



European Agency  
for Safety and Health  
at Work

Navigate:

- [Home](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Work Programmes](#)

# FOUR YEAR ROLLING WORK PROGRAMME, 1998-2001

**September 1997**

## ***Chapter 1. Introduction***

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work is required, under Article 10 of the Regulation establishing the Agency (2062/94) to draw up a four year rolling work programme, of which the Annual Work Programmes approved by the Administrative Board shall form a part.

The Programme is written with a clear objective in mind, as set out in Article 2 of the Regulation 2062/94:

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

The specific actions the Agency has to carry out are outlined in art. 3 and 4 of the regulation 2062/94. The Agency therefore proposes to address the issues concerned, in co-operation with the European Commission and in partnership with the other Community bodies, the Member States, European social partners and other parties involved in the occupational safety and health field, in a positive and open manner.

**1.2.** The forward planning of the Agency is currently in two phases; the first is this rolling work programme which consists of a four-year plan, that will be updated and rolled forward each year. The programme will begin with the plans for 1998 and set out medium and longer term aims for 1999-2001, allowing the necessary flexibility for them to be amended to reflect new developments and changing priorities. The second phase is the annual work programme for 1998, which gives detailed information about the Agency's goals and activities.

This first four year programme presents a particular challenge as it is necessarily written before the first full year's work has been undertaken, and before the Agency has all the necessary input and information (notably on costs) to provide the appropriate level of detail. In addition, its progress is naturally heavily dependent upon the activity of the first full year of activity, 1997. It aims to build upon and develop the themes begun in 1997. Particularly important will be the successful establishment of the Agency's information network based on the Internet and the role of the National Focal Points and national information networks. Specifically, the programme will concentrate on three main activity areas:

## **Network Development - building the links**

### **Information Services – communicating knowledge**

### **Information Projects – developing knowledge**

**1.4.** This rolling work programme is written on the basis that there will be a steady incremental increase in the Agency's resources, over the period to 2001 when the Agency should be fully operational. Resource allocations as set out in the Financial Statement for 1998 would enable the Agency to develop its work and make the necessary technical enhancements to its network. In each year of the four year programme, activities will be undertaken in each of the three areas described above. Emphasis will be given to ensuring wide public access to information at national level through the network structure, and to promoting high safety and health standards at national and EU level by carrying out a number of key information projects.

This programme is written on the basis that the period 1998-99 will be a time of further development and consolidation of the Agency's main network, of its other information dissemination activities and of its staffing and resource base; and that in 2000-1 the Agency will be fully operational, with its network in full partnership with bodies both inside and outside the EU, having the capacity to manage a wide range and number of complex projects.

Since the resource increases cannot be assumed, the programme attempts to emphasise what will be the Agency's priorities at any given level of resources. At a lower than expected level of resources, these priorities would continue to be pursued (albeit possibly to a longer time scale than originally envisaged), and lower priority work would not be undertaken. Activities on information activities and information projects in para 1.3 would have to be managed so that they did not take place at the expense of the development phase of the basic information network.

**1.6** As background to the plans set out in this programme, it is expected that by the end of 1997 the following will have been achieved (dependent on availability of resources):

- An IT plan will be in the course of implementation, basic network links will have been established, the role of the Focal Points and the national information networks will have been defined and pilot activities may have been commenced.
- Other information services will have been launched through the production of an information brochure, a newsletter, and stands at Conferences in Düsseldorf, Bilbao and Seville;
- Information projects will have been started, including projects on the economic impact of safety and health and occupational safety and health priorities and strategies
- The ad hoc requests for information will be routinely dealt with;
- A start will have been made to organising the political priorities of the Agency on a more structured basis, including relationships with other bodies with a close interest in the Agency's area of work. These will have

been placed on a firmer footing, notably with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin, with whom a Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be agreed and implemented.

## ***Chapter 2. Network Development - building the links.***

**2.1** The major tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 of regulation 2062/94 will be the following:

to establish the network comprising the main component elements of the national information networks; the national focal points and any future topic centres. This will be done in co-operation with the Member States, and the Agency will co-ordinate it, taking into account the national, Community and international bodies and organisations which provide this type of information and services;

to collect and make available information on safety and health matters from and to third countries and international organisations (WHO, ILO, PAHO, IMO etc.);

Particularly in the early period of the programme, the task of developing further the information network based on the Internet, through the Focal Points and National Networks, will be a high priority activity. The aim of this activity will be to link all existing safety and health information that are available through IT to the Agency's network, and to ensure that it is easily accessible to the target users. This will involve building up the IT infrastructure and expertise of the Agency to handle the relevant information. It will build on the achievements of 1997, which have included the creation of a Homepage system for the Agency and the Focal Points, and access to basic safety and health data in Member States through this gateway. It will be firmly based on the needs of target groups, which will be regularly monitored (see paragraph 2.11 below).

### **The Establishment of a Guidance on Basic Requirements and Development Plan for the Agency Network**

**2.3** By 1998, it is expected that agreement will have been reached on the requirements/responsibilities of the Agency Network. A development plan for their work and the national networks should have been constructed on the basis of the annual work programme, and implementation and further development should be in progress. This will feature the following:

- further development of the format of the information, and its means of access, so as to facilitate its use by target groups; this includes continual study of the needs of users;
- plans for linking existing occupational safety and health databases through the network;
- how material currently available in printed form might be accessed through the network;
- the scope for, and means of, developing the provision of information on a commercial basis;
- further development of the role of the Focal Points, for example in channelling information to the Agency network, in quality

control/consistency, in contributing to information projects, and especially in building up effective national networks, which link policy-makers, social partners, academic and research institutions and other major information providers in all Member States into the Agency's network. This will involve the sharing of good practice, securing commitment to the necessary input of resources, support, and advice from the Agency.

**2.4**A regular programme of meetings of the Focal Points will be established (3-4 per year), and there will be systematic liaison with each Focal Point.

**2.5**In the latter phase of the four-year period (2000-2001) it is likely that less priority will be given to this activity as it may be expected that by then, the role and responsibilities of the Focal Points and national networks will have been well established, and a relatively higher priority will be given to developing ways of using the information thus gathered.

### **Development of thematic networks through the Focal Points**

**2.6**The Agency's Information Projects will be carried out by the Agency in partnership with its national Focal Points, through 'thematic networks', with ad hoc groups of experts, through the Focal Points themselves, through studies of individual subjects, or through Topic Centres designated to carry out a specific task for the Agency. This concept is explained further below, in chapter 4. The thematic networks will monitor the need for collection and dissemination of information in each of the areas identified in Article 3 of Regulation 2062/94 as being of relevance to the Agency.

### **The development of Partnership arrangements with other EU and non-EU organisations**

**2.7**In the earliest phase of this programme links will be established between the Agency's Network and safety and health organisations both at EU level and at international level (for example, the ILO, WHO, ISSA, UNEP). Initial links will also be developed to other countries which make information available through the Internet. The Agency will focus on the CEEC's included in the enlargement process of the EU, on EEA-countries, the USA and Canada. Development of these links will be limited in the start-up phase as priority will be given to building up the network within the EU, based upon the national Focal Points and networks. In the middle to later period of the programme (1999-2000) the Agency will aim to connect the Network to a wider range of countries, and to increase co-operation in the development of health and safety information on the Internet. It will also aim to link the network to other groups with an interest in occupational safety and health, for example NGO's and consumer safety groups.

**2.8**By the middle to later period, the Agency would also expect to establish more sophisticated links with these bodies over the form and content of their information on the network and the uses of that information in projects. Thus the concept of 'full' and 'associated' partner status to the Network will be finally developed - the Agency would aim to formalise its arrangements for partnership with bodies outside the national focal point network by defining the terms of partnership with them, depending on their willingness and/or capacity to

contribute to information projects with the existing full partners.

### **The development of the Network technology**

**2.9**Development of the technical aspects of the network will continue from 1997, when it is expected that a basic Homepage system will be set up. This work will continue throughout the programme, although clearly it will have high priority in the early stages. Implementation of the IT plan will continue, including implementation of a study of the structure of the safety and health data in Member States.

**2.10**The technological development of the Network will be assisted where necessary through the use of outside consultancy, and by use through partnership of technical expertise within Member State safety and health organisations. The aim will be to implement the IT plan on the basis of the most objective advice available, and taking full advantage of the experience of the Telematics Project Health and Safety Promotion in the European Union (HS Pro-EU project).

**2.11**The Agency will keep under review the inevitable changes in information technology over the programme period, including the question of whether the Internet will remain the most appropriate vehicle for the IT network, and the implications of these changes for the work of the Agency.

### **Operation of the Network**

**2.12**As an early priority, the Agency will implement ways of measuring, as far as possible, the impact and effectiveness of its network. The information thus obtained will be used to target the information provided by the Agency so that it meets the needs of its priority users. This will build on work started in 1997. There will be an annual survey of Network users with, every two to three years, a more in-depth study of reactions to the network's information.

**2.13**The Agency will also review regularly, in conjunction with its Network partners, the structure and operation of the network, and make changes if necessary. These reviews and the outcomes of the user surveys will be reported as indicators of performance in the Annual Reports and Financial Statements issued by the Agency.

### ***Chapter 3. Information Services – communicating knowledge***

**3.1**Alongside the forward development of its main information network, based on the Internet, the Agency must use both this and other media to fulfil its obligations as set out in the Regulation to disseminate information on occupational safety and health; and it has specific obligations to organise certain forms of information exchange such as conferences and seminars. This work will continue throughout the period of the rolling programme, although it may be expected to grow in breadth and complexity over the period, as the Agency's access to information grows, and as its capacity increases to conduct and publish analyses, organise conferences, etc. The main elements of this work will be as follows:

#### **Responses to ad hoc information requests**

**3.2** Throughout the period of the programme one of the tasks of the Agency will be to respond to a variety of ad hoc requests for information from Community bodies, Member States and those involved in the field. Depending on the complexity of the request, it is likely that some 'mini-projects' will need to be set up to meet them. Although much of the responsibility for meeting these requests would fall to the Focal Points, it would be a drain on the Agency's resources if they were dealt with in an uncoordinated way; therefore the Agency will establish a system of prioritisation.

### **Newsletter**

**3.3** Continuing an initiative to be begun in late 1997, the Agency will publish a newsletter 4 to 6 times per year, which will be targeted primarily at Focal Points, members of national networks and other network partners.

### **Safety and Health Bulletin**

**3.4** The Agency will, from 1998 onwards, produce 2 to 3 times a year a bulletin reporting on its activities and on EU safety and health issues. This will be based on the information relayed through the Agency's networks and produced by individual projects. It will be targeted at individuals with a professional interest in occupational safety and health in the EU.

### **Other Occupational Safety and Health Publications**

**3.5** The Agency will plan and carry out a programme of publications, including its forward plans, annual reports, and the outcomes and evaluations of projects. In addition, the Agency will produce every two years a comprehensive report about the state of occupational safety and health in the EU. This will be based on the information received and disseminated through all channels by the Agency, and on the outputs of its thematic networks (see para 4.2 below), The report will include information on the development of legislation and organisational structures of health and safety institutions, and will identify emerging trends. European data will also be included e.g., statistics from EUROSTAT and data from surveys made by the European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions. Two such reports are planned - the first in 1999 and the next in 2001.

### **Conferences and Seminars**

**3.6** From 1998 onwards the Agency will be able to organise an agreed programme of seminars and conferences, either on its own initiative or in response to requests on particular topics. It will work especially with the safety and health authorities of the Member States holding the EU Presidency to co-ordinate such events. The Agency could have a role in helping to run other promotional activities at European level such as campaigns on specific subjects.

The Agency will develop, over the period, ways to use Bilbao as a venue for safety

and health events in Europe. This could include an occupational safety and health fair.

**3.8**The Agency will also seek to develop a role as a convenor of discussions on occupational safety and health at European level, by providing facilitation and a neutral forum for debate through seminars or meetings.

### **Exhibitions, Presentations**

**3.9**The Agency itself will continue to develop its strategy of representation at key exhibitions/conferences, either through an exhibition stand and/or through personal presentations. Such activities will be prioritised according to the relevance of the event to the Agency's objectives, the audience and the resources available at the Agency to support them. The Agency expects to have a stand at 4-5 exhibitions per year throughout the period of this programme.

### ***Chapter 4. Information Projects – developing knowledge***

The delivery of 'Information Projects' represents an important output of the Agency's activity in setting up its main information network. These projects, will be undertaken by the Agency in partnership with its Focal Points, either through 'thematic networks' (see para 4.3 below), through ad hoc networks of experts convened on a particular topic, through studies of individual subjects or through *Topic Centres* designated to carry out a specific task for the Agency. The projects will utilise the information provided to the network, or will identify the need for data on issues not readily available and will devise means of obtaining it. Some work on developing such projects will begin in 1997, and continue into 1998, but as the basic structure of the Agency's network is consolidated in the following years, inevitably the Agency's capacity to deliver a greater number of projects, and more complex projects, will increase. In particular, the projects will be able to encompass not only existing information held within the network, but will be able to undertake the task of creating new information to meet gaps identified in the existing knowledge.

**4.2**As provided for in the Regulation (Article 4(1) and 4(4)), the Agency would intend to set up some Topic Centres; these would be established in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to gathering information than that which is possible through using the Focal Point etc. networks. A Topic Centre could examine, for example, safety and health issues in a particular economic sector, or a specific risk area. The topic(s) would have to be agreed by the Administrative Board, and the development of Topic Centres would also be dependent on the level of resources available. Subject to these, the first Topic Centres could be set up in 1998.

**4.3**As far as the thematic networks are concerned a programme of activities will be drawn up with reference to the four year rolling work programme and the more detailed annual plans. The thematic networks will be organised by the Agency. Their members will be national experts on the various topics, appointed by the national Focal points. Particularly at the beginning of the four-year period, the work programmes of the thematic groups will be developed on a priority basis, in accordance with the resources available to support them, both in the Agency and in the national Focal Points. It is especially important that they should provide 'added value' at European level and avoid duplication with other work.

**4.4**The following thematic networks will monitor the areas identified in Article 3 of Regulation 2062/94 as being of relevance to the Agency:

- **National and Community priorities and programmes**
- **Research**  
**Practical solutions, preventive actions and co-operation**

**4.5**The specific issues for information projects will be finalised in the context of detailed annual programmes within the following frames:

### **National and Community priorities and programmes**

**4.6**Based on the information it gathers about national and community priorities and programmes, the Agency will be in a good position to provide data on the various organisational infrastructures in the EU to regulate and promote safety and health at work. This includes the way in which good practice and technical knowledge are disseminated. By 1998 the Agency will have gathered information about the health and safety systems in the Member States, the changes that are being made to these systems and it will disseminate the lessons learnt to provide help to those facing similar problems. During the period of this Programme the Agency should be able to develop these issues with a wider range of international and EU partners, and should be able first, via the internet to support countries outside the EU with information and later, to respond to requests for information and technical assistance from those countries. The main tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 of regulation 2062/94 will be the following:

- to collect and disseminate technical, scientific and economic information in the Member States in order to pass it on to the Community bodies, Member States and interested parties; this collection shall take place to identify existing national priorities and programmes and provide the necessary input to the priorities and programmes of the Community;
- to supply the Community bodies and the Member States with the objective available technical, scientific and economic information they require to formulate and implement judicious and effective policies designed to protect the safety and health of workers.
- to provide the Commission in particular with the technical, scientific and economic information it requires to fulfil its tasks to identifying, preparing and evaluating legislation and measures in the area of the protection of the safety and health of workers, notably as regards the impact of legislation on enterprises, with particular reference to small and medium-sized enterprises;
- to contribute to the development of future Community action programmes relating to the protection of safety and health at work, without prejudice to the Commission's sphere of competence.

### **Research**

**4.7**The main tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 in regulation 2062/94, will be the following:

To collect technical, scientific and economic information on research into safety



and health at work and on other research activities which involve aspects connected with safety and health at work and disseminate the results of the research and research activities. The available work and its conclusions will be related to the broader areas being considered by the Agency. In time, it should be able to identify where there is a lack of research or other types of information on any given subject.

### **Practical Solutions, preventive actions and co-operation**

**4.8**A key element of the Agency's work will be to collect and disseminate information about practical solutions to common health and safety problems, at workplace level, across the EU. These may be addressed by concentrating upon common risks, upon particular hazards, or certain high-risk activities, for example. This theme, whilst it can be made more sophisticated through the period of the four-year programme, will remain a basic part of the Agency's work. Furthermore, the Agency will concentrate upon identifying current means of information exchange and access between Member States, and upon areas in which information is lacking. In the latter part of this period it should be able to move to more proactive methods of promoting exchange of information for example by organising exchanges of personnel, and managing EC assistance programmes to support good practice or innovation. The main tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 of the regulation 2062/94 will be the following:

- to provide technical, scientific and economic information on methods and tools for implementing preventive activities, paying particular attention to the specific problems of small and medium-sized enterprises;
- to promote and support co-operation and exchange of information and experience amongst the Member States in the field of safety and health at work, including information on training programmes.

### ***Chapter 5. Internal Management of the Agency***

**5.1**In the period of this Work Programme, the Agency will develop the management systems necessary for its effective and efficient operation. The basis for this will have been laid in 1997; it is hoped that from 1998 the Agency will be able to build up its staff and other resources and it is essential that it should be able to demonstrate that these resources are being used to give full value for money.

#### **Management**

**5.2**Key indicators of performance and quality will be developed and monitored; among these will be evaluation either external or in-house, of the outcomes of the Agency's projects, and the surveys of network users referred to in par. 2.11. They will also include response times to enquiries and delivery of projects to time and to the satisfaction of those who commissioned them. Performance and quality measures will be reviewed regularly and remedial action taken if targets are not met.

**5.3**Throughout the period, the Agency will manage its finances according to the provisions of its internal Financial Regulations. It will set and meet an annual target for efficiency savings/productivity improvements. It will aim for standards

of management of its resources, which are both efficient and environment-friendly.

### **Infrastructure**

**5.4**In 1998, the Agency will need to identify a location for its long-term seat in Bilbao for a move to this accommodation in 2001. In doing so it will have regard to the needs of the Agency as well as for economy, and for high standards in the working environment.

### **Personnel development**

**5.5**In 1998 it is intended that a programme of staff development should be in full operation, involving particularly training in IT skills, team-working, project management, and languages, notably Spanish. The Agency will utilise where appropriate staff on short term exchanges/secondments to provide additional expertise and flexibility to assist in the delivery of its objectives. It will have, and give practical effect to, a policy of equal opportunities.

### **Support to the Administrative Board and Bureau**

**5.6**The Agency will aim to provide efficient and effective secretarial support to the Board and Bureau throughout the period; it is expected that there will be 2 Board and 4 Bureau meetings per year.

### **Planning System**

**5.7**As required by art. 10 of the Regulation 2062/94 the Agency will update each year its four year rolling work programme and produce a more detailed Annual Programme. It will do so in consultation with the European Commission and the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health at Work. In constructing the four-year and annual programmes the Director will collaborate closely with the National Focal Points and receive input from the thematic networks. By 1998, and for subsequent years, a continual system of planning, budget-making and review will have been instituted.



## **Four Year Rolling Work Programme 1998-2001**

### **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work**

This document: URL: [http://agency.osha.eu.int/publications/work\\_programmes/rolling/index.html](http://agency.osha.eu.int/publications/work_programmes/rolling/index.html)

Last Modified: 27 Jun. 1998 - Comments: [webmaster@agency.osha.eu.int](mailto:webmaster@agency.osha.eu.int)

© Copyright 1998 European Agency for Safety and Health at Work - <http://agency.osha.eu.int/>