



Mainstreaming occupational safety and health into education

Good practice in school and vocational education

Introduction

The European Union's strategy on health and safety at work has identified education and the prevention culture as key factors for maintaining and improving the quality of work. Supporting this strategy the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work has published a report, *Mainstreaming occupational safety and health into education: Good practice in school and vocational education*, which provides a comprehensive overview of good practice examples throughout Europe and outlines steps toward a systematic strategy to integrate occupational safety and health (OSH) into education and training. This factsheet summarises the report.

Good practice

The report contains 36 good practice examples, of which 14 are presented as case studies. The good practice examples are divided according to three different approaches: A 'holistic' approach, a curriculum approach and a workplace approach.

'Holistic' approach

Cases based on a 'holistic' approach have a more comprehensive view of safety and health, including physical, mental and social well-being. These cases focus on the whole school system to improve the working and learning environment in schools.

Cases

The 'National healthy school standard', England, a national programme that provides an accreditation process for education and health partnerships; **'The safe school', the Netherlands**, an initiative that focuses on increasing communication regarding security and violence in and around schools; **FAOS ('Light in school safety'), Greece**, the development of comprehensive procedures for the safety assessment in everyday schooling and in the surrounding school environment by developing public private partnerships; **the 'School environment round', Sweden**, a concept to design the working and learning environment in schools.

Curriculum approach

Cases where safety and health are an intrinsic part of the curriculum are not limiting safety and health to one specific subject. Safety and health are integrated as 'transversal' topics; in other words, throughout all levels of education and in different subjects, e.g. in languages and literature.

Cases

'At the safety school', Italy, a conceptual and methodological framework for teachers on how to introduce OSH into the syllabus; **Examples of good practice in primary school, Italy**, the development and dissemination of didactic tools at national level to promote a prevention culture; **Splaat ('Safe play at all times'), England**, to raise awareness in primary school of safety issues that relate to a building site and to develop teaching resource packs for national curriculum subjects; **Armi project: 'Ar and Mi at school'/'New kids on the job', Denmark**, to develop basic attitudes and knowledge and to make a positive contribution to one's own, and others' health and safety.

Workplace approach

Cases dealing with the last and important step in the educational process, the transition from school to working life, are focusing on the introduction of the students into the workplace, the steps to professional life and the risks that will have to be dealt with. These cases are dealing with this issue at general or sector level.

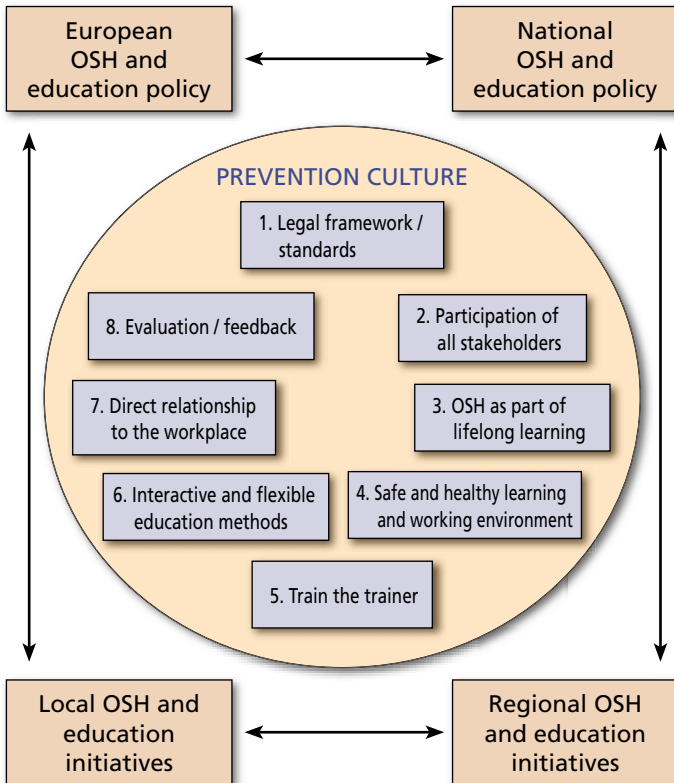
Cases

Preventing accidents to children and young persons in agriculture, Ireland, the development and introduction of a safety statement that sets out how OSH is to be managed on the farm; **Synergie, France**, a project aimed at giving students a proper economic and social usefulness within a company by working at sector level; **Students make machines safe, Belgium**, a specific example of how students participate in safety improvement of machinery; **Check it out, Great Britain**, a video teaching resource with concrete examples of workplace risks; **Young people want to live safely, Germany**, the creation of a competition for students in vocational schools; **OSH integrated in curricular standards, Italy**, the planning and testing of standard training modules on safety at schools and vocational training centres.

How to link good practices to a future strategy?

Based on these good practice examples, the report presents a draft model illustrating the most important elements of mainstreaming occupational safety and health into education.

Model of mainstreaming OSH into education



This model derives from the eco-holistic model of the health-promoting schools and shows the key external influences on the process of mainstreaming OSH into education, as well as internal elements that influence the promotion of mainstreaming within the school or other educational establishments.

The model is based on an analysis of a **six-step process** to mainstream occupational safety and health into education.

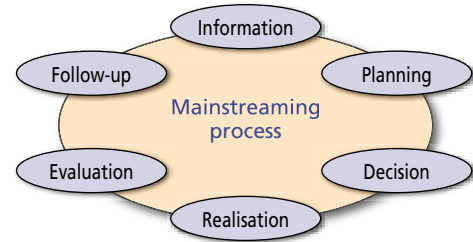
Further information

A first step to implement the model into European OSH and education policy was undertaken during an Italian EU Presidency seminar on 'Mainstreaming OSH into education — the workers of tomorrow' in October 2003 in Rome. The participants agreed upon the need for a European strategy to mainstream OSH into education and training (Rome Declaration). The Rome Declaration is available at: http://europe.osha.eu.int/good_practice/sector/osheducation/rome.stm.

The Agency's website has a section devoted to providing further information related to OSH and education at: <http://education.osha.eu.int>.

The Agency has published the report *Mainstreaming occupational safety and health into education. Good practice in school and vocational education* in 2004. This report is available at: <http://agency.osha.eu.int/publications/reports>.

The process of mainstreaming OSH into education



Step 1: Information

Collect necessary information before you start a project, e.g. data on accidents of children and young people, the number of safety lessons given in schools, or the working conditions in schools and other educational establishments. Also consider experience from similar projects.

Step 2: Planning

Clarify in advance which partners should participate in the project. Existing experiences and structures can be useful for your project, e.g. health-promotion networks, cooperation with safety and health authorities and their training institutes. Did you check all resources for funding?

Step 3: Decision

If you have completed these first two steps, you are able to decide if you will carry out a pilot study of the project. Define the general aim of the project and its operational goals. Set up an action plan with concrete deadlines and responsibilities.

Step 4: Realisation

In the implementation phase of the project, success will more than likely depend on the following factors: the recognition of safety and health as an inherent part of lifelong learning; a broad understanding of safety and health including physical, mental and social well-being; a direct relationship of educational measures to the workplace; and an involvement of experienced teachers in the development of the programme and its materials.

Step 5: Evaluation

Evaluation should be an intrinsic part of your project: Evaluation measures should accompany and improve the mainstreaming process. Additionally, you should evaluate the results of your project regarding their sustainability and their transferability to other institutions and in other cultural contexts.

Step 6: Follow-up

Develop a promotion plan before the project ends and make plans for an active follow-up, as early as possible.