

ACTION POINTS

Meeting:	MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD
Date:	19 June 2023 – 09.00-10.30
Venue:	Online

These notes intend to reflect the discussions held in view of the Management Board meeting on 27-28 June 2023

1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Chairperson welcomed the participants and introduced the draft agenda. Before working through the agenda, he asked the participants to declare whether they may have any conflict of interests with any of the items of the draft agenda. No Executive Board member reported any.

The main business for this meeting was to prepare the Management Board meeting later in the month.

The Executive Board was also called to discuss some aspects related to the recruitment of the Executive Director in a separate session.

CONCLUSION: The Executive Board adopted the draft agenda.

2. MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING PREPARATION

The interim Executive Director recalled that the Agency would introduce the different items at a joint online session open to the three groups and the Commission. The Agency would then rotate across the three groups to collect feedback and remarks – and any request for any further clarification, in the following order: Workers, Governments and Employers.

The Agency suggested to focus on those items that were submitted for adoption or decision and that are expected to require some more in-depth discussion, namely:

- Item 3 “Healthy Workplaces Campaign cycle”
- Item 4 “Proposal for a future foresight topic and shortlist of OSH overviews”
- Item 6 “Consolidated annual activity report 2022 incl analysis and assessment”
- Item 7 “Opinion on final accounts 2022”

Item 3 “Healthy Workplaces Campaign cycle”

The Agency referred to the webinar held on 1 June, where the evaluation findings and recommendations of the evaluation of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign “Lighten the Load” 2020-2022 were presented – and which included an assessment of the extended campaign cycle.

The Agency submitted a proposal based on the evidence from the evaluation and on own assessment in relation to the impact that the campaign cycle has on allocation of resources and EU-OSHA’s work in general. The Agency’s proposal consists in retaining the current three-year cycle and to commit to the building of future Healthy Workplaces Campaigns on OSH overviews.

The Groups’ spokespersons expressed the need for a more in-depth discussions with their groups on this matter.

The Governments stressed that it would be useful if the Agency could stress why the topic of the campaign starting in 2026 would merit a three-years cycle. In addition, the Management Board should be made fully aware of the consequences of their decision. It would be important to highlight that reverting to a two-years cycle can make it difficult for the Agency to deliver fully on the objectives of other activities – such as ensuring proper dissemination and outreach to targeted audiences of research projects or OiRA.

The Workers reported that more discussion would be needed within the group.

The Agency will address the concerns voiced out by the Executive Board in the introduction of this proposal to the Management Board.

In particular, the emphasis will be on the possible consequences for other activities and the benefits achieved with a longer cycle for the HWC itself. Going back to two years entails an important rethinking and reprioritisation of Agency's work as well as the campaign design (for example, the priority area approach may not be possible).

The Agency also stressed that the HWC campaign starting in 2026 (after the digitalisation campaign) has a very broad topic 'Mental health at work with a focus on new and overlooked areas and groups of workers'. This topic is complex and multifaceted and lends itself well for a longer HWC timeframe.

The Agency also stressed that the Management Board in due time can always reconsider their decision, including in the light of the theme selected for the HWC.

Should there not be consensus on the Agency's proposal, a possible way forward is that the Management Board mandates the Executive Board to rediscuss possible options in October to prepare for a decision by the Management Board in December.

It was also highlighted that it is important to make clear what the options are: A 19-months campaign within a two-years cycle, a 25-months campaign within a three-years cycle or, a 19-months campaign within a three-years cycle.

Conclusions: In the introductory session to the Management Board, the Agency will emphasise the rationale behind the Agency's proposal. The groups will discuss further the Agency's proposals during the group meetings.

Item 4: Proposals on new foresight and OSH overviews

The Agency presented the proposals for a topic for the new foresight study which will start in 2024 and for topics for new OSH overviews which will start in 2025/2026.

The Agency reminded that these proposals are now submitted for decision by the Management Board – after a broad consultation process with the Management Board and the OKAG earlier in the year.

The proposed theme for the new foresight is:

- OSH implications of future climate change-related developments and crises

The proposed topics for new OSH overviews are:

- OSH Overview on occupational exposure to cancer risk factors
- OSH Overview on climate change
- OSH Overview on accident prevention

The Executive Board overall welcomed the proposals. The Agency clarified that the suitability of the OSH overview topics for a campaign format would be assessed in the context of the ex-ante assessments that the Agency will prepare.

In the introductory session with the Management Board, the Agency will make use of a PPT presentation.

The Workers mentioned as a proposal the development of training and certification programs for employees and employers at the European level starting with a short-term horizontal program.

Conclusions: The Executive Board took good note of the Agency's proposals and had no further remarks.

Item 6 "Consolidated annual activity report 2022 incl analysis and assessment"

The Agency introduced the Consolidated annual activity report for 2022 and clarified that together with the Management Board's analysis and assessment is a key document for the European Parliament and Council's discharge decision for the financial year 2022.

The Management Board is expected to review the report and agree on an analysis and assessment thereof. A draft is provided to facilitate the discussions.

Conclusions: The Executive Board took good note of the report and had no further remarks.

Item 7 "Opinion on final accounts 2022"

The Agency introduced the final accounts 2022 and recalled that every year the Executive Director shall send the final accounts to the Management Board, who shall give an opinion on these accounts. A draft opinion was included in the meeting documentation to facilitate the Management Board discussions. The accounts, together with the Consolidated annual activity report and the Management Board's analysis and assessment, are key documents in the Executive Director's discharge process by the Parliament and Council. The European Court of Auditors delivered its observations based on the report from the external auditor, stating that in their opinion, the Agency's accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as of 31 December 2022.

Conclusions: The Executive Board took good note of the accounts and had no further remarks.

Other issues discussed at the request of the Executive Board included:

Item 5 "European Year of Skills and EU-OSHA"

Being 2023 the EU Year of Skills, the Agency outlined the actions undertaken under the different activities and strands of work which contribute to this important initiative. Further proposals can be discussed in the context of the discussions about the next EU-OSHA's strategy which will start next Autumn and with the involvement of the Management Board and OKAG.

Item 6: Evaluations: results achieved and lessons learnt

Under this item, at the plenary session the Agency will present evaluation findings and recommendations for two important activities that finalised recently:

- ESENER-3
- OSH overview on Musculoskeletal disorders

Looking at the ESENER-3 evaluation's recommendations, the Workers encouraged the Agency to follow up on the one which pointed out to the need for ESENER findings and follow-up studies to be further disseminated; as well as to the one related to carrying out a non-responses analysis, which was considered a sensitive proposal to gain a deeper understanding of the results. Conversely, regarding the recommendation on retaining the branding "ESENER", they expressed some reluctance, considering that with time the survey has been covering well established risks and not only new and emerging ones as it was the case at its origin.

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Under "Any other business", the interim Executive Director informed the Executive Board about the below issues:

ESENER-4 procurement

The recent procurement procedure related to the next ESENER wave had to be cancelled to address a lack of clarity on concrete issues that had emerged from the tender specifications at the evaluation phase. As a result, the procurement has been re-launched with the objective to secure a suitable contractor and a contract in place before the end of year. At this stage, it is not expected that this delay in the procurement schedule will have any significant impact on the implementation of the budget in 2023 nor on the work programmed for ESENER between 2023 and 2024.

Legal proceedings related to a procurement procedure on project management support

The Agency is currently involved in legal proceedings with an economic operator as a result of a decision taken by the interim Executive Director in full compliance with the applicable regulatory framework and following a clear recommendation from the relevant advisory body. The legal proceedings are confidential and more information shall be shared in due course and as significant developments arise. The residual risk on the Agency's operations is considered as low.

The Executive Board took note of the two AOB item.

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The Chairperson thanked the attendees and closed the meeting.