against hazardous substances**
  - 3.2. Making progress in the prevention of MSDs**
  - 3.3. Mental health: too often neglected**
- 4. International dimension**



# Perspectives for a new European H&S strategy

Resolution adopted at the Executive Committee on 7-8 December 2011

## Improving the structures of H&S systems

- **Combination of H&S Reps within companies with regional or site worker representations for MMEs**
- **Minimum targets for national labour inspectorates**
- **Minimum targets for multi-disciplinary, competent and independent workplace H&S services**

# Joint steps?

**EU Strategy?**

**Priorities for OM/OP?**

**Directive - an ETUI proposal?**

**Continuous cooperation?**

**Cooperation, exchange?**

**Joint publications, meetings?**

**Thank you for your attention!**

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