

Making Europe a safer, healthier  
and more productive place to work



<http://osha.europa.eu>



European Agency  
for Safety and Health  
at Work

*The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work*



## WELCOME TO THE AGENCY

**HEALTH** and safety at work is one of the European Union's most important and challenging policy areas.

- Every five seconds a worker in the EU is involved in a work-related accident.
- Every three-and-a-half minutes, someone in the EU dies from work-related causes.

Workers need to be made aware of the risks that they face and how to deal with them. Employers need to know what they must do to keep their employees safe and how to do it.

But occupational safety and health (OSH) issues are complex and diverse. Dealing with them effectively and equitably is more than individual organisations or Member States can manage alone.

That is why the **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work** was set up in 1996. We collect, analyse and communicate OSH-related information across the EU.

Our mission is to make Europe's workplaces safer, healthier and more productive, by promoting a culture of risk prevention.

Located in Bilbao, Spain, the Agency has a dedicated staff of OSH specialists and a network of partners in all Member States and beyond.



*As the Agency moves into its second decade, the field of occupational safety and health is as important as ever. Every year, more than 150 000 people die in the European Union as a result of work-related accidents and disease. The vast majority of work-related fatalities and illnesses are preventable.*

*Safety and health is one of the major problems in our workplaces, but it is an area in which we can make a huge difference. There are many case studies and examples of good practice around the world that we can learn from. Health and safety is an ethical issue, a basic human right, but it is also about company productivity and competitiveness. Good safety and health is good for business.*

*Message from Jukka Takala,  
Director of the Agency*

## RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

THE AGENCY commissions, collects and publishes new scientific research on OSH risks. We also monitor, collate and analyse statistical information on OSH in different Member States, and in different types of workplace.

## EUROPEAN RISK OBSERVATORY

DEMOGRAPHIC changes, as well as changes in work organisation, work processes and production methods, lead to new types of risks, old risks in new circumstances and the need for new solutions. Keeping pace with the fast rate of change in our workplaces is a key challenge for the EU.

To help meet this challenge, we have set up a Risk Observatory which anticipates and identifies new and emerging risks. The European Risk Observatory collects and analyses data, in order to provide policymakers and OSH professionals with an understanding of the impact of the changing world of work on occupational safety and health. By stimulating debate between the OSH community and policymakers, the Observatory helps to shape future prevention measures.

## GOOD PRACTICE

IDENTIFYING and sharing good practice is at the core of our efforts to create a genuine safety and risk prevention culture across Europe. Good practice includes solutions that have been successfully implemented at workplace level, whether by individual Member State governments, businesses or public organisations. We work to analyse and publicise measures which can be adapted to other organisations and other countries, and which can help improve workplace safety and health in a practical, concrete and cost-effective way.

## GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

OUR JOB is not only to identify, pool and analyse the most relevant OSH information, but also to make it easily accessible for our different target audiences — from safety representatives and safety managers, to employers and workers, practitioners, trade unions and policymakers.

We use a variety of communication channels to get the safety and health message across from conferences and campaigns to our website, including our electronic newsletter 'OSHmail', and a range of printed and online publications.

# W O R K



# WHAT WE

## CAMPAIGNS

**STAYING** directly in touch with workers and workplaces across Europe has always been a key objective for the Agency. To reach out to them we use awareness campaigns, such as the European thematic campaigns which include the European Campaign and Week for Safety and Health at Work, and the Healthy Workplace Initiative (HWI) in the newer Member States.

The European campaign is announced in the spring, and the European Week takes place in October when the Agency's campaign partners organise numerous activities and events across Europe. European campaigns focus on a single theme, and previous examples have included dangerous substances, accidents, stress, noise and young people.

With more than 30 countries participating, and some four million pieces of information material distributed in all official EU languages, the campaign has become the largest OSH awareness-raising activity in Europe.

## PUBLICATIONS

**THE AGENCY** produces a range of printed publications from factsheets and magazines to more detailed technical reports on specific

topics. Written by experts as well as practitioners, the Agency's publications portfolio is constantly growing to cover the most pressing issues in workplace health and safety. Summaries of our reports are available in all official EU languages.

The Agency's publications can be downloaded free of charge from our website, or ordered from the EU Publications Office.

## WEBSITE

**THE AGENCY'S** website is a comprehensive web portal, which provides information in up to 22 languages.

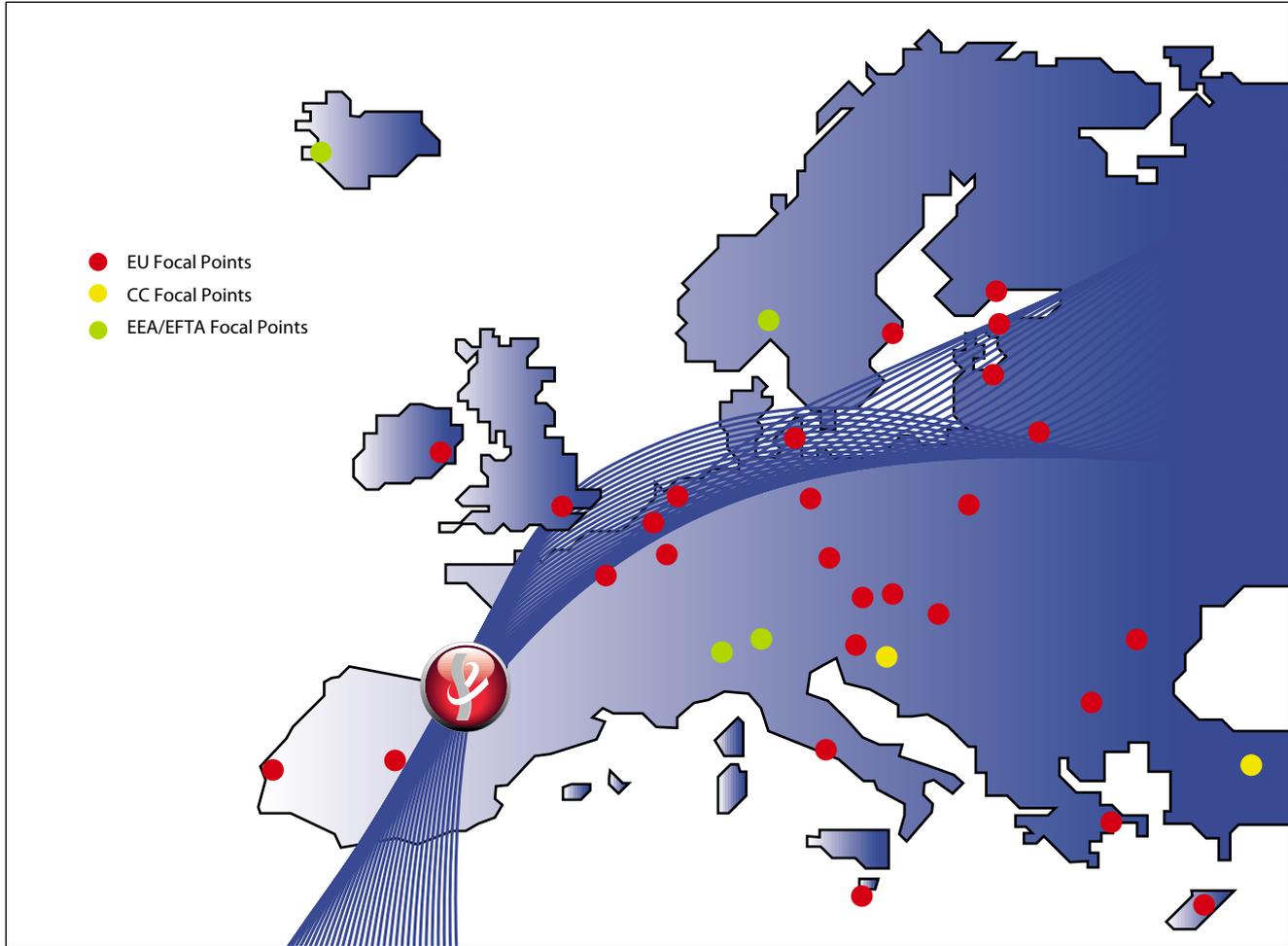
It deals with specific OSH issues in particular types of business. It also provides an overview and explanation of European legislation on OSH, and it enables users to search information by sector, risk type, and priority groups such as disabled people, women, young workers and workers in SMEs.

The site can be customised to suit user requirements in terms of topics, languages and countries. With thousands of links, the site is a gateway to reliable information on good practice from around the world, with examples of risk assessments and case studies of solutions to OSH problems.

THE AGENCY WEBSITE IS AT <http://osha.europa.eu>

# OFFER





# 4 HOW WE

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

**WORKING** in partnership is key to what the Agency does. Today, we are part of a worldwide occupational safety and health network, which shares information and expertise from around the world.

At the national level we are represented by a network of focal points, which are typically the lead OSH organisations in their respective countries. These focal points work with government, employers' and workers' representatives, providing information and advice to support Agency initiatives. They also manage the national Agency websites, organise European campaign events in the individual Member States, and nominate representatives to expert groups, which provide advice to the Agency in their own field of expertise.

We also work with topic centres, which are consortia of national safety and health institutions that collect and analyse national data to support key areas of the Agency's work. We work through more than 300 Euro Info Centres (EICs), which make up the EU's largest Community business support network, answering around 360 000 direct queries from SMEs every year, on a wide range of subjects.

We work with labour inspectorates, and with a wide range of consultants, including research teams from

leading academic and OSH-related institutions. We cooperate closely with EU bodies, including the European Commission, European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, our sister EU agencies and the social partners, in particular with BusinessEurope and ETUC. We have strong links with OSH bodies in countries outside Europe, and we have partnerships with international bodies including the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

## THE LEGAL BASIS OF OUR WORK

**EU POLICY** on health and safety at work has its legal basis in Article 137 of the EU Treaty, which gives the EU authority to legislate in this field. Directive 89/391/EEC, known as the 'framework directive', sets out the general principles for good safety and health at work. Other EU legislation in the field addresses specific OSH issues, such as chemical agents, noise and pregnant workers. The objectives and priorities of European policy are detailed in the Community strategy on health and safety at work.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AGENCY, GO TO

<http://osha.europa.eu>



In order to improve the working environment, as regards the protection of the safety and health of workers as provided for in the Treaty and successive Community strategies and action programmes concerning health and safety at the workplace, the aim of the Agency shall be to provide the Community bodies, the Member States, the social partners and those involved in the field with the technical, scientific and economic information of use in the field of safety and health at work.

Further information about the Agency's information projects and other initiatives can be obtained from its website:

<http://osha.europa.eu>

For details about national-level projects and developments, please contact your local focal point in your country:

[http://osha.europa.eu/about/focal\\_points](http://osha.europa.eu/about/focal_points)

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