



European Agency for Safety and Health at Work



Summary Annual Report 2014

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Dr Eusebio Rial González

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) lost a much loved and respected member of staff in 2014. Dr Eusebio Rial González, Head of the Prevention and Research Unit, died of cancer on 18 December at the age of only 48. Since joining EU-OSHA in 2003, he had been at the forefront of its work to improve safety and health in Europe's workplaces and was instrumental in many flagship projects: the 2014–15 Healthy Workplaces Campaign — Healthy Workplaces Manage Stress; the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER); the Online interactive Risk Assessment Tool (OiRA); and the OSHwiki web platform. Not only a highly regarded colleague, he was also a dear friend to many of us and will be much missed.



The year that ended so sadly began with much to look forward to: the new EU-OSHA multiannual strategic programme for 2014–20 was adopted, providing a clear view of how best to promote occupational safety and health (OSH) in a difficult business environment. We received high-level recognition of and support for our work in January when Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament, made an official visit to Bilbao to learn all about the Agency’s activities first hand. On 31 March, László Andor, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, inaugurated our new premises in the Miribilla district of Bilbao. On the same day, the Seat Agreement between EU-OSHA and the Kingdom of Spain was signed, securing Bilbao as our home in the long term. And in June, the much anticipated EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-20 was adopted. Its strategic objectives are very much in tune with EU-OSHA’s key areas of work.

1 Anticipating change

In 2014, EU-OSHA published a significant review arising from its latest large-scale foresight project: [‘Current and emerging occupational safety and health \(OSH\) risks in the healthcare sector, including home and community care’](#). It highlights the challenges that the sector faces, including the growing demand for healthcare and the need for more long-term care, shortages of skilled and experienced professionals, and the increasing use of technology requiring new skills.

Looking towards the next foresight project, another important report was published: the findings of a scoping study on emerging trends in workplace safety and health ([‘Scoping study for a foresight on new and emerging occupational safety and health \(OSH\) risks and challenges’](#)). The three topics identified as having potential to be the subject of the next foresight study were: the impact of information and communications technology on OSH; trends in human resources management; and the impact of the financial crisis on workplace safety and health.

Identifying and setting research priorities allows better coordination of research and more efficient use of resources. To this end, as part of its long-running project on OSH research priorities, EU-OSHA shortlisted the top priorities identified in its [2013 report](#) and prepared position papers on those topics, for example ‘prevention by design’, with the aim of raising the profile of workplace safety and health in the research community.



2 Facts and figures

Fieldwork for the second edition of ESENER, ESENER-2, was completed on target in 2014. Around 50,000 interviews were carried out in 36 countries, representing a significant increase in sample size over the first edition. Reports on the findings will follow in 2015. In January 2014, recommendations arising from a [post-test evaluation of ESENER-1](#) were published and these were incorporated into ESENER-2.



The preliminary results of the European Parliament-mandated pilot project ‘Safer and healthier work at any age — occupational safety and health in the context of an ageing workforce’ were presented at a conference in the European Parliament in December 2013, and the [proceedings](#) were published on EU-OSHA’s website in January 2014. Further analysis of the results will be done in 2015 and a final conference will be held in September. The importance of this topic is such that it will be the theme for the 2016–17 Healthy Workplaces Campaign — *Healthy Workplaces for All Ages*.

The initial work for the project ‘Improving occupational safety and health in micro and small enterprises in Europe’ was completed in 2014. The aim is to identify the key conditions that create an environment in which OSH management can be significantly improved. A comprehensive review will be published in 2015.

In January, EU-OSHA held a seminar in Paris on reprotoxic risks, in association with ANSES, the French Agency for Food, Environment and

Occupational Health and Safety. A methodology report on work-related cancer, ‘[Exposure to carcinogens and work-related cancer: a review of assessment methods](#)’, was published at the end of the year. Another seminar was held in Brussels in October, this time to kick off a large-scale study into the occupational burden of disease. One of the topics highlighted was sentinel and alert systems. These identify diseases not currently listed as occupational but which may turn out to be work-related. Early identification raises awareness and means that workers affected by such diseases are more likely to be compensated.

Two significant reports on the Agency’s work on the costs and benefits of OSH were published in 2014: in May, ‘[Estimating the costs of accidents and ill health at work: a review of methodologies](#)’, followed by an expert meeting to discuss the findings in June; in September, ‘[The business case for safety and health at work: cost–benefit analyses of interventions in small and medium-sized enterprises](#)’ made a compelling case for good OSH management, followed by a conference later that month, ‘[Investing in OSH: how benefits beat the costs](#)’.

3 Tools for OSH management

In 2014, OiRA made great strides: 47 new tools were published, exceeding the target of 35, and a further 30 are under development. Fourteen seminars were organised to promote OiRA or specific sectoral tools to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In December, a conference held under the auspices of the Italian Presidency of the Council of the EU (‘How to combine enterprises’ growth and competitiveness in times of crisis while promoting health and safety at work’) included a workshop dedicated to OiRA. Further recognition of its significance came with its singling out in the new EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work as a major contribution to helping SMEs comply with OSH requirements.

4 Raising awareness

The 2014–15 Healthy Workplaces Campaign, Healthy Workplaces Manage Stress, was launched on 7 April at the European Commission in Brussels. The campaign website, with resources in 25 languages, was launched the same day. The following day, a campaign partnership meeting was held and the Official campaign partnership offer launched. Over 100 campaign partners joined the scheme and more than 30 media partners came on board to help promote the campaign.

Inspired by the success of the first benchmarking workshop, held during the 2012–13 campaign, EU-OSHA formed a steering group and a further three events took place in 2014, hosted by Heineken, LEGO and Toyota. Three more company-hosted events are already planned for 2015.



Christa Sedlatschek, Director, EU-OSHA; Lászlá Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion; Vasilis Kegkeroglou, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare, Representative of the Greek EU Presidency, during the Healthy Workplaces Campaign launch press conference in Brussels, April 2014.

The European Good Practice Awards are a highlight of every Healthy Workplaces Campaign. For the first time, the current edition of the Awards was open to official campaign partners. The winners were chosen from 50 entries selected for further consideration at a jury meeting in January 2015, and the Awards ceremony is set to take place in April 2015.

The European Week for Safety and Health at Work took place from 20 to 24 October, with hundreds of events and activities focusing on managing work-related stress organised throughout the week. The Spanish focal point alone organised over 50 initiatives — from training courses and seminars to film screenings and media events.

EU-OSHA supports its national focal points through the European Campaign Assistance Package and the provision of a wealth of campaign material: 88,720 campaign-branded items, 476,125 publications in 25 languages, 62 campaign stands and 15 exhibition kits were distributed in 2014.

In addition to the official campaign guide, leaflet and flyer, the key outputs for the 2014–15 campaign were the film [Napo in ... When stress strikes](#); the '[Managing stress and psychosocial risks e-guide](#)'; the state-of-the-art review '[Calculating the cost of work-related stress and psychosocial risks](#)'; and a report published jointly with Eurofound, '[Psychosocial risks in Europe: prevalence and strategies for prevention](#)'.



Paul Lacoste, winner of the 2014 Healthy Workplaces Film Award at the International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film (DOK Leipzig)

Work has already begun on the 2016–17 Healthy Workplaces campaign, *Healthy Workplaces for All Ages*, focusing on promoting sustainable work and healthy ageing. The campaign's scope and goals were agreed, and EU-OSHA commissioned the development of an online e-guide to support enterprises in managing OSH in the context of an ageing workforce.

For the sixth year running, EU-OSHA sponsored the Healthy Workplaces Film Award at the DOK Leipzig documentary film festival in November. The award went to *Harvest* by Paul Lacoste, which follows a group of seasonal workers picking grapes in the south of France. The film

was selected for its reflection of the precarious and changing world of work and its relevance to the theme of the 2014–15 campaign — work-related stress. The Agency also had the previous winner — *C(us)todians* by Aly Muritiba, about working life in a Brazilian prison — subtitled in 13 languages and distributed to focal points.

Following a successful pilot in 2013, the ‘Napo for teachers’ initiative was extended in 2014. Aimed at primary school children, aged 7–11, the online package provides resources to assist teachers in introducing children to safety and health at an early age. An evaluation of the initiative was commissioned in 2014 and the results will be published in 2015.

One of the highlights of 2014 was EU-OSHA’s attendance at the XX World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Frankfurt, 24–27 August. Its stand showcased OSHwiki, OiRA and the 2014–15 Healthy Workplaces Campaign. Staff were involved in seven sessions, including a symposium on psychosocial risks, organised by the Agency.



XX World Congress on Safety and Health at Work 2014, Frankfurt

5 Networking knowledge

Launched at the XX World Congress on Safety and Health in Frankfurt, [OSHwiki](#) is the first web platform that allows users to compile and share knowledge on OSH collaboratively, providing the OSH community with a new way of networking online. Articles are written only by accredited authors to maintain the site’s authority and integrity. OSHwiki is designed to provide reliable information on all the major OSH topics, and new OSHwiki articles are being contributed all the time. The launch generated a lot of interest and media coverage, and over 100 new authors were accredited in 2014.

6 Networking and communication



For the first time, in 2014, the Healthy Workplaces Campaign was supported by an integrated social media campaign, including campaign products developed specifically for social media, such as infographics and videos. The initial figures were very encouraging: in the first four months following the launch of the campaign, the number of visits to the campaign website was three times greater than that for the same period during the previous campaign.

At the turn of the year, EU-OSHA’s YouTube account had well over 1,000 subscribers, its Facebook page had more than 17,000 likes, its Twitter account had 11,500 followers, and it had 5,290 followers on LinkedIn — all increased substantially compared with the previous year.

A prototype of the Agency’s new website was demonstrated at the XX World Congress on Safety and Health in Frankfurt in August, in anticipation of the launch of the new corporate website in 2015. In the meantime, 46 web teasers were published throughout 2014 to promote publications, activities and events and 11 topical blog posts were published.

In terms of international networking, funding for EU-OSHA's project to support the countries covered by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) ended on 30 November 2014. Support comprised provision of information, translation of key materials and financial support for national focal points to travel to seminars and meetings. The Agency also provides support by raising the profile of national focal points, for example by providing keynote speakers from EU-OSHA at OSH conferences in IPA countries. Further funding has been sought so that the project can be continued in 2015 and beyond.

In February 2014, EU-OSHA began a new project, funded under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which offers 16 partner countries to the south and east of the EU the opportunity to build a privileged relationship with the EU. As part of this, the partner countries can take part in the work of agencies such as EU-OSHA. The Agency has established contacts in the European Neighbourhood, visits have been made to a number of countries and key materials are being translated into the language of the partner countries. In 2015, seminars and workshops for representatives of ENP countries will be held in Bilbao.

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The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) contributes to making Europe a safer, healthier and more productive place to work. The Agency researches, develops, and distributes reliable, balanced, and impartial safety and health information and organises pan-European awareness raising campaigns. Set up by the European Union in 1994 and based in Bilbao, Spain, the Agency brings together representatives from the European Commission, Member State governments, employers' and workers' organisations, as well as leading experts in each of the EU Member States and beyond.

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

12 Santiago de Compostela,
E-48003 Bilbao, Spain
Tel. +34 944358400
Fax +34 944358401
E-mail: information@osha.europa.eu

<http://osha.europa.eu>