

Risk assessment on road transport and restaurant sectors

OiRA promotion in France



Background

Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) is a web platform that enables the development of sectoral risk assessment tools in any language in an easy and standardised way. OiRA partner countries can use OiRA to develop their own sector-specific risk assessment tools aimed at micro and small enterprises (MSEs). The tools help MSEs to identify and evaluate their safety and health risks and propose preventive actions in relation to the identified risks. Finally, OiRA tools can be used to generate risk assessment reports. Such risk assessment reports are mandatory in all European Union Member States.

In France, the OiRA tools have been developed for sectors with high levels of occupational accidents and diseases. The target groups were defined in a programme of the French social security system, which included a focus on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Target sectors were selected based on statistical analysis; among them were the road transport and restaurant sectors. The OiRA tools were developed for the sectors in general rather than for a certain size of company. However, both the restaurant and the road transport sectors are dominated by MSEs. In France, there are around 97,000 restaurants and 14,500 road transport companies with up to 19 employees.

Sector-specific OiRA tools were developed by the INRS (French National Research and Safety Institute for the Prevention of Occupational Accidents and Diseases, <http://www.inrs.fr/>). Funding for each sectoral programme was provided by the French social security system. The utilisation of the OiRA tools is voluntary. Professional associations promote their use and, in line with the OiRA philosophy, all tools are freely available.

Statistical analyses were used to best define the scope of the tools for both the road transport and the restaurant sectors. Based on this, it was decided that the focus of the road transport tool should be on freight transport (packaged goods in cardboard delivered on pallets), while the transport of hazardous substances or animals was not included. The selection of this area of special focus was determined by the significant amount of transport of cardboard-packaged goods (accounting for 40 % of the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) transport sector).

The French OiRA tools are integrated into larger sectoral programmes led by the French Insurance Fund for Employees (CNAMTS), the INRS, the Prevention Services of Regional Insurances (CARSAT) and a national steering committee for MSE programmes 2014-2017. Different partners in each sector contributed to the development and dissemination of the prevention programme and the OiRA tools.

In the road transport sector, the main partners are OPCA-TRANSPORTS (OPCA-TC), which is a public organisation that provides finance for training in the transport and services sectors, and the French Association of Transport (AFT).

In the restaurant sector, the partners are the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and several professional organisations.

Road transport sector in France

In the transport sector in France, OSH is tightly regulated, for example driving time is controlled and new businesses have to obtain administrative authorisation before beginning to operate. The level of education of employees in the road transport sector is mainly vocational training. Employees are generally mobile with few if any employees working in an office. Workers can change employer easily. Employees often have years of seniority and a high level of professional experience.

In the road transport sector, 1 out of 10 accidents occurs on the road, and serious injury or death is often a consequence. Approximately 90% of accidents occur when the vehicle is stationary, for example when entering or leaving a truck, loading or unloading goods or covering the trailer. The work involves only limited contact with clients, which are often large commercial groups, and the sector is characterised by high levels of competition and tight deadlines. Employees are injured between two and three times more often than in other business sectors. The severity of injuries is also higher than in other sectors. In total, there are 1,700,000 days of sick leave per year (about 70 days per company) in this sector and the cost of occupational accident and disease insurance corresponds to 5% of the payroll.

The vulnerability of road transport companies is high. The reliance on suppliers and the competitiveness of the market put pressure on employers. External factors related to economic changes (e.g. the price of fuel or the cost of goods) and the business market contribute to company vulnerability. The transport sector is also subject to a lot of change. It seems that, in the future, vans will be used in place of trucks, because there are fewer legal restrictions, guidelines or regulations for vans and they can more easily access city centres. The huge increase in online shopping requires smaller but more regular deliveries with an increasing travel frequency and fragmented working days.

Restaurant sector in France

The restaurant sector includes about 575,000 workers in France. Education is rather heterogeneous in the restaurant sector. Jobs are often temporary (high level of staff turnover) and do not require specific educational qualifications, although some employees have vocational training. Overall, employees are in a vulnerable position, with low wages in low-skilled jobs. A large number of employees are young workers and immigrants. The administrative and bureaucratic parts of the work account for a rather small proportion. However, the standards set by food and hygiene inspection requirements for kitchens are high.

The level of restaurant vulnerability seems to be rather high. The average company lifetime in this sector is only 7 years. Costs for

occupational insurance are very high, with more than 1,680,000 days of sick leave per year. Two thirds of accidents occur around lunch time and two thirds of accidents relate to employees with less than 1 year of experience.



In restaurants, work is generally carried out on the premises. Temporary and part-time employees are common, with a high number of seasonal workers and employees who work on short contracts or only at particular events. Restaurants generally experience a high level of pressure owing to price and high levels of competition.

Activities for promoting occupational safety and health and OiRA in these sectors

The implementation of OiRA tools in France is embedded in broader approaches to fostering occupational safety and health (OSH) in companies in the restaurant and transport sectors. The aim of the preventive programmes was to improve risk assessments with tools adapted to the needs of employers and work situations, to disseminate OSH information through partners and to offer services supporting the development of good practices, including raising awareness of risks and risk prevention methods.

To achieve these aims, the following (information and services) approaches were taken for companies in both sectors:

- information campaigns, including newsletters, information toolkits and online information (on www.INRS.fr/trm and www.INRS.fr/restauration);

- training for advisors of the CCI and the OPCA-TC in contact with owners and managers, and the provision of advice regarding OSH;
- financial subsidies for safer work equipment.

What was done and how

Information campaign

The OiRA tools were adapted and complemented by several information kits describing good practice; for example, several descriptions of preventive measures have been published (www.inrs.fr/restauration).

The tools and information kits were introduced through leaflets or newsletters in 2014. In 2015, the information kits were distributed by professional organisations such as the AFT or the OPCA-TC. In the restauration sector, dissemination was supported through the prevention network created by regional insurance companies and advisors of the CCI; MSEs were more responsive to CCI advisors than to advisors of regional insurance companies (because the latter are viewed in a less friendly manner as they do controls in the name of insurances). Personal contact between companies and advisors, as well as word of mouth, worked best for the transmission of advice about risk prevention.

Training for advisors

In both sectors, training on risk prevention was organised by regional insurance offices and reached 40 advisors that specialised in road transport and 100 advisors of the OPCA-TC, and 180 advisors of the CCI (for the restaurant sector). The training enabled advisors to support companies by providing OSH advice and informing them of the OiRA tools and other information available. These advisors arranged one-to-one meetings with owners and managers of MSEs to provide them with the necessary information and knowledge.

According to feedback obtained through interviews with the advisors involved, the advisors find the OiRA tools easy to use, and the tools allow advisors to reach companies and facilitate discussions about the legal requirements for OSH.

In addition, leaflets about professional risks and the use of the OiRA tool were sent to road transport companies (14 500 leaflets) and restaurants (97 000 leaflets) with fewer than 20 employees.

In the road transport sector, the Synergie programme complements this preventive approach by providing support for e-learning training sessions. The programme aims to improve the introduction given to trainees as well as those newly employed in companies, for example temporary workers and young employees. The programme was initiated because a large proportion of employees with less than 1 year of experience and young people (18- to 24-year-olds) are victims of occupational accidents in France. More information on the Synergie programme can be found online, available at:

(<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/safety-and-health-micro-and-small-enterprises-eu-policy-practice/view>, page 177).

Information about suitable work equipment and how to organise workplaces is available on the INRS website (www.inrs.fr/trm). In certain areas of France, a network bringing transport companies together has been built around these projects (Synergie devices and the OiRA tools).

In the restaurant sector, the MavImplant tool for the redesigning of workplaces and premises was established to support companies. MavImplant is a free web application, through which companies can build 3D mock-ups of their future workplaces. The programme guides the user through the successive workplace design steps. At each step of the project, the software supplies information and assistance relating to OSH and good practice in workplace environment design. Including potential OSH issues upstream in the project facilitates the taking of preventive action at the source. Find out more about MavImplant online: (https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/MAVImplant,_an_online_tool_for_building_a_3D_mockup_workplace_for_small_enterprises).

Financial subsidies

In the national programme of the French social security system for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (2014-2017), there were two types of financial support (economic incentives), both of which aimed to support investment in equipment. There were simplified subsidies for MSEs, financed by the French social security system, to buy equipment or improve workstations, for example grants to buy a special kind of dishwasher so that employees no longer need to wipe glasses, aimed at preventing cuts (in the restaurant sector), and grants to buy electrical handling equipment for loading and unloading goods on and off trucks or other transport vehicles (in the road transport sector). The scheme was specifically aimed at companies with 1 to 49 employees and it aimed to initiate the implementation of preventive actions following the use of the OiRA tool.

In addition, in both sectors a 'prevention agreement' was set up between companies and CARSAT to help companies invest in a global prevention action plan, for example to renovate kitchens and change floors. The implementation of the agreement was financed by the French social security system and dedicated to companies with 1 to 200 employees.

What was achieved

The evaluation of the impact of the programmes on the transport and restaurant sectors is still in progress.

Figures show that the tools and information provided are widely used: More than 9,800 sessions were created for the OiRA tool for the restaurant sector (from January 2014 to February 2018) and more than 10,000 people visited the online sector-specific page on the INRS website; More than 4,700 sessions were opened for the OiRA tool for the road transport sector (from January 2011 to February 2018) and more than 15,800 people visited the online road transport page on the INRS website.

Table 1: Figures on OiRA restaurant and transport tool March 2018

Tool	Number of target enterprises (<20employees)	Seniority of the tool in months	Number of accounts/users	Number of sessions	Number of action plans created	% of MSEs reached in the sector
OiRA road transport	14,500	75	4244	4795	1,276	29,3%
OiRA restaurant sector	97,000	49	8319	9816	4864	8,6%

The table shows the number of accounts/users of the OiRA tools. For a session to count, a risk assessment document must be created. A user can have several sessions if, for example, he or she has a company with three restaurants and carries out a risk assessment for each of them. Another way in which a user could have several sessions is if the same user carries out yearly repetitions of the risk assessment. If at least one measure is included in the action plan, it is counted as an action plan. A complete session (also referred to as top assessment) corresponds to a session during which more than 70 % of the risk statements were answered and more than 70 % of the risks identified were covered by preventive measures.

Users are prompted to participate in a survey when they have finished their risk assessment or action plan. In the survey 95 % of users that responded said that the tool met their needs and that they would recommend it.

Success factors

Factors that contributed to the success of the tool the transport sector were:

- a risk prevention approach based on a partnership with professional associations and a representative organisation of the transport sector that allows better information dissemination owing to their proximity to companies;
- tools adapted to common work situations that are easy to use and respond to employers' needs;
- clear communication with constructive and understandable advice, such as descriptions of good practice adapted to the professional actors;
- advice based on available resources and adapted to the economic context, for example technical solutions with recommendations about suitable equipment (e.g. a pallet jack).

According to the CARSAT respondents and the INRS officers who coordinate the preventive programme in the restaurant sector, all parties involved appreciate the tools and consider the tools well designed in the context of restaurants.

Challenges to overcome and future plans

Some problems were noticed in both sectors, such as the large number of companies scattered over the country, the heterogeneous involvement of professional associations and difficulties in engaging employers that are very busy and do not allocate sufficient time to OSH management in general. Certain aspects are related to the specific characteristics of the sectors. In the transport sector for example, the partnership between professional organisations and regional insurance companies works well in some cases, but is contentious in some regions. In the restaurant sector, the involvement of professional associations could be improved and enhanced.

Plans are still being made to improve the OSH programmes related to these sectors. The Synergie devices and the MavImplant tool are seen as supplementary to the OiRA tools. Social partners of the hotel, restaurant and catering trade (HORECA) decided that the eight preventive solutions recommended in the programme should become mandatory requirements for all restaurants. Subsidies will be used to develop safer equipment in collaboration with truck manufacturers.

Conclusions

In France, the OiRA tools are much more than simply free software for creating risk assessments for improving prevention in MSEs; they are embedded in a wider preventive approach, which brings together several stakeholders aiming to improve OSH (professional associations, national and regional insurance offices, INRS, etc.). The working material is easy to access and free of charge. Its dissemination is related to the existing links between stakeholders from the trade, but it has also reinforced these links and created new partnerships. The fact that the OiRA tools are well adapted and modified according to the needs of MSEs helps to reach this target group, especially in the sectors described in this case study.

Further information:

<https://oiraproject.eu/es/oira-tools>