

MINUTES

Meeting:	MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD
Date:	12-14 December 2023
Venue:	Online

This Management Board meeting was held online with simultaneous interpretation into EN, FR, DE, and ES. The meeting was organised around groups meetings and a final plenary session. During the group meetings held on 12-13 December, EU-OSHA presented the agenda items that would require more in-depth discussion and members from the groups had the opportunity to ask questions and request clarifications. Finally, on 14 December, the Management Board convened in plenary where conclusions were drawn and necessary decisions taken. These minutes are intended to cover both the Agency's presentations and clarifications provided during the group discussion, as well as report the discussions and decisions taken by the Management Board and the feedback from the groups and the Commission at the final.

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 in relation to any of the items on the agenda. The Chairperson also welcomed William Cockburn to this, his first Management Board meeting as Executive Director and the newly appointed Executive Director thanked the Management Board for their support and trust. The Chairperson also welcomed the recently appointed EP independent expert, Johan Danielsson, who introduced himself.

At this meeting, the Management Board was required to discuss and take decisions on a number of important items, including the adoption of the final Single Programming Document 2024-2026 and the final budget 2024.

Several delegations of votes had been received before the meeting, namely:

For the Workers' group:

- The Maltese representative delegated the vote to the Greek representative
- The Polish representative delegated the vote to the Greek representative
- The Dutch representative delegated the vote to the Greek representative
- The Lithuanian representative delegated the vote to the Portuguese representative
- The Spanish representative delegated the vote to the Portuguese representative
- The Luxembourgish representative delegated the vote to the Cypriot representative
- The Czech representative delegated the vote to the Cypriot representative

For the Employers' group:

- The Austrian representative delegated the vote to the German representative;
- The Maltese representative delegated the vote to the Irish representative
- The Dutch representative delegated the vote to the Irish representative

For the Governments' group:

- The Irish representative delegated the vote to the Latvian representative;
- The Maltese representative delegated the vote to the Latvian representative.

To establish the quorum for the meeting, the rules of procedure (Article 9.1) require that a majority of the members for each of the three groups and at least one Commission representative attend the meeting. As this was the case¹, the Chair informed that the Management Board could work through the agenda and take the decisions as required. Furthermore, it was confirmed that more than two-thirds of the votes were available for the meeting so that decisions requiring a two-thirds majority could be taken.

Under “Any other business”, the Spanish Government representative would take the floor to provide an overview of the achievements of the EU Spanish Presidency and the Belgian Government representative would inform the Management Board on the OSH priorities under their forthcoming EU presidency.

CONCLUSION	<u>The Management Board adopted the draft agenda by consensus</u>
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	Absolute majority
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, decision taken by consensus

2 ADOPTION OF DRAFT MINUTES

The Agency had circulated the draft minutes from the June meeting for information earlier and now they were submitted for formal adoption.

There were no comments to the draft minutes.

CONCLUSION	<u>The Management Board adopted the draft minutes</u>
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	Absolute majority
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, decision taken by consensus

3 FINAL DRAFT SINGLE PROGRAMMING DOCUMENT 2024-2026

According to the schedule agreed with the Management Board, in January 2023 the Management Board adopted a draft of the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2024-2026 which included multi-annual objectives and plans and a detailed annual work programme for 2024 with outputs and performance indicators, as well as all the required annexes. The draft SPD 2024-2026 was sent to the Parliament, the Council and the Commission – as well as to the Agencies EU-OSHA has agreed to exchange the draft SPDs with.

The latest draft includes the feedback from the Management Board from January 2023 and from the consultation, including the Commission’s opinion, which was included in the meeting documentation and which the Commission introduced in detail at the plenary session. The Executive Board at its November

¹ The quorum requirement only applies to the session on 14 December 2022, where the Management Board took the required decisions. The numbers that follow are related to the mentioned session. No of members from Governments group: 23, No of members from Workers’ group: 20, No of members from Employers’ group: 15, No of members from the Commission: 3. The alternate member is counted only if replacing the member; delegated votes are also counted.

meeting reviewed the document and gave a positive recommendation to the Management Board on its adoption.

Two drafts were circulated for this meeting: a clean draft and a draft with tracked changes, where it is possible to appreciate the changes from the January 2023 version. There had been some rewriting of the “foreword” and “general context” to align it to current developments.

One new activity will start in 2024 – this is a new OSH overview on circulatory diseases. This topic was highlighted as a priority in the EU OSH Strategic Framework and the Executive Board and the Management Board last year had the opportunity to discuss and comment on the ex-ante evaluation, which was finally agreed on in December 2022.

An important deliverable expected for 2024 is a new strategy for EU-OSHA. During 2024 the Agency will work very closely with the Executive Board and with the Management Board towards the definition of EU-OSHA’s new strategy. In January 2024, the Management Board will be informed of the outline of the process that will lead to the adoption of a new strategy.

The SPD has been prepared based on the information on the 2024 budget available at the time of the meeting.

The Commission introduced its opinion on the draft SPD. The opinion had been distributed before the meeting. In the opinion the Commission expressed its positive assessment of the draft SPD and its alignment with EU policy priorities.

COMMENTS FROM THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND AGENCY’S FOLLOW-UP

The Management Board overall expressed their appreciation on this final draft and agreed on its adoption.

The Workers put forward a few remarks and requests for clarifications.

In the first place, it was their understanding that EU-OSHA had been entrusted by the European Commission to draft guidelines for establishing Binding Limit Values on cobalt exposure following the recent tripartite consensus and inquired when such guidelines would be delivered.

The Commission clarified that whereas progress on this file had been made, there is not yet any official request transmitted from the Commission to the Agency.

At the previous Management Board meeting, the Workers had requested the Agency to integrate a basic OSH training module that will support workers and employers across all EU Member States. There is a notable absence of structured training and material on OSH across the EU, and the Agency could significantly contribute to bridging these gaps, supplementing the information and training provided by the employers as part of their legal obligations. A first step could be a mapping of what is already available.

The Employers asked that references to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises be emphasised in the text of the document, in the light of the important role that these companies play in the economic structure of the EU and in improving OSH. Referring to a remark included in the Commission’s opinion related to the need to reduce Agency’s staff missions when appropriate, they stressed that it is nevertheless important to ensure outreach to target audiences at national level and networking is key for that. Furthermore, they observed that not all Member States have the same needs and that the Agency should seek ways to adapt to these different needs. Finally, they reminded about the need to prioritise, considering the limited resources of the Agency. This was supported by the Governments.

The EP independent expert asked about cooperation with ELA as mentioned in the Commission opinion.

EU-OSHA thanked the groups and the Commission for the comments and positive feedback. Staff missions to support the key network partners of EU-OSHA will remain a priority and not be reduced as long as it can be avoided. The general discussion on prioritisation will be one of the main discussions in relation to the strategy to be developed during 2024 – there are different options, one is to reduce the

pace at which new activities are introduced. Regarding the proposal on a training module, the outcome of the previous MB meeting was that this would be looked at in the context of the strategy discussion. However, EU-OSHA already does work in relation to training, such as the OSH-VET project, the OiRA training module etc. Clearer wording on the importance of micro, small and medium-sized workplaces will be introduced.

Regarding the request to reduce staff missions in the Commission's opinion on the draft SPD, the Commission confirmed that this was a horizontal request to agencies in line with the European Green Deal recommendations. The Commission also commented on cooperation with ELA and acknowledged that there is cooperation but felt it appropriate to highlight the importance of this cooperation in the opinion.

CONCLUSION	<u>The Management Board adopted the final Single Programming Document 2024-2026</u>
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	Qualified majority and absolute majority of the members of the Government's group
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, decision taken by consensus

4 BUDGET AND ESTABLISHMENT PLAN 2024

The Agency explained that the budget has been reorganised into a new simpler, leaner structure. This is expected to simplify budget management and increase flexibility.

In January 2023, the Management Board adopted a draft budget 2024 for a total amount of € 17.373,746.

Compared to the draft budget, the proposal submitted for adoption anticipated revenue and expenditure of € 17.481,150 representing a total increase of approx. € 107.000, mainly due to the increase of EU contribution to address the impact of inflation on salaries and related expenditure and a higher EEA-EFTA contribution than expected.

Budget item	Heading	DB2024	+/-	2024
1 0 0 0	European Union subsidy	16,500,746	319	16,501,065
1 0 1 0	Other revenue from European Union subsidy	289,254	-	289,254
1 0 2 0	EEA-EFTA Contribution	483,470	107.261	590,731
2 0 0 0	Grant from the Basque Regional Government	40,000	-	40,000
2 0 2 0	Grant from the Spanish Government	60,100	-	60,100
TOTAL REVENUE		17,373,570	107,580	17,481,150

Compared to the draft budget 2024, the appropriations for the budget 2024 are as follows:

Budget item	Heading	DB2024	+/-	2024
TITLE 1.	STAFF EXPENDITURE	8,763,000	- 333,000	8,430,000
TITLE 2.	BUILDING, ICT AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE	1,821,930	103,070	1,925,000
TITLE 3.	OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE	6,788,640	337,510	7,126,150
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		17,373,570	107,580	17,481,150

The Agency presented a budget and an establishment plan where its staff resources are expected to remain stable in 2024 totalling 65 full time equivalent: 40 Temporary Agents (headcount) and 25 Contract Agents (FTE). This is in line with the opinion of the Commission on the draft Single Programming Document 2024-2026. The Agency introduced a change in the establishment plan as from 2024 onwards and reclassified an AST post of a person due to retire to an AD post to reinforce the research pool in the Prevention and Research Unit to match the upcoming challenges and ensure the attractiveness of the post to potential candidates. This will not bring about any impact on the 2024 budget. The impact is on the establishment plan and on the qualification of the post and the responsibilities and tasks attached to it.

COMMENTS FROM THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND AGENCY'S FOLLOW-UP

The Management Board expressed satisfaction with the proposal for the final budget 2024.

The Governments welcomed that the budget had increased – even if only slightly – across the three titles. It must be acknowledged however that the increases in the expenditure for national focal points in the context of the FAST implementation are not compensated by the increase due to the inflation and more structurally this is an important point to consider in the medium-long term, in particular for Title 3. Raising awareness about the need for additional resources is a shared responsibility between the Agency and the Management Board. The Employers agreed with this remark, observing that more resources are needed to keep up the work of the Agency at the current pace.

The Workers inquired why funds for the IPA programme were not included in the budget and asked whether this would translate into no action in IPA countries for 2024. In the light of candidate status granted to Moldova and Ukraine, it would be particularly important to keep this work going and to engage these two countries in EU-OSHA's work. They also observed a high increase in the budget for interim workers/trainees in comparison to the previous year and inquired about the reasons of this increase. Finally, the workers suggested that the rules for expert reimbursement could be changed so that all reimbursements would be done within two months after the meeting – this would reduce the time for submitting claims from two to one month. EU-OSHA would have to make the payment within one month of receiving the claim.

EU-OSHA explained that regarding IPA there will be activities in 2024 and there are funds available, the fact that no concrete figure is included in the budget is due to the technicalities of the budget. However, IPA does not include Moldova and Ukraine which means there is no budget available for actions to support Ukraine and Moldova. However, EU-OSHA has taken some initiatives and will continue trying to support OSH developments in these two countries, resources allowing. Finally, the Agency welcomed the Management Board's willingness to support requests for additional resources. The Agency is aware that inflation reduces the extent of actions that can be implemented via FAST and is something that the Agency monitors. However, the underlying problem is that resources are scarce.

In relation to the interim and traineeships budget, EU-OSHA explained how this increase reflects the return to the pre-pandemic expenditure levels. The successful implementation of interim and trainee

contracts depends greatly on the presence of EU-OSHA staff in the Agency premises, which was reduced significantly during the years 2020 to 2022. The expected budget implementation in 2023 is in line with the budget earmarked for 2024. In relation to the proposal for shortening the time for reimbursement of experts attending meetings, EU-OSHA suggested to review the rules when a new expert reimbursement system is introduced. Meanwhile, any expert who wants to be reimbursed within two months of the meeting can achieve that by submitting the claim no later than one month after the meeting.

CONCLUSION	The Management Board adopted the final budget and establishment plan 2024
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	Qualified majority and absolute majority of the members of the Government's group
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, decision taken by consensus

5 EX-ANTE EVALUATIONS FOR DRAFT SPD 2025-2027

According to the schedule agreed with the Management Board, the Agency presented the ex-ante evaluations related to the two new OSH overviews whose topics had been decided by the Management Board in June. These topics were: Climate change and Occupational exposure to cancer risk factors.

The OKAG and the Executive Board had the chance to review and discuss the ex-ante evaluations at their meetings in November and the comments received were included in the draft submitted to the Management Board. The Management Board was now expected to review the ex-ante evaluations and decide on the inclusion of these two activities into the planning for 2025.

The Agency presented an overview of the two ex-ante evaluations with the aid of a PPT presentation.

OSH and climate change

The objective of this activity is to contribute to the identification, prevention and improvement of the management of OSH risks linked to climate change, so that workplaces can be better prepared to face the consequences of climate-change related events. To do so, it will explore and synthesize the main impacts of climate change on the EU workforce and identify effective OSH policies and workplace practices across EU Member States to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts.

The two research dimensions will be:

- To determine the impact on workers and workplaces of climate change related events – in terms of risks and OSH consequences
- How the world of work is adapting to climate change related events and what can we learn from EU and beyond

This activity is expected to benefit from cooperation with several actors – including Eurofound but also other EU agencies such as EEA, ECHA, EFSA etc. and various Commission services. During 2025, a scoping phase would be carried out in close collaboration with the Agency's stakeholders.

The Agency also recalled that as from 2024, the Agency would also start a foresight on OSH implications of future climate change-related developments and crises. The two activities complement each other in that the OSH overview focuses on currently observed events, policies and practices and is based on available data, while the foresight focuses on anticipating future climate change-related developments and their associated OSH risks. So, under the same overall objective of preventing and managing OSH related risks, the scope, methodology and the outputs of these two activities differ and complement each other.

Occupational exposure to cancer risks factors

The objective for this activity is to contribute to prevent workers from being exposed to cancer risk factors at work, and when not possible, to better protect workers exposed to such risk factors. In doing so, this activity will contribute to the follow-up of OSH actions of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and to support the key objectives of the EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021-2027 on improving prevention focusing on work-related cancer. The activity aims to provide a sound, evidence-based and comprehensive picture of the current challenges related to occupational exposure to cancer risk factors in the EU countries, exploring research and statistics, the EU and national policies, strategies, approaches to prevention and workplace practices. It will aim at identifying the main challenges and needs of workplaces, including micro and small enterprises. It will also contribute to generating new knowledge and improving understanding (and guidance) on the subject.

Following up on the Workers' Exposure Survey (WES) that will finalise in 2024 (with last outputs in 2025) and building on the results from the ex-post evaluation, this new OSH overview would include several in-depth research projects. A preliminary list is included in the ex-ante evaluation. The possible topics will be explored during the scoping phase of the activity (2025) where the research design will be fine-tuned and the priorities defined.

The Agency also highlighted that while WES is an important information and data input for this activity, it would not be the only source. Comparison and integration with other data sources at national level (surveys, job-exposure matrices, studies on specific occupational risk factors, etc) would also be carried out.

Once the ex-ante evaluations are discussed and the main lines of the Agency's intervention agreed with the Management Board, the two activities would be included into the 2025 work programme (draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027).

Finally, the Agency recalled that at the Management Board meeting in June, the Management Board had preliminarily agreed that the Agency should prepare a third ex-ante evaluation on accidents at work for the autumn 2024 for inclusion in the 2026 work programme.

COMMENTS FROM MANAGEMENT BOARD AND AGENCY'S FOLLOW-UP

The Management Board welcomed the two ex-ante evaluations.

The Commission acknowledged that they covered all relevant needs and are fully aligned to the EU policy priorities, particularly the EU OSH strategic framework. The three groups, in turn, acknowledged and appreciated that the comments provided by their representatives to the OKAG and the Executive Board had been taken on board.

With regard to the proposed OSH overview on climate change, the Workers suggested that domestic Workers should also be considered, as it is expected to be the case for the other proposed activity. Following the assessment on France (and perhaps other Member States) of the Workplace Directive, the focal points should transmit these points from this assessment to the Agency as part of the work on climate change. In this way, the Workers can back up their demands with the work of the Advisory Committee. The Employers recommended to narrow the scope as it looks quite broad at the moment and above all to keep the focus on OSH. The Governments asked to add EU and national public bodies as well statutory and insurance organisations to the intermediaries in the ex-ante evaluation; and in relation to the reference to "health surveillance", they advised to bear in mind that there are national rules in place for that in some countries.

When it comes to the proposed OSH overview on occupational exposure to cancer risk factors, the Governments remarked that the scope is very broad. The Employers remarked that to avoid any potential bias in the overview, it is important to complement WES data with other data. Horizon 2030 could also provide a good support for more in-depth research. Finally, they suggested considering combined exposure with non-work-related factors (for example exposure of workers to cancer risk factors at work and also smoking). The Workers suggested that upon completion of the first WES, the Agency could consider broadening the geographical scope and range of substances covered for a future

survey edition. Furthermore, given that the fieldwork of the survey was carried out in winter and because of the survey design, it would be interesting to extrapolate the data to make them representative for 12 months. They suggested that the Agency looks into the possibility to extrapolate UV radiation exposure for the whole year on the basis of existing data from other sources.

EU-OSHA thanked the groups and the Commission for the comments which will be taken into account in the further development of the two activities. The first step is their inclusion in the draft SPD 2025-2027 which will be discussed in January 2024. Regarding the need to ensure a clear focus of the two activities, the 2025 scoping phase with the stakeholders will be very useful. For WES, in depth studies will be developed in 2024 and the data will be made available to researchers for further analysis.

CONCLUSION	<u>The Management Board agreed to include the two ex-ante evaluations into the draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027.</u>
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	Absolute majority, 50%+1
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, decision taken by consensus

6 MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETINGS

Last November, the Executive Board had discussed the modality of Management Board meetings – hybrid or online, further to some suggestions advanced in the past.

The Founding Regulation provides that the Management Board shall meet at least once a year. The current meeting schedule has been arranged around the different reporting and programming obligations that the Agency has as per the applicable regulations.

At the moment, the Management Board meets three times a year – in January, June and December. The June meeting is organised as a hybrid meeting, whereas the January and December meetings are fully on-line meetings. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Agency has made increased use of virtual opportunities to engage with the Management Board. As an example, the Management Board has been invited to attend on-line sessions where the work of the Agency was presented (cf recent seminar on EU OSH Barometer report; WES results) or to prepare for important Management Board's decisions (cf seminar on Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2020-2022 "Lighten the load" evaluation in relation to the decision on HWC cycle).

The Agency had provided the Management Board with the information about different aspects to consider in a note disseminated before the meeting. There is a political pressure to reduce face-to-face meetings, as evidenced by the objective of climate neutrality by 2030 enshrined in the European Green Deal recommendations from the Commission's Staff Working Document on the 4 agencies' evaluation from 2019. Furthermore, the Court of Auditors' report on EU agencies for 2022 has explicitly addressed the issue of climate neutrality and environmental performance. In the report, just recently released, the Court makes it clear that all EU agencies should prepare up-to-date corporate plans to improve their climate neutrality and energy efficiency. In order to increase transparency and accountability, such plans should have clearly defined, quantified baselines and targets, for example for reducing carbon footprint and energy consumption. In addition, all EU agencies should report on their climate, energy and environmental performance, for example by issuing sustainability reports or environmental statements.

Further to discussion with the Executive Board, the Agency presented two options for discussion and decision by the Management Board.

- (1) To keep the current practice – one hybrid meeting in June and two online meetings in December and January. As a variant to this option, the December and January online meetings could be

merged into one online meeting in December. This would entail some readjustments in the internal procedure but will optimise the Management Board's input to the planning by streamlining meeting agendas. This variant will also have a positive financial impact as 20-25.000 EUR could be saved. Compared to the current practice the environmental impact would be positive but almost insignificant.

- (2) To hold two hybrid meetings per year (June and December). The decision items which were normally dealt with at the January meeting would be put forward to December.

The Agency explained that this option would bring about three strands of impacts:

- **Financial impact:** + 80.000 EUR needed to be re-allocated from other operational activities (due to the multi-annual nature of the activities the necessary resources would be taken from the translations budget).
- **Environmental impact:** an additional estimated 18 tons CO₂ for the flights for the additional hybrid meeting which as a minimum will have to be compensated with offsetting actions with rather limited financial impact. To these 18 tons CO₂, emissions related to meeting room, hotels etc would have to be added.
- **Corporate governance impact:** the size, composition and efficiency of the tripartite Management Boards are discussed again in the current four agencies' evaluation and the issue of the meeting costs is brought up regularly. It has been possible to point to the use of digital options as a way to keep costs for tripartite Management Boards at a reasonable level. Furthermore, as mentioned, the Agency has to follow up on the Court of Auditors' recommendations on environmental performance and there is an expectation on agencies to become carbon neutral by 2030.

The Agency also explained that if the Management Board would decide for option (2), there would be some transitional measures to put in place. During 2024, the Management Board would meet in January (online), in June (hybrid) and in December (hybrid); as from 2025, the decision would apply fully and the Management Board would meet twice - in June and December in a hybrid format. The 2024 and 2025 budget would need to be adapted accordingly.

COMMENTS FROM MANAGEMENT BOARD AND AGENCY'S FOLLOW-UP

The Workers endorsed option 2, highlighting that hybrid meetings would facilitate face-to-face interaction; improve the quality of the discussions; and contribute to sustainability by fostering a just transition. They also recalled that face-to-face meetings were the norm before the pandemic; virtual meetings are problematic for certain inclusive procedures it is very important to keep the inclusive procedure alive. They nevertheless acknowledged the potential impact of this decision on the environment and suggested that other meetings organised by the Agency such as seminars, workshops etc organised as a face-to-face or hybrid events could be held online instead. Finally, the Workers reminded that the Agency should use these meetings as opportunities to continue presenting recently published work on OSH.

On a different note, they asked the Agency to look into better technical solutions to increase the interaction amongst colleagues during online meetings.

The Employers echoed the Workers and emphasised the need for a face-to-face interaction to facilitate consensus and dialogue across all the constituencies. They also suggested that one further option to minimise travel emissions could be to combine the June Management Board meeting with the Advisory Committee for Safety and Health in Luxembourg – an option to which however the Governments had opposed in the past.

The Governments reported that while the group's position on this item was not unanimous, the majority of the Governments were against additional hybrid meetings. However, in order to find a compromise, the Governments agreed to support the change to two annual hybrid meetings with the following conditions:

- Clear success criteria for the two annual hybrid meetings with a particular focus on physical presence must be agreed in January 2024 based on a proposal from the Agency (regarding attendance rates etc).
- The decision shall be revisited at the summer meeting in 2025 based on an assessment against the success criteria agreed in January 2024

In addition, the Governments requested that their concerns regarding the additional carbon footprint caused by the additional hybrid meeting, the financial impact on other operational activities of the Agency, and the reputational risks linked to the additional hybrid meeting be recorded in the minutes.

The Luxembourg Government representative stated that in this context, democracy, with social dialogue as a crucial component, plays a vital role in addressing OSH issues. For the Luxembourg Government face-to-face meetings appear to be more effective in connecting parties and fostering a collaborative environment. While democracy incurs costs, investing in its strengthening is undoubtedly worthwhile for the overall benefit of our OSH community.

The Commission expressed its understanding for the concerns regarding environmental impact, financial impact and reputation.

EU-OSHA confirmed that a proposal for success factors for the hybrid meetings would be developed. And as for almost any Management Board's decision, the Management Board can change it at any point in the future. It was also stressed that the Agency does not advocate for one or the other option, but the Agency has an obligation to inform the Management Board about the context and consequences of its decisions. As the Agency as usual will have to explain the decisions taken to the budgetary authority, the evaluators and the auditors, it is very useful that the groups have provided detailed background to the positions they have taken today. Regarding the suggestion to reduce other hybrid or face-to-face events, the Agency has a clear aim of not reducing such events for the operational work.

CONCLUSION	<p><u>The Management Board agreed to pilot option 2 (two hybrid meetings per year in June and December) under the following conditions:</u></p> <p><u>Clear success criteria must be agreed in January 2024 based on a proposal from the Agency (regarding attendance rates etc).</u></p> <p><u>The decision shall be revisited at the summer meeting in 2025 based on an assessment against the success criteria.</u></p>
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	Absolute majority, 50% +1
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, decision taken by consensus

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT

The Chairperson gave the floor to the Commission for their update. The Commission welcomed the progress report and updated the Executive Board on the following points:

Evaluation of four Agencies under DG EMPL's remit

The evaluation covers the three tripartite agencies (EU-OSHA, Eurofound and Cedefop) and ETF. ELA – due to its recent establishment – is not included. The evaluation is advancing well and the cooperation from the agencies is appreciated. A draft final report has been submitted by the contractor and the findings are positive for EU-OSHA, particularly with regards to effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and coherence, including cooperation with other agencies. There is room for improvement when it comes to

tailoring outputs to target audiences, offering help and advice to MSs most in need (though it is recognised that this would require resources) and as regards cost-effectiveness in procurement. The final report will be published together with the Commission's Staff Working Document by summer 2024.

Commission Communication on a Comprehensive approach to Mental Health

The communication was adopted in June 2023 with the aim of improving mental health by integrating the topic across policy areas. There is a chapter on psychosocial risks at work which includes as a flagship a commitment to organise a peer review by the Commission to address psychosocial risks at the workplace level. Based on the outcome of the peer review, as well as on the input of social partners, the Commission may present an EU level initiative on psychosocial risks. Furthermore, EU-OSHA's Healthy Workplaces Campaigns on digitalisation (2023-2025) and EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Campaign on mental health at work that will start in 2026 are the second flagship highlighted in the Commission communication. In addition, the communication also mentions that the Commission will continue the work on reviewing Directive 89/654/EEC (Workplace Directive) and Directive 90/270/EEC (Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Directive).

Meeting between DG EMPL and employment agencies

The meeting was opened by the Commissioner who stressed the important work of the agencies. From DG EMPL the issue of balance between tasks and resources was stressed. Agencies confirmed that they will continue working on key priorities and support the Commission but also pointed out the resource shortage.

The already established cooperation between agencies was appreciated. Better planning of cooperation between agencies and the Commission is desirable and the agencies are positive towards further involvement in delivering on policy priorities. There was agreement on focusing on implementation and the Commission stressed the importance of speaking with one voice. The possibility of a shared data warehouse will be explored. Everybody would welcome simplification of the SPD. Shared services exist and can be further explored. The Director-General recognised the need for more visibility of the agencies' work and that the fairness dimension of the twin transitions remains a priority.

Following up to the update provided by the Commission on the 4 Agencies' evaluation, the Agency observed that this evaluation would be an opportunity to learn and get an important input for the upcoming strategy discussions.

The preliminary findings from the evaluation study that the Agency has commented on are very positive for EU-OSHA and acknowledge our effort to cooperate closely with the other EMPL agencies to create better added value for our policy area.

Once the Staff Working Document from the Commission is available, the Agency will work closely with the Management Board to follow up on the recommendations from the evaluation.

EMPL agencies – joint event at the European Parliament (20 September)

As part of the European Year of Skills, the conference 'Skills, skills, skills! Skills for people, skills for competitiveness, skills for sustainability', held in Brussels on 20 September, brought to light data, trends and challenges related to developing the workforce skills that are needed both in the present and in the future. The call for a 'skills revolution' echoed through discussions, emphasising its central role in driving the EU's growth and competitiveness.

Speakers from the European Parliament, European Commission and the five EU agencies under the remit of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (Cedefop, Eurofound, EU-OSHA, ETF and ELA) shared insights on the matter.

From the OSH perspective, the Agency emphasised that appropriate skills also contribute to workers' health and safety. Skills and training provide workers not only with the understanding of risks and safety, but also of their rights as enshrined in the EU directives. There was also a mention of the EU-OSHA OSHVET project, which promotes cooperation between OSH and Vocational education and training (VET) specialists to better educate the younger workforce.

Spanish EU Presidency event in Toledo (26-27 September)

The event focussed on mental health and precarious work and the management of psychosocial risks. The Agency actively participated in the event – the Executive Director moderated the roundtable on mental health and precarious work and the role of the institutions together with representatives from the Parliament, Commission, Belgium and Spain Governments. Several Agency staff also presented at the parallel sessions emerging evidence – ranging from OSH pulse data to ESENER-3. The focal point meeting was organised side to side to the event – so that Focal points could also take part.

On the occasion of the Summit, a first workshop following up to the EU OSH Stocktaking summit was organised – a second workshop took place in November.

Launch of the HWC on digitalisation (25 October)

On 25 October, the Agency launched the new Healthy Workplaces Campaign at a press conference in Brussels. Commissioner Schmit and State Secretary of Spain, Perez Rey, representing the EU Presidency, joined the Executive Director on this occasion.

European Week for Safety and Health at Work 2023 (23-27 October)

Between 23 and 27 October, a large number of FAST-supported events were organised across the EU together with the focal points.

WES results and Spanish EU presidency event in Madrid (20-21 November)

The first findings of the WES were presented for the first time during the conference ‘Preventing Work-Related Cancer’, taking place on 20-21 November in Madrid, Spain. The event was part of the Roadmap on Carcinogens, an initiative that will also benefit from the data provided by WES, since it raises awareness of the risks from exposure to carcinogens in the workplace and exchanges good practices between companies and organisations.

The Management Board and the Focal Points had the opportunity to be presented with a preview of the results in an ad hoc seminar organised on 10 November and where the Agency received very positive feedback.

The goal of the survey is to contribute to improving preventive measures and to updating evidence-based policy and the encouraging reactions that we have seen point to the fact that EU-OSHA is going in the right direction.

Cooperation with other Agencies

The Agency keeps on cooperating with other Agencies within EMPL and beyond both on issues linked to the core mandate as well as in the corporate and administrative domains.

Agreements are already established with Eurofound, EIGE, ELA and in September a framework for cooperation was finalised with Cedefop. Furthermore, arrangements allowing mutual representation in Management Boards are in place with Eurofound, ELA and EIGE to ensure adequate coordination at governance level. Related to this, EU-OSHA exchanges draft programming documents with other relevant agencies to facilitate strategic cooperation.

On several operational activities, there is good cooperation to make the best use of the respective resources of each agency, for example with Eurofound on ESENER and WES and some of the OSH Overviews.

Together with other agencies, particularly under EU-ANSA, EU-OSHA contributes to the work on preparedness for future emergencies. This included the publication of a joint report on actions related to COVID-19.

Court of Auditors’ report 2022 (released on 26 October)

For some time, the annual ECA report has been presenting the result of the annual audits of EU Agencies collectively.

For the financial year 2022, the report was released on 26 October and includes, apart from the results of the audit for the accounts for 2022, the result of additional work we carried out on a horizontal topic

related to the agencies' response to the climate and energy crises and their reporting on climate and energy performance which have been referred to when introducing the previous item.

Whereas the audit for the agencies as a whole produced less positive results as compared to previous years, the assessment for EU-OSHA continues to be positive. There is just a non-material observation on budgetary management and more specifically on a specific issue linked to carry-overs.

Work with Focal Points

The Agency has identified a number of strategic challenges and opportunities in the near future. Several developments and events have raised issues which have to be dealt with in a structured way. The relation with the focal points is a strategic asset for EU-OSHA and an action plan has been set up based on an analysis of some hindrances and underexploited opportunities which was shared and discussed with the focal points. The work addresses mainly the following areas:

- Optimise communication between agency and Focal Points and facilitate communication between Focal Points, making best use of new ways of working introduced during the pandemic. Work on this area is progressing, main highlights include more discursive items included in the agenda, an organisational chart of the agency shared with Focal points, single calendar for Focal points information requests being developed etc.
- Identify the best ways of supporting the Focal Point (the nominated competent national authority), the Focal Point manager, and other stakeholders in the EU OSHA "system" (e.g. interaction between contractors and Focal Points, contribution of the tripartite national network, link to Management Board members). The work on this area is also progressing well. As an example, the Agency runs post-briefings on new OSH content developed based on the Focal points' contributions (cf. heat guide).
- Improve how the Agency plans, implements, and monitors work involving the Focal Points (e.g. the Focal Point agreement and task list, ad hoc requests, managing the demands for information): the Agency started holding pre-briefings to explain the context of info requests and strives to streamline requests for evaluations and satisfaction surveys. Furthermore, a multilingualism working group is being set up and the process on how to work with contractors was further clarified.
- Explore how the Agency can raise the profile of Focal Points and Focal Point managers at European, national, and organisational level with a view to securing sufficient resources and clarifying the role of the Focal Point manager – for example, the meeting organised in Toledo goes in this direction; also reporting to the Management Board on focal points' work is more systematic (for example, newsletter includes Focal points' upcoming tasks etc) and finally a new individualised 'end of year' letter from the Director appreciating the work of the Focal Points.

The Executive Director paid a visit to the Dutch focal point in October and the Irish focal point in December, which were both very well prepared and organised.

Work programme and budget implementation for 2023

Both the work programme and budget implementation for this year are on track. Regarding the work programme, the expected implementation rate at year-end is above the target (the implementation is 100 percent whereas the target was 90 percent) and regarding the budget the estimation is a 96 percent implementation so far. Full details will be provided in the progress report that the Management Board will receive in January covering the full year. In broad terms, the Agency has either delivered or has planned to deliver new work in addition to what was included in the original plans and only foresees one cancellation – the expert exchange programme which can hopefully be resumed next year. For the rest, there are some slight delays in some specific outputs under the OSH overview on digitalisation, mainly due to some hiccups during contract management and some backlog in the publication process towards the end of the year.

On-going recruitments

Recruitments for three currently vacant positions are underway:

- Head of Prevention and Research Unit (AD9)
- Head of Communication and Promotion (AD9)
- Senior Communication Officer (CA FGIV)

The vacancy notices were circulated to the Management Board and the Focal points with an invitation to share them further within their network. A particular effort was done to circulate the vacancies in those countries that are underrepresented in the current Agency's staffing.

COMMENTS FROM THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND AGENCY'S FOLLOW-UP

The Management Board welcomed the progress report for 2023 and congratulated the Agency and its staff on the good achievements reached in 2023. There were no specific remarks from the groups.

The Governments appreciated the Agency's efforts to follow up on Focal points' concerns and the general importance given to the focal points.

CONCLUSION	<u>The Management Board took note of the Executive Director's progress report, the non-substantial amendments, and the other updates.</u>
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REQUIRED	N/A, item for information
RECORD OF VOTES	N/A, item for information

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairperson gave the floor to the Management Board Governments' representatives from Spain and Belgium and invited them to provide an update on the OSH related priorities and initiatives delivered and planned under their respective EU presidency periods.

The Spanish Government representative presented the achievements of the Spanish EU Presidency that would come to an end on 31 December in the area of OSH, cf [PPT presentation](#).

The Belgian Government representative gave a preliminary overview on the priorities for the Belgian EU Presidency, taking over from Spain as from 1 January 2024, cf [PPT presentation](#).

The workers expressed their desire for the Management Board to be more actively involved in EU-OSHA events.

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The Chairperson thanked the attendees and closed the meeting.

ANNEX – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

	Name	Role	Category	Representing
1	RITZBERGER-MOSER Anna	Alternate	Governments	Austria
2	NEDJELIK-LISCHKA Julia	Member	Workers	Austria
3	CRUTZEN Véronique	Member	Governments	Belgium
4	DE MEESTER Kris	Member	Employers	Belgium
5	VERDOOT Caroline	Member	Workers	Belgium
6	KONOVA Darina	Member	Governments	Bulgaria
7	OSSIEUR Isaline	Coordinator	Employers	BusinessEurope
8	PRELEC Marina	Member	Governments	Croatia
9	SEIFERT Nenad	Member	Employers	Croatia
10	ŠEPAK-ROBIĆ Ivana	Member	Workers	Croatia
11	EVANGELOU Evangelos	Member	Workers	Cyprus
12	HLAVÍN Jaroslav	Member	Governments	Czech Republic
13	ETZERODT Clemens Ørnstrup	Member	Employers	Denmark
14	KNUDSEN Annemarie	Member	Governments	Denmark
15	SPANNOW Ulrik	Member	Workers	Denmark
16	PEÄRNBERG Marju	Member	Employers	Estonia
17	SOON Silja	Member	Governments	Estonia
18	LIIV Marika	Alternate	Governments	Estonia
19	SOON Argo	Member	Workers	Estonia
20	DORESTE Ignacio	Coordinator	Workers	ETUC

	Name	Role	Category	Representing
21	ALVAREZ Jesús	Vice-Chairperson		European Commission
22	MATTINÓ Giacomo	Member		European Commission
23	MOITINHO Teresa	Alternate		European Commission
24	DANIELSSON Johan	Observer		Expert nominated by the European Parliament
25	RYTIVAARA Auli	Member	Employers	Finland
26	HAKALA Liisa	Alternate	Governments	Finland
27	LÉVY Patrick	Alternate	Employers	France
28	MEDIAVILLA Lucie	Member	Governments	France
29	ZAIGOUCHE Abderrafik	Member	Workers	France
30	METZE Eckhard	Member	Employers	Germany
31	SCHÄFER Kai	Member	Governments	Germany
32	SCHNEIDER Sebastian	Member	Workers	Germany
33	KONSTANTAKOPOULOS Ioannis	Member	Governments	Greece
34	STOIMENIDIS Andreas	Chairperson	Workers	Greece
35	LUMNICZKY Attila	Member	Governments	Hungary
36	FELSZEGHI Sára	Member	Workers	Hungary
37	PÁLSSON Jón R.	Observer	Employers	Iceland
38	GILLEN Michael	Vice-Chairperson	Employers	Ireland
39	DALTON Marie	Coordinator	Governments	Ireland
40	ROBINSON Dessie	Member	Workers	Ireland
41	KALFIN Ivailo	Observer		Eurofound

	Name	Role	Category	Representing
42	LEUZZI Fabiola	Member	Employers	Italy
43	VALENTI Antonio	Member	Governments	Italy
44	LŪSIS Renārs	Vice-Chairperson	Governments	Latvia
45	JASIENĖ Rūta	Member	Employers	Lithuania
46	SABAITIENĖ Aldona	Member	Governments	Lithuania
47	WESSELIUS Tanja	Member	Governments	Netherlands
48	VAN VEELLEN Wim	Member	Workers	Netherlands
49	SEEM Monica	Observer Alternate	Governments	Norway
50	BJØRSHOL Arnnfinn	Observer	Employers	Norway
51	LUNDE Bergljot Fuhr	Observer	Workers	Norway
52	GAJEK Agnieszka	Alternate	Governments	Poland
53	HRYNYK Rafal	Member	Employers	Poland
54	FERREIRA Nelson	Member	Governments	Portugal
55	PENA COSTA Marcelino	Member	Employers	Portugal
56	CRUZ Vanda	Member	Workers	Portugal
57	PERJU Elena	Member	Governments	Romania
58	MEITNER Róbert	Member	Employers	Slovakia
59	KOSTURÁKOVÁ Martina	Member	Governments	Slovakia
60	PETRIŠIČ Nikolaj	Member	Governments	Slovenia
61	KOMEL Vladka	Alternate	Governments	Slovenia
62	BÖHM Lučka	Member	Workers	Slovenia

	Name	Role	Category	Representing
63	VUK Martina	Alternate	Workers	Slovenia
64	TEJEDOR AIBAR Mercedes	Alternate	Governments	Spain
65	CASTRILLO Laura	Alternate	Employers	Spain
66	GARCIA DE LA TORRE Ana	Member	Workers	Spain
67	FALK Magnus	Member	Governments	Sweden
68	ANDERSSON Cecilia	Member	Employers	Sweden
69	FRISTEDT Karin	Member	Workers	Sweden
70	COCKBURN William	Executive Director		EU-OSHA
71	MILCZAREK Malgorzata	Interim Head of PRU*		EU-OSHA
72	MURGIONDO Donianzu	Head of RSC*		EU-OSHA
73	SMITH Andrew	Head of CPU*		EU-OSHA
74	BEJER Jesper	MB Secretariat		EU-OSHA
75	PICCIOLI Ilaria	MB Secretariat		EU-OSHA
76	ANYFANTIS Ioannis	Observer		EU-OSHA

* CPU - Communication and Promotion Unit
 PRU - Prevention and Research Unit
 RSC - Resource and Service Centre