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Psychosocial Risk Management: European Framework

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World Health
Organization

baua:
Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz und Arbeitsmedizin



CIOP  PIB



Finnish Institute of
Occupational Health



PRIMA-EF

- Developing a European Psychosocial Risk Management Framework
- FP6 - 2 year project
- 6 partners, 5 CCs: IWHO (lead), BAuA, ISPEL, TNO, CIOP, FIOH
- 2 international organisations (WHO, ILO)
- 6 liaison organisations: 3 international (US NIOSH, University of South Australia, Singapore Ministry of Manpower) – 3 EU (Institute for Social Policies - Bulgaria, HSE - UK, Cyprus International Institute - Harvard-Cyprus Initiative for the Environment & Public Health)
- 9 advisory organisations: DG-Employment & Social Affairs, DG-SANCO, EU-OSHA, EuroFound (Dublin), ICOH-WOPS, ETUC, ETUI, ETUI-REHS, BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP, UNIZO



Outputs 1

- Definition of European Psychosocial Risk Management Framework
- Development of social dialogue and corporate social responsibility indicators
- Survey involving stakeholders on a tripartite basis
- Review and analysis of available methodologies to evaluate the prevalence and impact of psychosocial risks at work and work-related stress > indicator models

Outputs 2

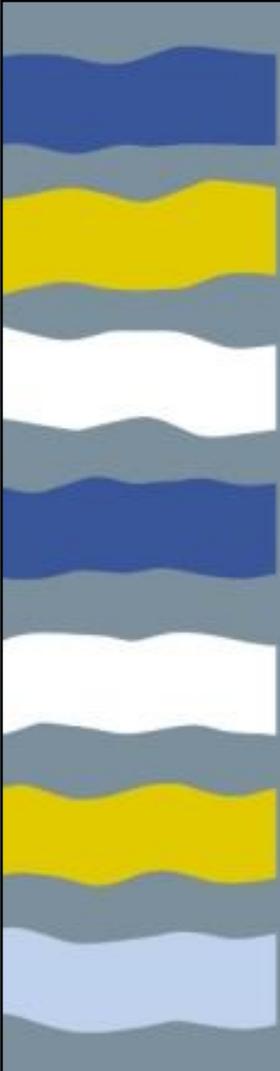
- Comprehensive review and analysis of case studies of evidence-based, best practice interventions in different occupational sectors, worker groups, enterprise sizes and European countries
- Inventory of different approaches > Special reference to approaches that promote best practice in occupational health and safety and the management of psychosocial risks through corporate social responsibility and social dialogue principles and to gender-friendly approaches

Outputs 3

- Guidelines for: employers; employees; trade unions; experts
- PRIMA-EF guidance sheets, book and brochure
- Interventions inventory
- www.prima-ef.org



PRIMA-EF Outputs



PROTECTING WORKERS
HEALTH SERIES No. 9

PRIMA-EF
Guidance on the
European Framework for
Psychosocial Risk Management
A Resource for Employers and
Worker Representatives



**The European Framework for
Psychosocial Risk Management: PRIMA-EF**

Edited by Stavroula Leka and Tom Cox



Methods and Data

- Literature review: A literature review was carried out of the risk management approaches in relation to bullying and third party violence at work
- Policy review: review of policies across EU countries as well as international policies
- Inventory: An inventory on existing psychosocial risk management approaches and their characteristics was elaborated
- Expert interviews: Complementary information was collected through semi-structured interviews with experts who had been involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of different approaches and policy initiatives, organisational representatives
- In all 39 interviews were carried out; 24 experts were interviewed about primary or secondary, six about tertiary and nine about policy level interventions. The interviewees represented 15 countries

Results 1

- Third party violence: awareness and recognition of the problem increased
- Bullying: high on political agenda in many countries (bullying, mobbing, undesired behaviour)
- State of awareness and recognition of bullying at work differ between countries and organisations – effects on the possibilities to carry out interventions
- Awareness and recognition of bullying still low in many countries and organisations

Results 2

- Preventive work to increase awareness and knowledge about bullying and distribution of information etc. carried out
- In preventing and reducing bullying, psychosocial working conditions, atmosphere in the workplace, organisational culture and leadership style should be addressed
- Interventions to reduce the risks of bullying in the work environment are still very few – the results have been promising. Initiatives focusing on personality characteristics are unlikely to succeed

Policy relevant results 1

- Most participants reported increased awareness of psychosocial issues in organisations and society at large. Undeniable evidence of losses and harm caused due to mismanagement or ignorance of psychosocial risks and the related change in priorities, and new policy developments (such as framework agreements) were reported as the main drivers for the development of macro level interventions
- At the global level, the initiatives mainly took the form of guidance issued by the WHO, ILO conventions and global networks. But despite the availability of these initiatives, cooperation between international organisations, such as the ILO and the WHO, was considered by many to be lacking in the area of psychosocial risk management; this was reported to have an impact on the awareness of these issues at the macro level
- Clear communication structure with clearly defined mandates for different ministries was considered essential, especially between the ministries of Labour and Health

Policy relevant results 2

- Differences in prioritisation of psychosocial risks, policies on their management, and capacities and structures to manage psychosocial risks were reported to differ across EU member states > Key differences between old and new member states
- Many terms and classifications used to describe different forms of work-related violence and their use differed between international agencies, countries and researchers, leading to different interpretations of the available guidance
- From some stakeholders' point of view, legislation specifically about psychosocial issues is necessary; some member states have produced relevant policies, especially relating to bullying and harassment at work. But other stakeholders were in favour of less stringent initiatives > This difference in opinion and approach relating to psychosocial issues among key stakeholders at the macro level was highlighted as one of the key policy challenges

Policy relevant results 3

- To address bullying or third party violence, wide-ranging campaigns, programmes and projects were reported to have been organised by different stakeholders including national and international organisations, trade unions, safety and health authorities and insurance companies. Often the drivers for campaigns were reported to be the increasing amount of violent incidents at work, sickness absence due to violence and bullying and economic reasons
- Policy level initiatives were seen as important in many ways. The existence of regulations and collective agreements helps make the challenges posed of bullying and violence at work more visible. Regulations encourage and increase discussion in organisations and in workplaces leading to increased awareness and recognition of problems

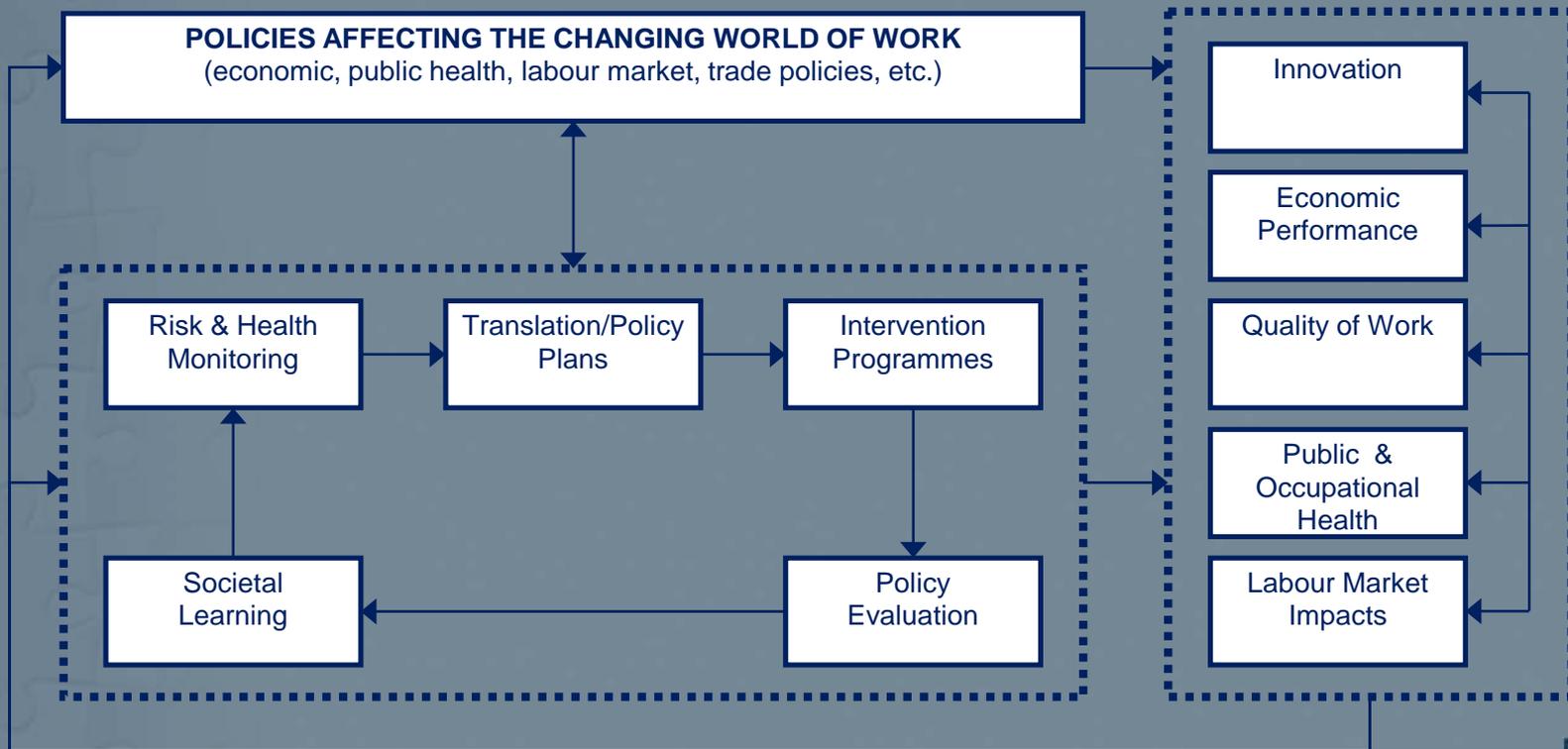
Policy relevant results 4

- Main barriers to the development of policy level interventions > lack of government support for macro initiatives and conflict between different governmental departments
- If policy-makers have other priorities or if they think that an issue is not important, it is very difficult to make progress. Lack of awareness in relation to psychosocial issues and differences of opinion on the kind of policies (hard vs. soft policies) to be ratified have been significant barriers to the development of policy level interventions
- Few studies on evaluating policy interventions, primarily legislation, were reported to have been conducted. A participant highlighted a study on the evaluation of the Swedish regulations on bullying which suggested that the law was introduced “*too early*”, in a situation when the level of awareness, recognition and knowledge of the issue was not adequate. It was thought that, “*such situations might lead to resistance and difficulties, especially if employers were aware [due to the legislation] of what they should do but did not know how*”

PRIMA-EF Framework, Policy Level

The macro level risk management policy process

Outcomes





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Thank you!

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