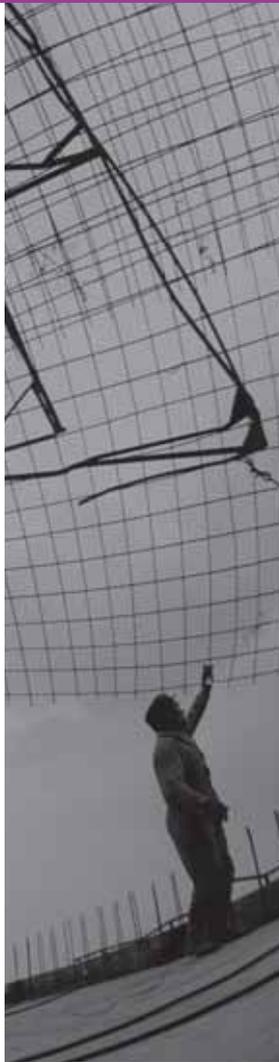


# Annual Report 2009

Summary

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work



# Key Activities in 2009

*Throughout Europe, 2009 was a year of economic crisis, with many economies struggling to emerge from recession, and with unemployment rates rising. In these difficult times, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (the Agency) continued to emphasise the importance of health and safety for successful organisations.*

*Looking back at 2009, the highlights for the Agency include the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER), the Healthy Workplaces Campaign on Risk Assessment, a pan-European opinion poll on health and safety at work, a photo competition and the Healthy Workplaces Film Award.*

## COLLECTING AND ANALYSING INFORMATION

### European Risk Observatory

2009 saw the completion of the fieldwork for a major Agency project, the [European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks \(ESENER\)](#). The survey provides real-time information from organisations across Europe, showing how they are dealing with OSH risks (especially psychosocial risks such as stress, violence and harassment), and what are the drivers for, and barriers to, good OSH management – essential information for both policymakers and enterprises. This is the first time that a Europe-wide survey on this subject has been carried out at the enterprise level. Preliminary results were announced at the closing event of the Agency's Healthy Workplaces campaign on Risk Assessment, in November 2009, and the full results will be launched in June 2010 at a Spanish EU Council Presidency event.

In 2009, the Agency's European Risk Observatory (ERO) began its *Foresight project*, which goes beyond looking at risks that are already apparent. With a 10-year time horizon, the *Foresight project* will present policy-makers with possible future scenarios, helping them take action to minimise new workplace risks. The first *Foresight study*, which began in 2009 with a call for tender, looks at the timely issue of new and emerging risks in 'green' jobs.

The ['Expert forecast on emerging chemical risks related to occupational health'](#) was published – the last of the ERO's four flagship reports on emerging risks, following others on psychosocial, physical and biological risks: together, the reports aim to establish the state of knowledge in these key occupational safety and health (OSH) areas. The chemicals report, which presents the views of experts from across Europe, identifies particular concerns around certain types of substances and certain types of exposure. As with the other

reports, it forms the starting point for further studies and discussion.

A literature review on *'Maintenance and OSH'* was prepared, to support the Agency's Healthy Workplaces Campaign for 2010-2011, which will focus on the subject of maintenance. The review gives the first comprehensive picture of the working conditions of maintenance workers, and for the first time identifies the high proportion of accidents in European workplaces that are related to maintenance.

As part of the Agency's ongoing *'OSH in Figures'* project, which aims to provide an evidence base for the prevention of workplace accidents and diseases in Europe, the report ['OSH in figures: stress at work - facts and figures'](#) was published, bringing together statistics and research from across Europe.

A literature review was also begun as part of the *Women at Work* project, looking at the OSH implications of the increasing numbers of women in the European workforce.

The *NEW OSH ERA* project, which aims to foster the co-ordination of OSH research in Europe, saw its first common call by participating organisations, on the subject of work-related stress.

A 2009 literature review on ['The human-machine interface as an emerging risk'](#), which follows-on from the ERO report on emerging physical risks, emphasises the importance of ergonomic design.

Another literature review on ['The occupational safety and health of cleaning workers'](#) looks at the risks that they face – this is the first study of its kind to have been carried out at EU level. The Agency organised a seminar with stakeholders and researchers to discuss the findings of the review, and identify what actions can be taken to improve the safety and health of this often-overlooked group of workers.

The new report ['Exploratory survey of Occupational Exposure Limits \(OELs\) for Carcinogens, Mutagens and Reprotoxic substances \(CMRs\) at EU Member States level'](#) gives an overview of the systems used in different EU Member States to set workplace exposure limits for hazardous substances.

The report ['Labour inspectorates' strategic planning on safety and health at work'](#) looks at the OSH subjects that labour inspectorates see as priorities in terms of research and awareness-raising. Labour inspectorates play an important role in promoting safety and health at work, and are increasingly focusing their attention on the anticipation, definition and prevention of emerging risks.

## Working Environment Information

The Working Environment Information Unit's work on economic incentives is due to the fact that there is a need for quality-assured information for organisations in this area. Many governments and insurers would like to put in place better incentive schemes, but they need information on how to do it, and which models have proven effective. Two expert workshops organised on the subject made use of the report's findings.

The *Workplace Health Promotion (WHP)* project, which looks at employers' attempts to encourage their employees to adopt healthy lifestyles, produced studies on the effect of ['Health promotion in the transport sector'](#) and studies on the effect of ['Mental health promotion in the healthcare sector'](#), as well as collections of case studies on mental health promotion and WHP among young workers.

Two reports were produced in 2009 on integrating or 'mainstreaming' OSH into education. The first, ['OSH in the school curriculum – requirements and activities in the Member State'](#), is the first comprehensive review of the ways that EU Member States include OSH and risk education in national school curricula. The second, ['Preventing risks to young workers: policy, programmes and workplace practices'](#), gives examples of good practice in preventing risks to young workers.

One of the legacies of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign on Risk Assessment will be a free *'online interactive risk assessment tool'* (OiRA) for micro and small enterprises which is currently being developed. In addition, a comprehensive database is accessible via the website that brings together checklists, handbooks and other risk assessment tools from across Europe.

The report ['Prevention of risk in practice: Good practice related to risk assessment'](#) collected the examples of effective risk assessment that were recognised in the Good Practice Awards that were organised as part of the 2008-2009 Healthy Workplaces Campaign.

The report ['Assessment, elimination and substantial reduction of occupational risks'](#) features cases from a variety of workplaces that demonstrate how a risk assessment process has led to a risk being identified and successfully eliminated or substantially reduced.

The report ['Workforce diversity and risk assessment: ensuring everyone is covered'](#), meanwhile, highlights the need to carry out inclusive risk assessment to take into account the diversity of the workforce when assessing and managing risks.

A series of case studies was finalised on the prevention of musculoskeletal disorders in [agriculture](#).

A project was begun in 2009 to identify good practice in managing OSH risks in road transport.

The Agency also continued its work to improve the overall user-friendliness of the section of its website dealing with [OSH legislation in Europe](#).

A wide range of different material was prepared during 2009 for the next [Healthy Workplaces Campaign on Safe Maintenance](#), including a campaign guide, factsheets, presentations, posters and leaflets, case studies of good

practice, and a cartoon video featuring the popular animated character Napo.

## COMMUNICATION, CAMPAIGNING AND PROMOTION

2009 was the second and final year of the Agency's highly successful [Healthy Workplaces Campaign on Risk Assessment](#), which is the cornerstone of health and safety management. The campaign, which is now the largest of its kind in the world, saw record levels of involvement across all the EU Member States and beyond. Over two million information pieces of campaign material were distributed across the EU.

Activities around the campaign included the involvement of 43 prominent European organisations as [official campaign partners](#).

The [Good Practice Awards](#), organised as part of the campaign, recognised organisations that had made outstanding contributions in promoting risk assessment in the workplace.

The Agency, together with all focal points, organised the following European Campaign Assistance Package (ECAP) supported campaign activities at national level: 101 national partnership and stakeholder meetings, 14 media events (press conferences, journalist/expert round tables), 3 radio call-ins, 21 national news releases and 20 professional articles.

An evaluation was also carried out of the effectiveness of campaign activities and of the two-year campaign model and ECAP campaign support mechanism. Overall, the 2008-2009 Healthy Workplaces Campaign was one of the most successful campaigns with a considerable amount of evidence pointing to raised awareness of the importance of risk assessment (and ways of doing this) and other positive outcomes.

The [European Week for Safety and Health at Work, in October 2009](#), was the focus of campaign events, with a wide range of conferences, seminars and training sessions being organised.

The campaign closed with a [European Summit on risk assessment and SMEs](#) – the event was supported by the Swedish EU Council Presidency, the Spanish government and the Basque regional government. EU policymakers, social partners and leading safety and health experts came together to discuss the issues raised by the campaign.

For the first time, the closing event included a [Network Day](#), in which the Agency's partners throughout Europe and especially the focal points were able to come together to share ideas and expertise.

The Agency's awareness-raising activities in 2009 included a ['Pan-European opinion poll on occupational safety and health'](#), aimed at finding out what European workers think of their working conditions. According to the findings, there is widespread concern among European citizens that the current economic crisis could adversely affect health and safety at work, putting at risk the improvements that they report having seen over the last five years. In fact, 6 out of 10 Europeans expect the global economic downturn to

deteriorate working conditions, especially regarding health and safety.

A [Europe-wide photo competition](#) received over 1,600 entries from 800 participants from all over the EU. Photographers were asked to give their interpretation of the question "What's your image of safety and health at work?"

For the first time, in 2009 the Agency supported the [Healthy Workplaces Film Award](#) for the best documentary on work-related topics at the International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film. The winner was a film entitled 'A Blooming Business,' by Dutch director Ton Van Zantvoort, which shows the hazardous working conditions in a globalised flower industry.

Promotional activities also included organising journalists' visits to the winners of the Good Practice Awards, the preparation of Agency videos, and the organisation of a number of OSH events.

Media monitoring over the year shows considerable press interest in the Agency's work with 2,260 press cuttings received.

2009 saw the first steps taken on a new communications partnership, which will involve the Agency working with the European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry and its Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) to reach SMEs, especially, with OSH information.

Web developments in 2009 included a new Agency blog, a user survey, an exercise benchmarking the Agency website against those of similar organisations, and the third year of the Agency's Google AdWords promotional campaign.

## DEVELOPING THE NETWORK

The Agency has continued its work co-ordinating its Strategy with those of other OSH organisations. The Agency has also been collecting data to enable it to measure the impact of its activities, and continues to strengthen its collaboration with international partners (including, for the first time, some European Neighbourhood Policy states).

## OUTLOOK FOR 2010

The Agency's activities in 2010 will include the implementation of the *Foresight project*. The first phase will explore key socio-cultural, economic, political, technical and environmental drivers of change in 'green' jobs.

Literature reviews and reports will address nanotechnologies, workers involvement, combined exposure to MSDs and psychosocial risks, violence and harassment, health and safety risks faced by self-employed workers, and reports to support the Safe Maintenance campaign.

The ESENER survey will receive its official media launch with the involvement of the Spanish EU Council Presidency in June 2010, following a briefing at the European Parliament in March – a report giving initial results will be published in June, and an online mapping tool will be developed to help with the analysis of survey data. Four reports have been commissioned, as part of this secondary analysis.

The Agency will carry out pilot projects to validate the diffusion strategy for its OIRA tool, working with partners to develop sector-specific and national tools.

The report on economic incentives will give an up-to-date view of the enticements (such as lower insurance premiums and tax rates) used across Europe to motivate organisations to improve their OSH.

Products deriving from the Workplace Health Promotion project include two factsheets, case study reports on occupational health promotion among young workers, and on the promotion of mental health at work.

Work will begin to define the scope of the 2012-13 campaign, which will address one of the overarching themes of the Community Strategy – the promotion of risk prevention as the cornerstone of the European approach to better occupational safety and health.

Efforts to publicise the 2010-11 Healthy Workplaces Campaign on Safe Maintenance will focus on an EU Partnership Meeting, which will present the campaign to potential partners, the campaign's official launch on 28 April, and the European Week for Safety and Health, in October.

A large amount of campaign material will be disseminated, and the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Good Practice competition will be organised, to honour organisations that have found innovative ways of promoting occupational safety and health.

2010 will see another edition of the Healthy Workplaces Film Award within the DOK Leipzig Festival.

Finally, as it is coordinating the Heads of Agencies Network in 2010, the Agency will be representing all of the regulatory EU agencies, at a time when the future place of agencies in EU governance is being debated.