



2016-17 Healthy Workplaces for All Ages: Campaign Partnership Meeting

Brussels, 16 March 2016

With the first signs of spring in the air, previous and potential campaign partners and media partners, along with EU-OSHA staff, met to discuss the new campaign, *Healthy Workplaces for All Ages*. Director of EU-OSHA, Dr Christa Sedlatschek, kicked off the meeting by welcoming old friends and new to Brussels. She began by emphasising that this new campaign is not about age itself, but about Europe's ageing workforce. The fact that, by 2030, 30% or more of the workforce is expected to be over 55 exemplifies the extremely timely and highly relevant nature of the campaign.



The objectives of the 2016-17 *Healthy Workplaces for All Ages* campaign are as follows:

- to promote **sustainable work** and **healthy ageing** and the importance of **risk prevention throughout working life**;
- to assist **employers** and **workers of all ages** by providing **information** and **tools** for managing occupational safety and health (OSH) in the context of an ageing workforce;
- to facilitate **information** and **good practice exchange** in this area.

Dr Sedlatschek went on to highlight the business case for sustainable work and healthy ageing: healthy workers are productive workers, and productive workers are, by definition, essential to any effective organisation. Extending this idea to workers' whole working lives makes good business sense.

Finally, the Director could not overemphasise the importance of campaign partners: 'without effective campaign partners, this campaign will fail. With effective partners, it will succeed.'

The campaign and EU policy framework

To set this new campaign in the wider European policy context, EU-OSHA was very pleased to welcome Ole Christensen (Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur of the EU Strategic Framework on safety and health at work 2014-2020) and Stefan Olsson (Director, Employment and Social Legislation, Social Dialogue, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, European Commission) back to another EU-OSHA event.

European Parliament perspective

Ole Christensen began by thanking EU-OSHA and its campaign partners for their excellent job in raising awareness of OSH, as good OSH can benefit not only workers, but also organisations through increased productivity and the economy as a whole through lower healthcare costs.

Like Christa Sedlatschek, Mr Christensen highlighted the relevance of the new campaign topic at this time, when, with increasing retirement ages, people need to be an active part of the workforce for longer. He emphasised the need for active and healthy ageing for all workers and increased sustainability of social security systems: 'the future of OSH needs to be more, not less, ambitious!'

In line with this, Ole Christensen stressed the need to promote sustainable working in the legislative framework, as highlighted in the EU OSH Strategic Framework 2014-2020. And he concluded on a simple yet powerful note: 'safety and health is a fundamental right in Europe. We need to limit risks to all workers, and EU-OSHA's new campaign can help us do this.'



European Commission perspective



Stefan Olsson began by congratulating EU-OSHA and its partners on the great results achieved in previous Healthy Workplaces Campaigns with relatively few resources. When resources are lacking, he emphasised the importance of cooperation with the outside world and the vital role campaign partners play in this.

Only the week before the Campaign Partnership Meeting, the European Commission had adopted the European Pillar of Social Rights package, of which safety and health is a key element. So, at a time of ongoing discussions on revisions of the legislative framework, Mr Olsson highlighted the importance of campaign partners having an input in this social pillar.

What's more, the challenges that arise from demographic change are, according to Mr Olsson, one of the main policy challenges of the coming years: 'we need to help people to remain in work for as long as they want.' He concluded by summarising the 2016 work programme of the Commission, which will include an evaluation of the whole legislative framework. He stressed the importance of consultation with social partners and EU-OSHA in this process, and stated that he was very much looking forward to continuing this work.

Question and answer session

Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers or raise issues. A fruitful discussion was had, with a variety of topics covered, including:

- The ability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to adhere to legislation; they can sometimes find it burdensome.
- Whether or not legislation is the most appropriate tool for tackling workplace risks and the role of social dialogue and social partners in its implementation.
- The relevance of the campaign to different sectors. Construction, in particular, was discussed, as it is a sector in which safety is extremely important and workers often have to change roles mid-life owing to work-related health problems. But OSH is often not the priority, particularly in SMEs.
- How technology could be used to address workers' needs.

The 2016-17 *Healthy Workplaces for All Ages* campaign



Katalin Sas, Project Manager at EU-OSHA, introduced the new campaign topic. She began by highlighting the importance of EU-OSHA's network of partners, particularly its national focal points and official campaign partners (OCPs): 'these partners are our direct links to workplaces.'

With Europe's ageing workforce, all workers are facing longer working lives. As a result, various challenges are arising, including general labour shortages, more people in the workplace with chronic health problems, and concerns about lower productivity and absenteeism. The new campaign topic aims to address these issues and highlight the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach, including:

- **Life-course perspective and holistic approach.** Health in later life is affected by working conditions in earlier life. Risk prevention and a person's complete physical, mental and social well-being need to be considered throughout working life.
- **Work ability.** Work demands (affected by workload, work environment, leadership, etc.) need to be balanced with individual resources (affected by health, skills, motivation, etc.) through good leadership, worker participation and cooperation between management and workers.
- **Diversity- and age-sensitive risk assessment.** Risk assessment is the cornerstone of OSH management in Europe, but all individuals are different. Differences between individuals in functional capacity and health increase with age.
- **Adapting the workplace.** Work should be adapted to individuals' abilities, skills and health, and this should be a dynamic and continuous process throughout working life. Adaptations can include changes in equipment, job re-design and job rotation.
- **Lifelong learning.** Workers of all ages should take part in education and training. This is particularly important for older workers to prevent the erosion of skills.
- **Workplace health promotion.** This should involve a combined effort of employers, employees and society to improve health and well-being at work, but it can be successful only if combined with risk prevention and health protection.
- **Human resources (HR) and OSH management.** Cooperation between stakeholders is very important, in particular HR and OSH management, as HR policies can have an impact on safety and health, for example policies on work-life balance and career development.

But what are the benefits? Having an age-diverse workforce brings diverse perspectives and talents to an organisation; allows an organisation to adapt to a diverse customer base; and fosters knowledge-sharing between generations. And, through good age management, workers benefit through better health and well-being at work and organisations are likely to see improved productivity, lower rates of absenteeism and lower staff turnover.

Katalin Sas concluded by quoting Barack Obama (and adding to his version slightly!): 'Yes we can! Working together, we can help workers of all ages.'

Key dates

Campaign launch: 14 April 2016

European Weeks for Safety and Health at Work: October 2016 and 2017

Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards ceremony: April 2017

Healthy Workplaces Summit: November 2017

Question and answer session

After the summary of the coming campaign, the floor was opened to questions or issues. Standards in the field were the first topic raised, with Dr Sedlatschek highlighting the [e-guide](#) as a source that will present the existing standards. And this was followed by a discussion of risk prevention as a joint responsibility of trade unions and employers and of the importance of tools for dealing with OSH issues if they do arise.

The 2016-17 partnership offers

The official campaign partnership offer

Heike Klempa, EU-OSHA's Campaigns Manager, began by summarising the successes achieved through the 2014-15 partnership offer: it was the biggest campaign to date, recruiting 102 OCPs, with a wide variety (over 1,000 different types) of activities conducted, including training sessions, conferences and a wealth of online activities.

But the crown of the campaign partnership initiative proved to be the good practice exchange events. These events, previously known as 'benchmarking', provide OCPs with the opportunity to improve their OSH management and EU-OSHA with the opportunity to spread its campaign messages and support OCPs. And the Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards were another success: in the 2014-15 campaign, a new OCP category was introduced to the awards, won by Siemens for its multifaceted 'Life in Balance' programme.

The aim of the 2016-17 partnership offer is to build on the success of the 2014-15 model. And organisations joining the partnership can receive a wealth of benefits in return:

- **Recognition** for their efforts in the form of a dedicated section on the campaign website and publication of OCPs' news and activities in the monthly newsletter (OSHmail, which has more than 70,000 subscribers) and on social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn; with around 40,000 followers).
- Opportunity to **network** and participate in **good practice exchange** with like-minded organisations.
- Invitations to EU-OSHA's public European flagship **events**, at which there is the opportunity to present in workshops, conferences, etc.
- Receive **campaign materials**, including a welcome pack and a subscription to the bi-monthly campaign newsletter.

One of the application criteria is that an OCP should get substantially involved in the campaign, from disseminating campaign materials to developing campaign activities. Partners of the previous campaign and potential new partners can find details of how to become an OCP in the 2016-17 campaign, including application criteria, on the [campaign website](#).

The media partnership offer

Birgit Müller, Communications Officer at EU-OSHA, outlined the media partnership offer — the third time this offer has been run. She highlighted the importance of strengthening the cooperation between OCPs and media partners.

The 2014-15 campaign had 34 media partners (mainly OSH magazines) from 15 countries and was a great success, with over 500 media clippings generated in each year of the campaign. What's more, as well as producing print and online articles, media partners organised activities and events, including a [live question and answer Twitter chat](#) and a [workshop for school children in Spain using the Napo materials](#). And a survey in 2015 revealed that almost all media partners would be interested in a future partnership.

The 2016-17 media partnership offer is open to media outlets at both the European and national levels that are interested in OSH. Media partners can benefit through increased visibility (e.g. news published on the campaign website, on social media and in OSHmail; invitations to EU-OSHA events; and prior access to campaign press materials), as well as increased reputation and networking opportunities.

Like OCPs, media partners must get substantially involved in the campaign (e.g. for a magazine, this would comprise publishing at least five articles during the campaign). They must also make the campaign visible on their website, social media profiles or printed copy, have a professional working knowledge of English (as all communication with EU-OSHA will be in English; obviously copy can and should be in the national language) and report on their activities at least once a year. For more information on how to become a media partner, contact news@osha.europa.eu



Experiences and expectations of previous partners

Toyota Material Handling Europe

Tom Schalenbourg, Director of Sustainable Development, began by highlighting the importance of OSH at Toyota Material Handling Europe — 1 in 10 accidents in Europe occurs with material handling equipment. And so, as a responsible company, Toyota is committed to including safety and health in its conversations with employees, customers, suppliers, stakeholders, etc.

Toyota first joined EU-OSHA's campaigns in the 2010-11 *Safe Maintenance* campaign and has greatly benefited from the partnership ever since. Toyota contributes to the campaigns by asking its sales companies or distributors (which are found in all Member States) to promote the campaign — some do this solely online but others have organised events. One of the greatest benefits to Toyota of joining EU-OSHA in these campaigns has been that it has allowed it to better understand its customers' safety priorities to help it to offer better solutions. So it makes good business sense.

Participation in the campaigns has also altered Toyota's approach to OSH. Traditionally, as an equipment supplier, it has focused on OSH in relation to equipment. But, largely owing to good practice exchange events, it is now trying to focus more on leadership and people. Toyota has taken part in, and organised, good practice exchange events across Europe, along with other OCPs such as Lego, Heineken, Siemens and Seat.

Mr Schalenbourg concluded by stating that Toyota hopes to continue its successful campaign partnership with EU-OSHA, keeping up its holistic approach and organising and taking part in good practice exchange. He also highlighted that it would be very useful to keep the toolkits of the previous campaigns live online. Finally, he emphasised the need for EU bodies to continue to publish new statistics on OSH.



Safety Management magazine



Iris Cepero, the Editor of *Safety Management* — the magazine of the British Safety Council (BSC) — was the next speaker in this session. As a monthly print magazine with digital and online formats, it joined EU-OSHA as a media partner in the 2014-15 campaign. The magazine's newsletter has 40,000 readers a month, and the website has more than 7,000 page views a month. Most articles in the magazine can read for free and shared online, and it has a good rate of sharing. It reaches a lot of people.

In the 2014-15 campaign, *Safety Management* published 20 print and 40 online articles specifically dedicated to the campaign. It also conducted one round table, and stress was the main topic of BSC's 2014 annual conference. What's more, the campaign videos were used at all BSC conferences.

As well as publishing articles and distributing materials, as a media partner the magazine was able to interview a variety of OSH experts, including EU-OSHA's Director, national focal points and campaign partners. What's more, EU-OSHA attended BSC events. And the networking opportunities with other journalists and media outlets were highlighted as another great bonus.

Iris Cepero was sure of one thing: *Safety Management* is ready for the new campaign. It has already published some articles on related topics. And, as a journalist, she is happy that the new topic is fairly broad, as she said: 'the wider the better!'

AGE Platform Europe

Philippe Seidel Leroy, a Policy Officer at AGE Platform Europe, was the final speaker of this session. Although AGE Platform Europe has been an OCP in previous campaigns, the new campaign topic is of particular interest to this organisation — the largest umbrella organisation for people aged 50+. It is dedicated to defending older people's rights, both those of today and those of tomorrow, and is greatly in favour of intergenerational solidarity, having coordinated a campaign for the [European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations in 2012](#).

A variety of issues are particularly relevant to older workers, and AGE Platform Europe aims to raise awareness of these issues. First, only around half of 55- to 60-year-olds are in work in Europe. Second, older workers are often the group given the least opportunities for in-work training, but are often the ones with out-dated skills. Finally, work–life balance is an issue that is often raised by older workers, who can have duties of care for family members.

In previous campaigns, AGE Platform Europe has conducted campaign awareness-raising activities and distributed materials internally and externally. It distributes newsletters and materials on scientific projects, and believes in the importance of concrete examples of measures in the workplace.

But the organisation aims to step up its engagement in this new campaign. The current AGE campaign on age-friendly environments ties in nicely with EU-OSHA's new campaign, and it will try to link the two. Through its perspective on local solutions in local environments, AGE Platform Europe can scale EU-OSHA's campaign down to the national level and provide a platform for good practice exchange. Finally, AGE Platform Europe hopes that the new campaign will look at gender aspects; older woman who have spent a long time out of the labour market, for example, can find reintegration into the labour market particularly difficult.



Question and answer session

Several questions were raised in the session, most of which focused on encouraging good practice exchange and organising these events. The potential for good practice exchange to happen online, for example through [OSHwiki](#), was discussed, with OCPs becoming accredited authors and publishing articles. Tom Schalenbourg also highlighted that the best-value events are usually those with a diverse range of good practice examples and organisations participating.

Conclusions and next steps

Dr Christa Sedlatschek returned to conclude the day's meeting and summarise the campaign's next steps. She began by emphasising an underlying theme of the day: the new campaign is not about age itself, but about ageing throughout working life. We need to improve the working lives of all generations of workers, promoting sustainable work and healthy ageing. And risk prevention will be at the core of this.

As discussed throughout the day, the campaign will look at companies and organisations of all sizes and sectors and this campaign, in particular, will look more closely at new measures for tackling OSH in the workplace, for example new technologies.

She went on to thank all existing partners for joining EU-OSHA in Brussels, and thanked Tom Schalenbourg, Iris Cepero and Philippe Seidel Leroy in particular for providing great insights into and compelling cases for being a campaign partner. She stressed that, by joining the 2016-17 campaign, organisations can lead by example and be at the forefront of implementing practical solutions in the workplace.

For all organisations thinking of joining EU-OSHA in its next campaign, the application process opens at the beginning of April and closes on 20 May, so they have plenty of time to get their application in.

And then for the big announcement: EU-OSHA — together with Commissioner Thyssen and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Netherlands (representing the Dutch EU Presidency) — will launch the *Healthy Workplaces for All Ages* campaign on 14 April 2016.

Christa Sedlatschek concluded the meeting by thanking the EU-OSHA team and all partners, old and new, for their participation in the event and expressed her wish for all to work together over the next 2 years for the benefit of workers of all ages.