

OSH Policies, Strategies, Programmes and Actions

Stakeholder Conference

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Practices at company level for safer
and healthier work at any age

Context

- Birth rate across Europe remains at below replacement level - ageing of the population poses specific economic and social challenges associated with employment and the available workforce
- In the UK 2.9 million people out of work aged between 50 and state pension age. Of these, only 0.7 million see themselves as retired, yet 1.7 million think it is unlikely that they will ever work again
- Pressure to retain the ageing workforce in employment – social partners must play their part, but we need more practical examples of 'what works at work'

Objectives

- Focus on OSH policies & practices for older workers resulting in improved Job Retention & RTW
- identifying, describing and analysing 'successful and innovative workplace practices in the context of an ageing workforce in order to provide decision-makers with a better understanding of the current situation concerning practices at workplace level, and possible improvements'
- An important emphasis for the study, set out in its objectives, has been to highlight 'what works well and what needs to be done or prioritised, and identifies the main drivers of and obstacles to effective implementation of policy initiatives in this area'

Methods

Qualitative

'36 selected examples of good workplace practices were analysed. The project collected data through 24 case studies, which were complemented by 20 semi-structured interviews within the same or other companies'

Quantitative

Secondary analysis of the second Enterprise Survey on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER-2). The aim of this component of the research was to *'obtain insights into the relationship between high proportions of employees of 55 years and older in companies and workplace characteristics concerning health and safety at work'*

Case Study Findings

Measures

Drivers

**Target
Groups**

Initiators

**External
Support**

Financing

**Integration
into Policy**

Evaluation

Interventions

Primary Level

- Adapting physical environment and technical equipment
- Adapting tasks and managing workload
- Changing management culture
- Workplace health promotion

Secondary Level

- Improving health surveillance
- Promotion of healthy behaviour
- Skills development

Tertiary Level

- Return to Work programmes
- Employee Assistance programmes
- Rehabilitation Services

Example: Olso Airport's 'Life Phase' policy

- Relocation of workers to less physically demanding jobs when they cannot perform their task any more
- Flexible working hours and additional time off for employees over 62
- Re-training to be relocated to less stressful jobs
- In partnership with the University of Stavanger, training of managers on managing employees at different age levels including seniors
- Individual health checks and evaluation for older employees including advice and follow up on how to change lifestyle
- Facilitation of physical activities, energy breaks
- Promotion of healthy nutrition
- 'Green' canteen
- Health monitoring more regular for older workers
- Seminars aimed at raising awareness skills development and getting the most out of the second half of the career

Data from ESENER 2 Analysis

- Respondents from establishments with higher shares of older workers mention the presence of physical and psycho-social risks more often than respondents from establishments with lower shares of older workers
- They also reported more frequently the use of OSH services and the implementation of preventive measures for MSD
- Furthermore, results indicate that awareness of OSH risks seem to be greater in establishments with higher shares of older workers than in establishments with lower shares of older workers

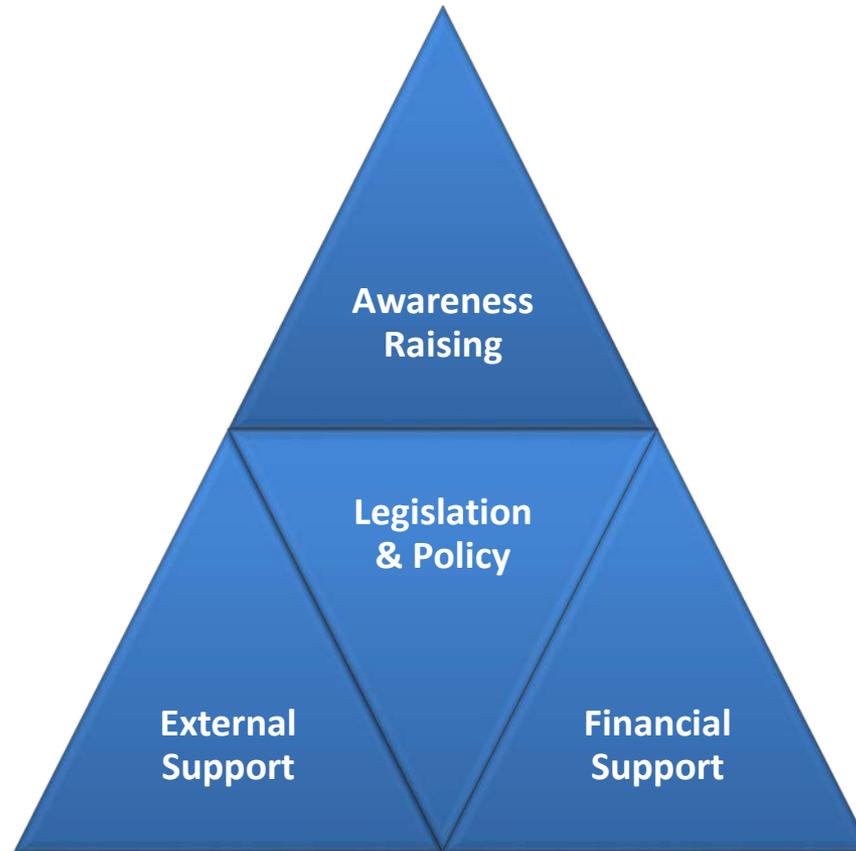
Success Factors

- Involvement of employees in the development and implementation of the measures
- Management's involvement and commitment to the measures
- Inclusion in a broader programme or strategy
- Strategic approach and diversity of measures
- Use of external consultants
- Adopting a life-course approach
- Flexible approach
- Systematic approach

Barriers

- Lack of financial and human resources
- Implementation challenges in SMEs
- Lack of anchoring of OSH measures
- Corporate culture & attitudes
- Reluctance to change work habits and routine
- Low Pay
- Lack of consultation & involvement

Support Needs



Other Considerations

- Large vs Small employers
- Transferability
- Scalability
- Line managers
- Comorbidity
- Risk assessment & job re-design
- Mid-career reviews
- Making a compelling 'business' & 'moral' case
- Role of healthcare professionals
- Importance of early intervention
- Non-work causes of ill-health & reduced functional capacity
- The centrality of 'Good Work' (*primary prevention, social determinant, therapeutic benefits*)

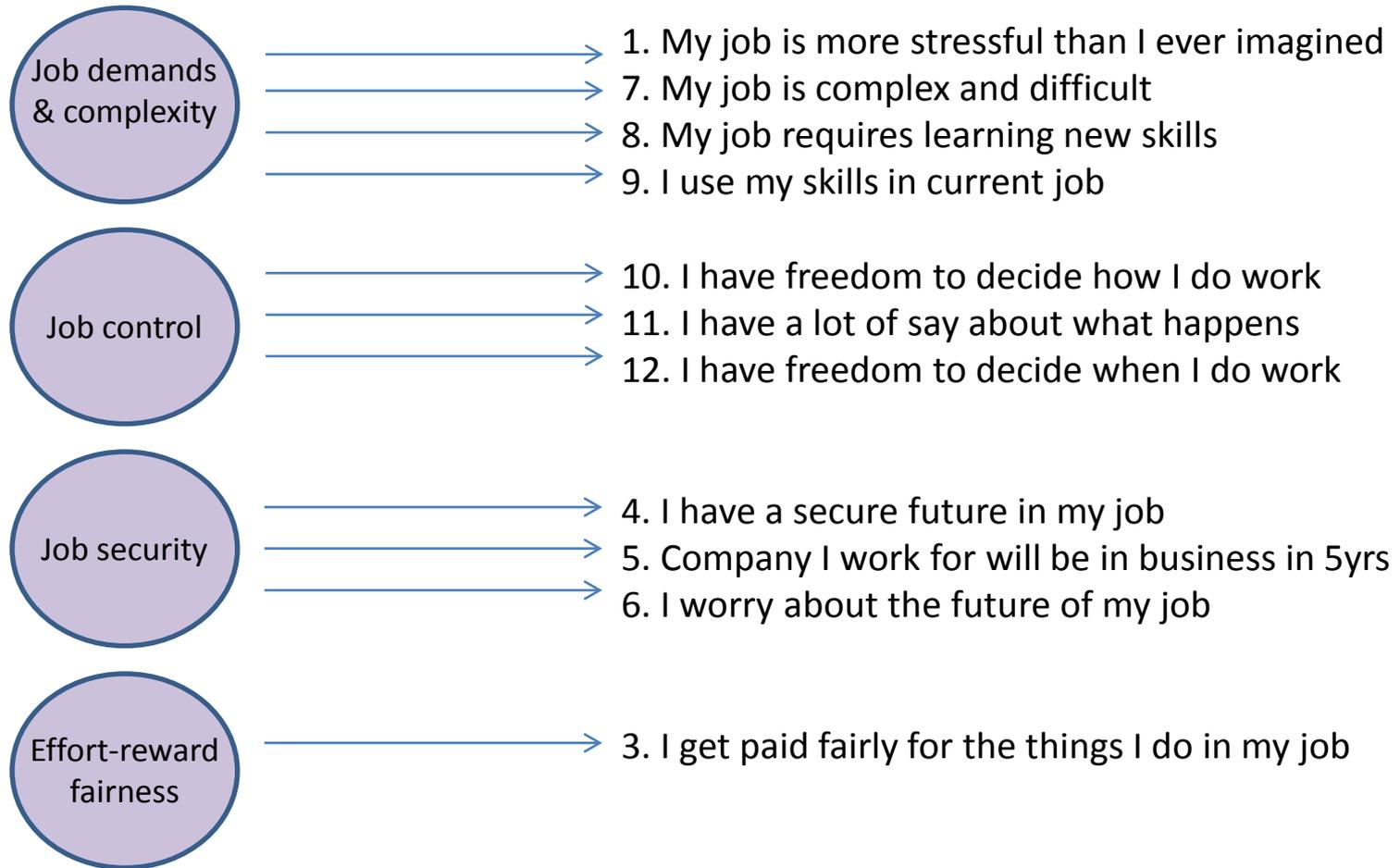
Components of 'Good Work'?



A Message from HILDA

- Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey
- Analysis (Butterworth et al, 2011) of seven waves of data from 7,155 respondents of working age (44,019 observations) from a national household panel survey.
- Longitudinal regression models evaluated the concurrent and prospective association between employment circumstances (unemployment and employment in jobs varying in psychosocial job quality) and mental health, assessed by the MHI-5

Psychosocial Job Quality (1)



Psychosocial Job Quality (2)

“As hypothesised, we found that those respondents who were unemployed had significantly poorer mental health than those who were employed. However, the mental health of those who were unemployed was comparable or more often superior to those in jobs of the poorest psychosocial quality.”

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