Stakeholder Conference
“Safer and Healthier Work at Any Age”

22 September 2015

Project methodology
Structure of the project

Part 1: State of knowledge on OSH and older workers (IOM)
- General literature review on OSH and older workers
- Literature review: overview of gender aspects
- List of resources available for workplaces
- Checklist for risk assessment (OiRA)

Part 2: Policies on OSH in the context of an ageing workforce (Milieu)
- Overview of policies in MS and EFTA countries
- Detailed descriptions of policies (EU-level, 8 MS)
- Qualitative research with OSH intermediaries (workshops)

Part 3: Rehabilitation and return-to-work (Milieu, IDEWE)
- Literature review on rehabilitation and RTW
- Overview of systems in MS and EFTA countries
- Case studies of good practices (intermediary)
- Qualitative research with OSH intermediaries (workshops)

Part 4: Practices at the workplace (COWI, Milieu)
- Case studies of good practices (company)
- Qualitative research: experience in large and medium companies (interviews)
- Qualitative research: experience in small and micro enterprises (interviews)

Analysis
Structure of the project

Research (WP1): scientific community, EU and national research institutes, policy makers

EU policy & practices (WP2 & WP3): EU policy makers and stakeholders (EU social partners, networks, NGOs, etc.)

National policy & practices (WP2 & WP3): national policy-makers and stakeholders, OSH intermediaries, practitioners

Company level (WP4): employers and employees (older workers), trade union and OSH (or safety) representatives
Knowledge reviews

• Three main themes:
  - OSH in the context of an ageing workforce (IOM)
  - Gender issues (IOM)
  - Rehabilitation and return-to-work (IDEWE)

• Academic and grey literature based on search protocol (research questions, inclusion/exclusion criteria) and using well-known database for both type of literature

• Focus on systematic reviews, meta-analysis and literature reviews
Lessons learnt:

• Need for a clear and early **focus on the research questions** as they determine the search strategy. It is difficult in the case of OSH because of the large number of other policies which interacts with ageing and OSH.

• Importance of considering **gender sensitive assessments** in any research – using a gender neutral approach may lead to losing some information.

• With regard to RTW, there is a lot of evidence albeit **without focus on older workers** or mental health.
Search questions

OSH & older workers (incl. gender)
• What data are there to support changes in retirement data across the EU?
• What are the main hazards for older workers? (sectors, size, gender)
• What is the impact of early intervention for OSH and health promotion for younger workers?
• What is the impact of health promotion for older workers?
• What other policies (employment, health, research and education) impact on OSH for older workers?
• What gender dimensions have an impact on OSH for older workers?

Rehabilitation & return to work
• What is the current state-of-the-art research on the effectiveness of rehabilitation/return-to-work interventions?
• What are the success factors for long-term reintegration and sustainable return-to-work?
• Which kind of support do employers need regarding return-to-work – specifically, occupational safety and health aspects?
Research on national policies

• Country studies carried out by national OSH experts (32 MS & EFTA countries) based on desk-study, including 8 in-depth studies (AT, BE, DK, DE, FI, FR, NL, UK)

• Statistical data to set the context was collected based on European sources (Eurostat, Eurofound and OECD), as well as national data for the in-depth countries

• Qualitative research for 10 countries (in-depth countries and EL and PL) – workshops to discuss current policies and practices amongst a range of stakeholders (governments, social partners, academics, intermediaries)

• All studies reviewed by FOP in several instances and during the workshops
Research on national policies

Lessons learnt

• Area in **constant evolution** with on-going reform, requiring regular up-dating of the country studies (June 2014)

• Rehabilitation and return-to-work: importance of focusing in the country studies on **relevant statistical data** such as sickness absences and disabilities at the national level

• Workshops: **participation** is better ensured when workshops organised in close collaboration with key actors (FOP, ministries, large research institutes)
Review of workplace practices

• 24 case studies (AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, LV, NL, NO, PL, SI, UK), wide range of sectors with a focus on innovative practices

• Based on preliminary desk-research and interview(s) with relevant actors in the company by national OSH experts

• In addition, grouped interviews in 10 countries, in 20 companies including 7 of the case studies above (10 MSEs and 10 large companies)
Review of workplace practices

Lessons learnt:

- Difficulties in convincing companies to participate in grouped interviews (lack of time, resources and interest, especially for the MSEs) – case studies should have been selected on the basis of their willingness to participate in grouped interviews.

- Difficulties in identifying new companies, notably for MSEs: the solution was to broaden the selection criteria (coverage of companies without specific policies in place) and change in accordance the focus of the interviews.

- As a result, the importance of knowledge transfer and issues of ‘succession’ has been raised in many MSEs and could be a focus for future research.
Thank you!

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