



Promoting health and safety in European Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)



SME Funding Scheme 2003 - 2004



European Agency
for Safety and Health
at Work



European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

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for Safety and Health
at Work

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005

ISBN 92-9191-141-0

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Printed in Belgium

PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

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European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

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Foreword

Attention to occupational safety and health (OSH) not only saves days lost and distress to employees and their families, it can also be highly motivating and make a major contribution to increased efficiency and productivity. It is clearly an integral part of good business management even if it is a separate item on a management meeting agenda. It is certainly not an add-on that can be left off if time and money are short. This comes through clearly in the reports of OSH projects for SMEs in 2003-2004.

This was the third of three years' OSHA funding for promoting best practices, providing information and developing and running training projects in safety and health for SMEs. Businesses and institutions in the 15 Member States that made up the EU at the launch of this scheme were eligible for funding, but the lessons and outcomes should benefit all 25 members of the subsequently enlarged union. Beneficiaries of the scheme carried out 40 projects: 26 national and 14 transnational involving cross-border co-operation between partners.

As in previous years, safety in the construction and metal industries was strongly represented. More unusual project areas were dentistry (in Portugal), dry-cleaning (in France), hairdressing (Sweden and EU-wide) and the live music industry (across Europe) — all involving their own unique range of hazards as well as those shared by all or most enterprises. Several projects addressed the difficulties faced by migrant and temporary workers, who are more prone to occupational illness and accidents than their permanent counterparts, and the problems of those who care for the elderly and dependent. Other cross-cutting themes included disability, the health of women and stress-related effects on mental health.

Projects reflected the value of CD-ROMs as a source of multilingual and interactive training and information as well as the widespread use of the web, and approaches ranged from building support networks for SMEs to direct counselling, mentoring and providing work experience for teenagers. This publication summarises each project, with contact addresses and websites. Many of the ideas and output of these projects have a value well beyond the fields they addressed. There can be very few, if any, SMEs whose quality of working life, accident record and health levels could not benefit from the ideas and information contained in these reports.

Introduction

Good practice in reducing safety and health risks

Promoting health and safety in European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs): SME funding scheme 2003–2004

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are widely acknowledged as the backbone of the European economy, employing nearly two thirds of the EU's private-sector workforce and creating one in every two new jobs. Sadly, their occupational safety record does not compare well with larger enterprises. The fatal accident rate in firms with fewer than 50 workers is around double that of larger companies.

Because cash flows in SMEs tend to be tight and they find it harder to release staff than larger companies, occupational safety and health is often a low priority. This is despite the evidence that safe, healthy and agreeable working conditions not only save days lost through sickness and injury, but increase productivity.

The support of the European institutions for the role of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in this field reflects an understanding of the importance of addressing the problem outlined above. In early 2003, the Agency launched a third SME funding scheme targeting the reduction of safety and health risks in European SMEs. The European Parliament and the European Commission allocated the Agency a EUR 4 million budget.

The 2003-2004 scheme provided co-funding for initiatives that encouraged SMEs to adopt good occupational safety and health practice. Grants for projects were aimed at SMEs' specific needs in one of three categories:

- training related to the prevention of accidents and the avoidance of health risks;
- information and communications that promote health and safety;
- identifying effective good practices that reduce dangers to health and safety.

Project awards

The Agency received 649 eligible applications and, following discussions with national and international expert groups, selected a list of 40 projects to be co-funded, covering a broad range of sectors, topics, approaches, categories, applicants and EU Member States. These show a widespread recognition of the problem within SMEs and the strong commitment of many organisations and companies to reduce health and safety risks. They also demonstrate the wealth of innovative ideas for the development and exchange of good practice examples in the field.

Independent endorsement

An independent assessment of the 2002–2003 scheme estimated that the 51 co-funded projects directly reached around 80 000 SMEs and provided information and advice indirectly to a further 700 000-plus businesses via websites and other avenues. It concluded that over 80 % of these projects would not have gone ahead without funding from the Agency. The evaluation team noted that the projects demonstrated considerable sustainability. Key strengths of the scheme included its focus on high-risk sectors and 'the non-bureaucratic nature of its procedures'. We are confident that the third funding scheme will be seen as making an equal contribution in providing the European Community with practical solutions to the problems of managing occupational risks in SMEs.

More SME information

This publication is one of a number of Agency initiatives to communicate the outcomes of these projects to a large audience. You will find more details on the Agency website (<http://sme.osha.eu.int/>).



SME Funding Scheme 2003 - 2004

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

PROJECTS

14 Transnational projects

AUSTRIA (ÖSTERREICH)

- Working across cultures: health and safety for staff in refugee camps and asylum centres (OMEGA Health Care Centre)

DENMARK (DANMARK)

- Educating teenagers in the hazards of the workplace (LO — Aarhus Amt)

FRANCE

- Confronting the health risks from pesticides in winegrowing (Université Bordeaux 1, IUT, département HSE)

GERMANY (DEUTSCHLAND)

- Chemical risk reduction in two high-exposure metal operations in Germany and Greece (Kooperationsstelle Hamburg)

GREECE (ΕΛΛΑΔΑ/HELLÁDA)

- Occupational safety and health in vehicle repair garages (Association of Engineer-Owners of Thessaloniki Garages)

IRELAND

- Complete safety management for fishermen (Irish Sea Fisheries Board — Bord Iascaigh Mhara BIM)

ITALY (ITALIA)

- Health and safety training for workers in atypical employment (Patronato INCA-CGIL)

ITALY (ITALIA)

- Safer use of forklift trucks in SMEs (IAL — Istituto della CISL (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori) per la formazione professionale)

ITALY (ITALIA)

- Safety and health for women caring for the elderly and dependent (Federazione lavoratori funzione pubblica — Confederazione Generale Italiana Lavoro (CGIL), Firenze)

SPAIN (ESPAÑA)

- Good practices in chemical risk assessment (Instituto Sindical de Trabajo, Ambiente y Salud (ISTAS))

SPAIN (ESPAÑA)

- Safety and health at work for people with disabilities (Fundación ONCE)

SWEDEN (SVERIGE)

- Safety and health for hairdressers across the EU (Handelsanställidas förbund)

THE NETHERLANDS (NEDERLAND)

- Drafting a code of practice for epoxy products in the construction industry (IVAM UvA BV)

UNITED KINGDOM

- Creating a safety culture at live music events (Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College)

Austria (Österreich)

Working across cultures: health and safety for staff in refugee camps and asylum centres

Staff in refugee camps and asylum centres suffer from high level of stress because of the nature of their work. They experience work overload and symptoms of burnout, as well as the risk of violence from their clients.

This project aimed to improve methods of combating these risks, including the development of an occupational safety and health (OSH) plan. The Austrian project leaders, with their German, Danish and Spanish partners, focused on training in intercultural communication (including non-verbal forms) and mediation. They devised training programmes to improve intercultural competence, as well as health, safety and stress prevention.

Who organised the project?

OMEGA Health Care Center

Who were the partner organisations?

- Deym-Soden Consulting (Germany)
- Danish Red Cross Asylum Department (Denmark)
- CEPS Projectes Socials (Spain)

What was it called?

Working across cultures: building a healthy workplace through training in intercultural communication and worker representation and empowerment.

What was the project about?

The project-holders developed a training manual with material and texts that can be used to construct theme-specific workshops on the interaction between intercultural groups or contact with people from different cultural backgrounds. The target group for the training material is institutions and individuals working with multi-ethnic groups.

What did they do?

The project-holders had preparatory meetings with employee representatives with a view to establishing a representative council at some later date (for financial reasons this could not be achieved within the project period). They published in German and English 'An occupational health and safety plan' appropriate to small organisations, with checklists for key components and advice on how to implement them.

They ran the following training events:

- a first-aid course;
- four workshops on intercultural communication and conflicts;
- a workshop entitled 'Intercultural conflict resolution and cross-cultural mediation' for participants from seven organisations;
- a workshop entitled 'The body as a place of identity'; about non-verbal intercultural communication using dance therapy and theatre techniques.

The participants were lay and professional persons who do counselling for migrants and institutions working with migrants and who work in multicultural teams. They ran a counselling service for institutions and organisations working with multicultural clients and staff and an open advisory service once a week.

OMEGA Health Care Center

Type of organisation

- ✓ Private healthcare provider

Sector

- ✓ Refugee and asylum centres

Activity

- ✓ Training, workshops and counselling

Output

- ✓ Guide
- ✓ Training manual/CD-ROM
- ✓ Brochure
- ✓ Web content

Total budget: € 152 318

Agency support: € 120 175

They developed a training manual and a brochure, and made a presentation of the project at the second Women's Health Day, in Graz in March, and at a three-day conference entitled 'Forum prevention — Symposium of the safety systems working party', in May, also in Graz.

What was produced?

The project's output included 'A guide to developing an occupational health and safety plan', published in German (49 pages) and English (41 pages). This guide is not meant to replace national, industry-specific requirements for workplace health and safety but is a general guide to the key elements in developing a local plan for workplace health and safety in small or medium-sized enterprises with limited resources.

A 96-page paper version (300 copies) of the 'Intercultural encounters' training manual was produced in English and German (both languages together in one book to allow its use in cross-cultural environments). Themes relevant to the interaction between people from different cultures are presented in independent modules. Users can explore the themes themselves, as an introduction, background texts and activities are presented for each of these topics.

The participants produced 300 copies of a CD-ROM version of 'Intercultural encounters' in German and English, with additional scenes and interviews developed to help users explore specific topics in depth. It also contains the OHS plan guide and 'Guidelines on health, well-being and stress prevention in work with multicultural and marginalised groups' in Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian, English, French, German and Spanish.



A folded one-page brochure was produced for Women's Health Day, with information about the project and its aims, and a brochure entitled 'OMEGA projects on health and safety in the context of the intercultural workplace'. The latter has been translated and printed in five languages: Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian, English, French, German and Spanish.

Information about the project in English and German, the guide to developing an OHS plan (English and German), the guidelines (Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian, English, French, German, and Spanish) and the training manual (English and German) can be found on the Omega homepage (www.omega-graz.at).



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Denmark (Danmark)

Educating teenagers in the hazards of the workplace

Many young students between the ages of 15 and 18 work in their spare time. Most of this takes place in SMEs and research shows that a disproportionate number of accidents at work involve this young age group. This is especially the case in agriculture, restaurants, building and construction and in supermarkets, where there are a lot of young people. Many of them are school leavers but an increasing number are still in full-time education and are therefore even less familiar with the working environment and the hazards to health and safety that it can present. This project set out to exchange best practice and to develop education in health and safety issues for the young workforce in cooperation with schools and workplaces, with a view to reducing the number of accidents involving young people in SMEs.

Who organised the project?

LO — Aarhus Amt

Who were the partner organisations?

Confederación Empresarial de la Provincia de Alicante (COEPA)
(Alicante, Spain)

Technological Educational Institute of Piraeus (Greece)

What was it called?

Insuring safety and health for the young workforce in SMEs

What was the project about?

This transnational project was about educating young people in issues relating to occupational safety and health, cooperating across borders and learning from the differing situations in each of the three partner countries. The target groups were teenage school pupils and the young workforce. They set out to build cooperation between local schools/school systems, SMEs and the local labour market organisations. The project developed educational models that were tested in local pilots, with the aim of achieving a reduction in accidents involving young workers.

What did they do?

The first transnational meeting of the partners was held in Athens and focused on planning and promoting the project and agreeing a timetable. Local meetings followed in the three participating countries, ensuring that the project was well grounded in local realities and in differing cultures, traditions and regulations.

A further transnational meeting in Alicante (in January 2004) drew together the conclusions of the earlier discussions, agreed on the development of local pilots and led to press conferences held by the partners at a local level. The fourth phase tried out education programmes in local schools in cooperation with small enterprises in agriculture, restaurants, building and construction or supermarkets. The aim was to develop programmes for local use that could nevertheless cross borders and be used in other European countries.

In Alicante the employers association, COEPA, worked with a local municipality, targeting job seekers between 16 and 21 years old and focusing on education in occupational safety and health (OSH) and on work experience. In Patras, the Technological Educational Institute of Piraeus worked with the Technical High School on a combination of work and OSH education, targeting the young workforce between 15 and 18 years.

LO Aarhus worked with two local municipalities, a supermarket, an agricultural enterprise and an educational NGO, on a combination of OSH education and its practical application in the workplace. The target group was the young workforce including

LO — Aarhus Amt

Type of organisation

✓ Trade union body

Sector

✓ Agriculture, restaurants, building and construction, and supermarkets

Activity

✓ OSH education

Output

✓ Web content

✓ Leaflet

Total budget: € 85 797

Agency support: € 68 637

school students between 14 and 16 years in two schools. The local partners worked to strengthen cooperation between teachers, managements and OSH organisations through OSH courses in local schools.

A final seminar entitled 'The first step', in Aarhus, presented the conclusions of the local pilots: that young people were strongly motivated to take an interest in OSH topics; that it was important to discuss and reflect on the issues, not merely to learn about them; that the link between education and job functions was crucial; that visiting companies and having actual work experience of health and safety issues was highly motivating; and that the young participants in these pilots were subsequently much more capable of detecting major risks at work.

What was produced?

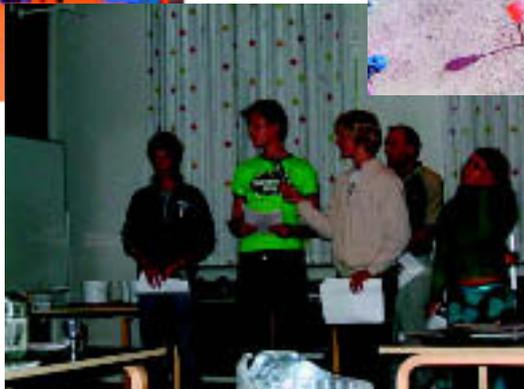
The project-holder produced website content and a 'how to do' leaflet with contact details of the partners, in Danish, English, Greek and Spanish. The leaflet stressed: the importance of learning about occupational safety and health before young people enter the labour market; that this kind of education should take place in the context of the workplace through cooperation between companies, schools, municipalities and labour organisations; that the young people should be at the centre of education in safety and health at work; that they should come to regard it as an important and a useful part of their education in school; that it should be part of the school curriculum; and finally that it should have the active and practical support of parents at home.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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France

Confronting the health risks from pesticides in winegrowing

Possibly up to a million people in France are exposed to pesticides in the course of their work. The effect on their health can range from cancers to reproductive and neurological problems. For these risks agriculture is the most dangerous activity, and the least organised in combating them. This is manifested in a much reduced life expectancy compared with other occupations. Difficulties in dealing effectively and safely with pesticides include the fact that they can be absorbed through the lungs, the skin, the eyes and the stomach, and that the ill effects are not always immediately obvious. This project was directed at the safe use of agricultural chemicals for eliminating plant pests and diseases in the winegrowing sectors in France, Spain and Portugal.

Who organised the project?

Université Bordeaux 1, IUT, département HSE

Who were the partner organisations?

Département «Hygiène, sécurité et environnement» IUT — université Bordeaux 1 (France)

Laboratoire santé, travail, environnement (LSTE), Institut de santé publique, d'épidémiologie et de développement (ISPED), université Bordeaux 2 (France)

Mutualité sociale agricole (France)

Fundación Mutua Universal (Spain)

Confederació d'Empresaris del Baix Llobregat (COFEM) (Spain)

Ordem dos Engenheiros (Portugal)

Université de Bordeaux 1, IUT, Département HSE

Type of organisation

✓ Higher education institution

Sector

✓ Wine industry

Activity

✓ Research

Outputs

✓ Training materials

✓ CD-ROM

Total budget: € 218 301

Agency support: € 174 641

What was it called?

Training in the prevention of phytosanitary risks in the agriculture sector

What was the project about?

This project was about the provision of training in the winegrowing sector to reduce 'phytosanitary' risks: risks inherent in ensuring plant health, notably those arising from the use of agricultural chemicals in eliminating plant pests and diseases. Wine-growing is especially characterised by the intensive use of pesticides, and the full range of risks and preventive measures are not always well understood by smaller enterprises.

Hence, the project-holders set out to devise training modules for minimising these risks. This involved providing the most up-to-date knowledge, covering good practice and enabling people to analyse their own working situations. Traditionally, safety and risk prevention have been regarded as the concern of specialists, which leads to preventive measures being decided with little or no input from the people directly involved. The aim of this project was to make these people the agents of their own risk prevention.

This general aim was broken down into three sections: (a) identification of the hazards and analysis of the risks; (b) establishment of training methods; and (c) the dissemination of results. The transnational nature of the project meant that a fairly wide audience could be reached while allowing for cultural differences in France, Spain and Portugal, the three partner countries.

What did they do?

Following a preliminary meeting in December, the partners met in February 2004 to update their training materials and to formalise the role of different vineyard cooperatives near Bordeaux, which play the role of federations for 120 small vine producers. An ergonomic study of phytosanitary treatment activities was planned with the French partners.

In March, at a one-day meeting in Barcelona, a questionnaire was agreed by the French and Portuguese partners in order to identify the vine-growers' concerns about phytosanitary risks and their needs. The aim was to be able to compare the characteristics of the vineyards in Catalonia with those in Portugal and in Bordeaux.

In June, the first results of the ergonomic study and the questionnaires were presented in Bordeaux. These resulted in further changes to the training support. In July, in Porto, the Portuguese partners associated with the agriculture school of Porto (University of Porto) presented the results of their questionnaires, and the final structure of the training materials was updated. A last meeting, to finalise the training package, was held in Barcelona in September.

What was produced?

The partners developed a training package with four distinct modules:

- interactive role-plays
- operational information sheets
- what you should know about phytosanitary treatment
- resources to create training programmes on phytosanitary risk.

The interactive role-plays were designed through the feedback of analyses carried out in the field. The module summarises the different phases of phytosanitary substances: buying and transport, preparation, treatment, cleaning, re-entry and waste management.

The operational information sheets cover the main prevention points; the message is available in 10 different languages but is mostly visual.

The module covering 'what you should know about phytosanitary treatment' outlines the evolution of wine-growing, the demands of the job, health hazards, phytosanitary good practice, regulations, prevention measures, who to contact in an emergency and where to get help.

The final module on resources is a synthesis of the first three, in the form of PowerPoint slides, as a resource for trainers.

All four modules can be accessed freely on the website. There is also a folder containing all the sheets and a CD-ROM with all the modules.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Germany (Deutschland)

Chemical risk reduction in two high-exposure metal operations in Germany and Greece

The use of chemicals in open and manual processes is widespread in craft and industrial SMEs. According to a survey on working conditions in 2000, some 16 % of employees in the EU either handle or are in contact with dangerous substances. Craft workers and machine operators are among those with the highest exposure. Manual handling of chemicals exposes workers to a high risk of inhalation and skin contact. This project focused on a specific method of risk assessment and reduction in two typically high-exposure operations in the metal sector: maintenance of car brakes, involving exposure to highly volatile solvents and broken fibres; and removal of dirt from metals in washing tables or on-site, involving exposure to different chemicals and abrasive materials.

Who organised the project?

Kooperationsstelle Hamburg

Who were the partner organisations?

DEI (Greek public power corporation)

Nordmetall (north German employers' federation for the metal industry)

IG-Metall Bezirk Küste (German metalworkers' union)

PHU (Greek Employers Federation)

GFE/PPC (General Federation of Employees of Public Power Corporations — Greece)

What was it called?

The use of the Austrian PIMEX method as a tool to reduce risks from dangerous substances in Greek and German companies

What was the project about?

This project was about encouraging and supporting the use of the Austrian PIMEX method (picture mixed exposure) as a tool to improve working conditions in German and Greek SMEs. For 10 years, AUVA (Austrian social insurance for occupational risks) has been successfully using this method, involving video recordings of working processes and simultaneous measurement of risk factors. The field of application was the use of dangerous substances, and more specifically the cleaning of metal surfaces and the maintenance of brakes (as areas for demonstration). The aim was to transfer this method of risk analysis and reduction from Austria to Germany and Greece.

PIMEX was first developed by the National Centre of Working Life, in Sweden, in the late 1980s. A video of the working operation is mixed on a computer screen with the data from measuring instruments (e.g. chemicals and noise). The video and the measurement data results are presented in real time or very close to the actual time of measurement. The presentation has a motivational impact on people in a company and gives good insight into the quantity and variation of exposure during the manual handling of chemicals.

What did they do?

The first project period included two information seminars, one in Germany and one in Greece, to explain the PIMEX system to multipliers such as occupational safety and health specialists. The seminar in Germany took place in Bad Wilsnack and was attended by 30 people. The second was in Athens and was coordinated by the Greek project partner (PPC/DEI). Participants (25) came from fields such as industrial safety, health and medicine.

Kooperationsstelle Hamburg

Type of organisation

- ✓ Government body
(ministry research department)

Sector

- ✓ Metal industries

Activity

- ✓ Risk assessment

Output

- ✓ Seminars
- ✓ Flyer
- ✓ Poster
- ✓ Handbook
- ✓ Lectures
- ✓ Web content

Total budget: € 177 034

Agency support: € 141 627

Practical demonstrations of the PIMEX system were given in both seminars. The project team also organised lectures to a number of companies, unions and safety institutions. Training seminars targeted at technicians and occupational safety and health specialists took place in Athens (11 people) and in Bad Wilsnack (12).

The PimexPro team carried out a number of PIMEX measurements within companies. This started with the measurement of brake cleaning at DEI car repair and transformer repair in Faliro, near Athens. In the same company, the manual cleaning of dirt from transformers with organic solvents was analysed with the PIMEX system. The method was able to show very clearly the peak exposures and to identify the worst and best working practices.



Observations made in the Rabens company and the Meyer shipyards in Germany showed similar results. The project team also conducted a study of exposure to welding fumes in two companies.

Finally the project team organised an international workshop in Hamburg for more than 30 participants. The workshop demonstrated the variety of PIMEX applications. Work with the system has continued since the end of the project period.

What was produced?

The following products (available free) were developed:

- an eight-page flyer — 3 000 copies in English and 1 500 each in French, German, Greek and Spanish — containing a small CD-ROM with PIMEX videos and measurements;
- an A0 poster in English, French, German, Greek and Spanish, for fairs and exhibitions;
- lectures, translated into Greek for the information seminar in Athens, documented in a 78-page workshop report (available in English, German and Greek);
- a technical handbook for the use of the PIMEX system;
- a website (www.PimexPro.org) covering topics such as technical advice, news, lectures and FAQs; it also carries the lectures from the final (Hamburg) workshop.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Greece (ΕΛΛΑΔΑ/HELLADA)**Occupational safety and health in vehicle repair garages**

The car repair sector is mostly made up of small businesses whose workers are exposed to a wide range of risks including: stress from overload and poor work organisation; difficult working conditions and lack of ventilation; lifting heavy loads; and exposure to hazardous chemicals leading to skin and respiratory problems. This project addressed the need for training in occupational safety and health (OSH) for employees in repair garages. The holders and their partners developed a training programme to cover the main occupational risks and preventive measures, and ran a series of courses in the Thessaloniki district and in Hamburg for garage owners and their employees.

Who organised the project?

Association of Engineer-Owners of Thessaloniki Garages

Who were the partner organisations?

Hamburg Port Training Institute (HPTI) (Germany)

Interbalkan Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)

SMEs in garage sector:

- Anastasios Lykartsis Service Honda Mitsubishi
- Omicron Motors Pan. Mitroglou Vehicles – Spares – Garages
- V. Mitsos – V. Raptis – D. Daskalakis Partnership

What was it called?

Garages – main risks of the sector

What was the project about?

The project was about developing an accident prevention policy in garages for passenger and goods vehicles. The holders set out to promote the development of a culture of health and safety by: spreading knowledge of preventive measures that could be taken by garages; improving working conditions; and applying national law in everyday situations.

What did they do?

The project holders and their partners ran seven training courses on occupational safety and health for garage owners in Thessaloniki, extending their originally planned course to 35 hours. Each course was attended by 25 people, extending training to a total of 175 SMEs. They devised occupational hazard risk assessments and safe working instructions in Greek and English for car repair and lorry workshops.

A training course in Hamburg was organised by the Hamburg Port Training Institute. The 25-hour programme included a session on garage management and sessions on safety and on safety training. It included six study visits to garages for the practical aspects of occupational safety and health regulations. It was attended by 20 garage owners from Thessaloniki.

They held an opening conference in Thessaloniki in March at which the goals of the project were presented and a closing conference, also in Thessaloniki, in September at which they presented and summarised the project. Attendance included 130 members of the association. A press conference and subsequent interviews resulted in coverage in the sectoral and local press.

Association of Engineer-Owners of Thessaloniki Garages**Type of organisation**

✓ Business association

Sector

✓ Automotive industry (repair garages)

Activity

✓ Training

Outputs

✓ Handbooks

✓ CD-ROM

Total budget:

€ 191 233

Agency support:

€ 149 296

What was produced?

'Safe Working Instructions' is a 16-page coloured bilingual publication distributed free to the project holder's 800 members. It deals with possible risks and protection measures relating to:

- sunken inspection shafts
- lifting ramps
- lifting jacks
- fuel tank drainage
- used engine oil
- work on brakes
- work on petrol tanks and fuel supply lines
- use of naked flames – arc welding and oxyacetylene welding
- maintenance work – battery replacement
- charging batteries
- work on a roller brake tester in a sunken shaft
- cleaning with a pressure water sprayer
- cleaning car parts with a cleaning fluid washer
- protecting the skin.



The two publications on risk assessment and the prevention of occupational diseases (relating to car and to lorry repair workshops) are free to association members. Each is 150 pages long and in colour and consists of:

- Part I Occupational Hazard Risk Assessment
- Chapter 1 General
 - Chapter 2 Hazardous substances in car repair workshops
 - Chapter 3 Working environment factor/agent measurements
 - Chapter 4 Risks from the state of the workplace
 - Chapter 5 Risks from procedures implemented
- Part II Occupational diseases and prevention in repair workshops
- Part III Evaluation and conclusions

The seven-day training courses consisted of: general principles of Greek national law and European directives relating to workers' safety and health; technical safety; recording and investigating the causes of accidents at work; lighting, ventilation, air-conditioning, temperature and damp in the workplace; noise and vibrations, and electrical dangers; labelling, fire safety and dangerous substances; dangers from machines; cutting and joining metals, transport and manual handling of goods.

All the material was included on a CD-ROM in Greek and English.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Ireland

Complete safety management for fishermen

Commercial fishing is considered a very dangerous occupation in the EU. Ireland has approximately 2 000 fishing vessels while the United Kingdom has about 7 000 — with a total number of fishermen at least double these numbers (approximately 18 000). The nature of the risks means that they cannot all be eliminated, but they can be anticipated and minimised. The aim of this project was to provide a user-friendly system of hazard identification, risk assessment and the management of safety in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

A safety management system was developed for all types of fishing vessels from 6 metres in length to 24 metres and over. When the skipper and crew have completed the process, a risk assessment will have been prepared for their specific vessel. The system is intended to complement the content of the mandatory basic safety training courses delivered to all fishermen in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Who organised the project?

Irish Sea Fisheries Board — Bord Iascaigh Mhara BIM

Who was the partner organisation?

Seafish, United Kingdom

What was it called?

Safety management system and risk assessment for fishing vessels

What was the project about?

The project was about devising and promoting a software application to help fishermen complete risk assessments and develop safety policies for their vessels. A CD-ROM helped them produce a document, known as the 'Fishing vessel safety folder', specifically for their own vessel and aimed at crew members, presenting complex health and safety requirements in a simple format.

Within the CD-ROM the project-holders also developed a safety management system (SMS), aimed at Irish vessels over 24 metres, which is currently (2005) under test. Features in the SMS include: outlining the benefits of an SMS; explaining risk assessment and its legal implication for fishing vessels, and how to conduct one; providing information on a range of typical hazards found onboard fishing vessels; explaining terms used in safety management; and a step-by-step approach to developing a safety policy.

The project will help vessel owners and skippers meet their legal obligation to undertake risk assessments, by guiding them through the process and documenting their findings in a user-friendly manner. This will have the positive effect of reducing the likelihood of exposure to hazards. The primary target groups were fishing vessel owners, skippers and crew members in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

What did they do?

Following an initial stage, outlining the purpose of the project to the fishing industry and other interested parties, the partners identified an opportunity to meet directly with fishermen at the Fish Ireland Exhibition, held over three days in Killybegs, a major fishery harbour on the north-west coast of Ireland. This exhibition attracted an attendance of approximately 15 000, mainly from the United Kingdom and Ireland. The project team devised a prototype CD-ROM for demonstration purposes and to show a preliminary version of a tutorial to fishermen visiting the stand. The tutorial approach was adopted as the preferred method of explaining and demonstrating the various sections within the application, thereby reducing the volume of text needed.

Two articles were published in the national fishing papers, the Irish Skipper and the Marine Times, and one in the 'Fish matters' newsletter.

Irish Sea Fisheries Board — Bord Iascaigh Mhara BIM

Type of organisation

✓ Public body

Sector

✓ Fisheries

Activity

✓ Designing, publishing and publicising

Output

✓ CD-ROM

Total budget:

€ 133 455

Agency support:

€ 51 594

What was produced?

They produced a free CD-ROM with an easy-to-use risk-assessment method for fishing vessels. Its features include:

- guidance notes;
- an explanation of the risk-assessment method used;
- a booklet on how to get started, risk assessment and key safety points;
- an explanation of what a 'Fishing vessel safety folder' is;
- a tutorial;
- a 'tip box' giving guidance to the user on how to complete an input field;
- three core sections on risk assessment:
 - vessel areas (such as accommodation),
 - vessel activities (such as stowing catch),
 - specific fishing types (such as otter trawling);
- feedback (based on the vessel information supplied) on a wide range of issues such as minimum manning levels, life saving appliances and fire fighting equipment;
- a facility for recording relevant crew information;
- pro forma emergency plans (man overboard, fire, abandon ship, etc.);
- a section for Irish, UK and EU documents (such as legislation and codes of practice);
- a safety management system (SMS) (limited to Irish fishermen with vessels above 24 metres in length);
- a glossary of health and safety terminology;
- frequently asked questions.



A version of the application is also available by logging on to the BIM website at http://www.bim.ie/templates/text_content.asp?node_id=629.



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Italy (Italia)

Health and safety training for workers in atypical employment

New forms of flexible and atypical employment are growing all over Europe, especially in SMEs. Research at national and European levels shows that workers in flexible employment experience poorer health and safety conditions and suffer two to three times the level of accidents as non-flexible workers. Their training in health and safety is generally inadequate as is their level of involvement in protection and prevention measures, as companies are less inclined to invest in them. They tend to accept poorer working conditions, to experience greater stress and to be less motivated. This project set out to promote training and greater awareness of the occupational safety and health needs of atypical workers. It focused especially on SMEs in the food industry, where a disproportionate number of women work and where flexible labour is common.

Who organised the project?

Patronato INCA-CGIL

Who were the partner organisations?

Emergences (France)

Labour Research Department (LRD) (United Kingdom)

European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP) (Italy)

What was it called?

Training and information on gender safety and health issues

What was the project about?

The project was about promoting occupational safety and health in new forms of flexible and atypical employment (part-time employees, fixed duration contracts, etc.), with particular attention to female workers and to maternity. The aim was to encourage a preventive approach and to improve knowledge and awareness of risk management and preventive measures.

What did they do?

The project-holders planned the project and scheduled training at meetings in Bologna and Rome. This was followed by a workshop for all the partners, in Bologna, at which information was exchanged on atypical work in the three member countries, and detailed planning was concluded. Preparatory training involved 436 people (191 women) and took up 103 training days (mostly in Italy but with workplace learning activities in the United Kingdom).

In Italy, there were nine courses between February and September 2004 for a total of 286 participants (119 women). Each carried out a project involving learning and field research on the occupational safety and health of atypical workers. In the United Kingdom, there were four full-time courses from January to May, with 36 training days plus workplace learning for 52 participants (18 women). In France, there were eight full-time training courses from February to June, with 40 training days for 98 participants (54 women).

The next phase involved the mentoring of atypical workers as a pilot project in three SMEs in Italy, in a social and healthcare assistance organisation, a company in the agriculture/food sector and in a call centre.

They also drafted a portfolio on occupational safety and health for the use of atypical workers, which was discussed at a workshop for the partners, in Paris, and further refined. In September, they held three one-day information seminars, in Paris, London and Rome, for a total of 371 registered participants (226 women). All three seminars were interpreted in French, English and Italian.

Patronato INCA-CGIL

Type of organisation

✓ Welfare organisation

Sector

✓ General (atypical employment)

Activity

✓ Training

Output

✓ Web pages

✓ Handbooks

✓ Training documents

Total budget: € 239 746

Agency support: € 153 328

What was produced?

They set up a project web page (www.inca.it/osha) containing project activities and events, training material, information on atypical employment, including Italian law and health and safety issues, links, an online forum and seminar speakers' presentations.

Training material was devised, used and distributed in Italy. Documentation included:

- 'The project and its objectives', summarising the project, including statistics on injuries and occupational diseases, flexible employment and female workers;
- 'Three notes on flexible employment', analysing the main features of the different work contracts in flexible employment and how the law has developed in the Italian context;
- 'Historical development of the norms on health and safety in the workplace', looking at how the right to occupational safety and health has developed in Europe;
- 'Contractual norms of flexible employment and protection against accidents', extracts from contracts and other legal documents;
- 'Law on health and safety', summarising the main legal texts on health and safety;
- 'Pathologies and risks factors emerging in the current work contexts, with special attention to reproductive health', highlighting examples of risks that have been found in jobs with a high percentage of women and giving a model of risk evaluation in areas especially relevant to women.

LRD (UK) prepared a 64-page booklet on women in the UK labour market, UK law and women workers, and the hazards and specific health issues facing them. Emergences (France) prepared training documents distributed to all the participants in the training courses.

There is also Vademecum, a project handbook (4 000 copies, 63 pages in Italian, French and English), and Manuale Formatori, a training handbook (1 500 copies, 84 pages). Other publications included two articles in the Italian weekly magazine *Rassegna Sindacale*.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Italy (Italia)

Safer use of forklift trucks in SMEs

Forklift trucks are the most widely used equipment for handling materials in numerous industrial and manufacturing sectors; they are extensively used in SMEs, mainly in warehouses. But there is a high rate of accidents involving both drivers and adjacent workers, and they have been identified internationally as a significant contributor to both serious and fatal industrial injuries. Forklift drivers are also exposed to many other risks, as a result of poor ergonomic design, awkward postures, repetitive movement and additional manual handling of goods. This project set out to reduce these risks by working with drivers, designers, dealers and national authorities towards improving forklift truck design.

Who organised the project?

IAL — Istituto della CISL (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori) per la formazione professionale

Who were the partner organisations?

ISPESL (Italy)

USL Siena (Italy)

Regione Toscana (Italy)

BTS-ETUC (Belgium)

SindNova CISL (Italy)

GroLa BG (Germany)

IAL — Istituto della CISL (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori) per la formazione professionale

Type of organisation

✓ Trade Union training body

Sector

✓ Industrial (warehousing)

Activity

✓ Research

Output

✓ Report

Total budget: € 111 369

Agency support: € 89 095

What was it called?

Reducing risks on forklift trucks in SMEs

What was the project about?

The aim of this project was to establish good practice, training content and activities intended to reduce the dangers of forklift trucks in SMEs, and to improve forklift truck design by involving their users in the process.

The project grew out of earlier research in Italy and Sweden into the effectiveness of technical standards in ensuring the safety of work equipment in SMEs. It set out to collect information from machinery users and to produce a strategy for improving the technical standards of machinery. It focused on forklift trucks ('self-propelled trucks up to and including 10 000 kg capacity and C-Standard EN 1726-1 1998'). Its overall objective was to improve the design of forklift trucks in order to help employers improve the working environment of these vehicles, including surroundings, related equipment, instructions, procedures and training.

What did they do?

The project-holders carried out fieldwork with 29 SMEs: 18 in Prato, five in Rome and six in Mannheim. Each enterprise underwent at least one inspection aimed at surveying the working environment, examining the forklift trucks and recording the subjective workload assessment of operators (222 in total). They selected 29 workers and assigned them to four working groups (two in Prato, one in Rome and one in Mannheim) which also involved technical experts.

They studied together and discussed the main tasks, corresponding risks and preventive measures in order to produce a final evaluation document, summarising the problems and their proposals for improvement. This draft was addressed to manufacturers and employer-users.

At the beginning, each participant was given a knowledge-assessment questionnaire on the safe use of the forklift trucks under investigation (10 multiple choice questions with only one correct answer to each). Another (open) questionnaire asked them to point out any ergonomic deficiencies in the machinery and its use, especially those relating to:

- maintenance,
- access to the driving compartment,
- comfort of the driving seat,
- any instance when a potentially damaging driving posture had to be adopted,
- visibility,
- lighting in the working environment.

The five main stages of operation were identified as:

- operational checks at the start and end of use,
- travelling when empty,
- loading,
- travelling when loaded,
- unloading.

Each stage was then analysed in order to define:

- the correct procedure to accomplish each task,
- the knowledge needed by workers to follow correct procedure,
- the risks involved in implementing correct procedure and any critical points,
- further preventive measures and safety procedures needed to avoid accidents.

The culmination of the project was a European workshop in October in Brussels, where an invited audience from the European Commission's Enterprise DG, the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) and national authorities discussed the project results. The event provided a valuable opportunity to exchange views on standardisation, machinery risk assessment, integration of machinery into the workplace, market surveillance of machinery, accident investigation and machinery users' feedback.

What was produced?

At the end of the project period a final report in Italian and English was being completed. It identifies the main risks associated with the use of the forklift trucks in different working environments and during different operations; it sets out essential training content, for drivers and their co-workers, for the safe use of forklift trucks; it makes recommendations and offers guidelines for buying as well as safely using forklift trucks; and it makes recommendations for the improvement of existing harmonised standards.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Italy (Italia)

Safety and health for women caring for the elderly and dependent

Women employed in SMEs providing healthcare for the elderly and dependent are exposed to a number of occupational risks. These include the effects of working anti-social hours such as nightshifts; stress arising from the difficulties of dealing with this particular clientele; musculoskeletal problems from manual lifting; and skin and respiratory disorders from the use of chemicals used in cleaning and hygiene. These women, who make up some 90 % of the staff, tend to have poor educational backgrounds and an increasing number are immigrants; and they have a high rate of absenteeism due to illness and work accidents. This project set out to provide training and to raise the level of awareness of occupational safety and health among them and their employers.

Who organised the project?

Federazione lavoratori funzione pubblica — Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), Firenze

Who were the partner organisations?

CGIL regionale Toscana-Firenze (Italy)

Sogespa SpA, Firenze

Sicurgest SrL, Firenze

Associazione Ambiente Lavoro Toscana (ONLUS-ALT), Firenze

Associazione Mosaico, Firenze

Infoprima, Malaga (Spain)

Fagligt International Center for Uddannelse, Copenhagen (FIC) (Denmark)

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) (Belgium)

What was it called?

InCaSe: Innovation, care and security in SMEs supporting elderly people

What was the project about?

The project was about improving risk assessment in enterprises caring for the elderly, especially for women who make up the vast majority of the workforce in this field. It focused on raising awareness of the need for occupational safety and health among the women and their employers.

What did they do?

A first meeting with partner organisations and a workshop on training content was held in Copenhagen in January 2004. This was followed by a survey of the methods of risk evaluation in the enterprises involved.

They ran training courses for health and security representatives in Italy (two courses of 20 hours each for 32 workers in 15 enterprises) and in Denmark (one course of five days (20 hours) for 17 people).

Federazione lavoratori funzione pubblica — Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), Firenze

Type of organisation

✓ Trade union

Sector

✓ Care of the elderly

Activity

✓ Training, publication

Output

✓ Handbook

✓ Brochure

✓ CD-ROM

✓ Website

Total budget: € 174 471

Agency support: € 136 053

In May, a second transnational meeting in Malaga agreed on the production of a video with selected good practices, and of a brochure in four languages. They also agreed on information campaigns to be carried out in Italy (in 13 enterprises for 200 people), and in Spain (in four enterprises for 42 people). They made a tentative identification of standards for the quality certification of services delivered in SMEs caring for the elderly, from a gender sensitive perspective. They also produced a handbook for workers' representatives on health and safety in enterprises caring for the elderly.



A seminar in Florence for 30 trade union delegates from the public and services sectors in the province of Florence presented the project outcomes and discussed the possibility of applying the methodology to other sectors. Their last transnational meeting was a seminar in Florence entitled 'Health, safety and gender in enterprises for the care of the elderly: European strategies and initiatives for trade unions and local institutions', attended by over 80 people. Copies of the handbook and brochure were widely distributed.

What was produced?

They produced a 'Handbook for health and safety in SMEs caring for the elderly' (1 000 copies in Italian and English) containing: a brief description of the project; a summary of research on health and safety from a gender sensitive perspective in the EU and in partner countries; a procedure for risk analysis; and a 'gender sensitive toolbox' for identification and risk prevention.

They published a CD-ROM with a grid for hazard identification and existing national regulations in the partner countries and a 20-minute video, in Italian and Spanish. Filmed in Italian SMEs, it presents four hazardous situations and describes good and bad practices. Dialogues have been adapted to the local context in Spain.



A six-page brochure in Italian, Spanish and Danish contains: a brief description of the project; four of the commonest risks for workers in the care sector in the three partner countries (with differences between Italy and Spain on the one hand and Denmark on the other that take into account the different social, cultural and economic contexts); and a grid for risk identification.

A website in English and Italian (www.incase-osha.org) includes the work plan, a training package and other documents. There is also an area reserved for those actively involved in the project.

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Spain (España)

Good practices in chemical risk assessment

There are more than 100,000 chemical substances on the European market and more than a million chemical preparations. Many of them are routinely used in the workplace and pose potential threats to the health of employees. According to a report by the European Commission in 2003, more than 30,000 employees were suffering from skin and respiratory diseases, as a result of using chemicals at work. Many of these may be especially dangerous to women and to their reproductive health. Every employer and employee needs to be aware of the risks. Sadly this is often not the case in the small businesses where most people work and where the exposure to chemical hazards is greatest. This project set out to deliver preventive mechanisms that could be easily used by small firms and their staff.

Who organised the project?

Instituto Sindical de Trabajo, Ambiente y Salud (ISTAS)

Who were the partner organisations?

Emergences (France)

INCA (Italy)

What was it called?

Participative protocol for intervention on chemical risk

Instituto Sindical de Trabajo, Ambiente y Salud

Type of organisation

✓ Union body

Sector

✓ General (use of chemicals)

Activity

✓ Research, seminars

Output

✓ Guide

Total budget: € 149 877

Agency support: € 119 902

What was the project about?

The project was about providing a practical tool to assess and prevent chemical risks in firms with fewer than 50 employees and a high proportion of female workers in Spain, Italy and France. This tool, a formal protocol, is for use in small companies handling chemical substances. In particular the project was designed to raise awareness of the risks from substances and materials dangerous to women and to their reproductive health.

What did they do?

Following research into existing documents and data they developed a protocol proposal for preliminary assessment. At the first transnational meeting of the project in December 2003, a decision was reached to focus the protocol on gender issues and work organisation as risk-increasing factors.

The proposal was discussed in five different groups (three in Spain, one in Italy and one in France). One of the groups in Spain was exclusively for women. A total number of 36 workers participated in the discussion. They came from a variety of sectors affected by chemical risk, such as manufacturing cleaning products, basic chemical industries, the car industry, cleaning services and hospitals. As a result the language was simplified, and 'blacklisted' chemicals and 'R phrases' (a numbering system identifying types of risk) were included in the annexes to make risk identification easier.

A new modified and extended version was tested and validated in 11 enterprises and final changes were discussed at a second transnational meeting in Valencia in June 2004. Printed and web editions of the protocol were produced. An ergonomic, user-friendly design was introduced to facilitate the search and detection of the support tools. An online interactive version of the guide with several links to databases was developed in the next phase.

Distribution to social agents, health and safety representatives, and other interested parties was then carried out. In September the protocol was presented at a meeting of 30 participants from different sectors, most of them members of the health and work network (santé et travail) of the French trade union, CGT.

What was produced?

The main product was a new protocol, aimed at SMEs, for tackling chemical risks: 'Prevention of chemical risk at the workplace. A guide for intervention'

The guide includes:

- an introduction to its purpose and its value as something that can be used by employees themselves;
- a note on the contents and proposals;
- the procedure itself, divided into chapters on preparation for intervention, identification of dangerous chemicals, identification of risks, risk assessment, programme for intervention and follow-up.

The different chapters describe the steps to take, providing graphic reference for easy access to information at each stage. Sample forms and questionnaires are provided to facilitate the tasks. Annexes are included at the end of the document with label samples, 'blacklisted' chemicals, and samples of lists, forms and questionnaires for risk identification and samples of letters to different institutions.

The three chapters are identical in all the three language versions (Spanish, French and Italian), but the annexes are different since they have been adapted to national regulation in each country. The guide is available free online at <http://www.istas.net/guiaquim>, www.emergences.fr and www.inca.it/GuíaInterItalia.pdf and can be downloaded in PDF format in the three languages. The Spanish version has been presented in an interactive format that allows users to browse the different chapters, with references to the examples and supporting material.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Spain (España)

Safety and health at work for people with disabilities

People with disabilities face additional risks at work that relate specifically to their disabilities, and these are not always adequately covered by employment legislation or properly understood by small businesses. One consequence of this is a higher than average level of absenteeism that makes it difficult for disabled people to enter the job market or to stay in their jobs, especially within SMEs. This project set out to reduce the rate of absenteeism among the disabled and to raise their profile within SMEs, by developing an occupational safety and health (OSH) management system targeted at disability.

Who organised the project?

Fundación ONCE

Who were the partner organisations?

Grupo Fundosa (Spain)

Ulster Supported Employment Ltd (USEL) (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

What was it called?

Safety and health at work for people with disabilities

What was the project about?

This project was about improving the occupational safety and health conditions of people with disabilities by developing an effective prevention practice that took into account their specific disabilities. It also set out to reduce absenteeism rates and improve the employment quality of the disabled within SMEs.

Specifically the project-holders aimed:

- to draw up an occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) designed for organisations that employ people with disabilities;
- to implement the OHSMS in four Spanish enterprises operating in four different sectors with a total of 183 employees, and all of them employing people with disabilities;
- to promote the exchange of good practices between SMEs from Spain and Northern Ireland and to ensure that the outcomes of the project were spread as widely as possible.

What did they do?

The project was structured in four phases. During phase 1, 'Producing the system and a user guide', they analysed and updated documentation on safety and health at work for people with disabilities previously produced by a partner organisation, the Fundosa Group. They then set about designing an occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) with the help of their Northern Irish partner.

In phase 2, 'Pilot verification trials', four pilot experiences were developed at four Spanish SMEs, applying all the measures prescribed by the OHSMS. They also incorporated regulatory and procedural specifications in the OHSMS with the help of their Northern Irish partner.

In phase 3, 'Drafting and publication of the system', they revised the OHSMS with the results of its implementation in the four Spanish SMEs. They also prepared and published the CD-ROM containing the OHSMS, and other material.

Finally, in phase 4, 'Dissemination and exchange of good practice', representatives from four SMEs in Northern Ireland visited the four Spanish SMEs and observed the implementation of the OHSMS, and presented the project at a final seminar. This included a debate on solutions and trends in the integration of the disability perspective in risk prevention strategies within companies, which was attended by 82 people.

What was produced?

Fundación ONCE

Type of organisation

✓ Foundation

Sector

✓ General (disability)

Activity

✓ Research, seminars

Output

✓ CD-ROM (containing OSHMS)

✓ Brochures

Total budget: € 196 779

Agency support: € 153 487

The team produced the following documents:

- a presentation of the project,
- the OHSMS itself, which includes:
 - a manual with guidelines, a prevention policy and an emergency plan,
 - a guide for managers, containing legal obligations on occupational health and a managerial tool to help carry them out,
 - a series of procedures covering the following areas:
 - identifying and keeping a record of statutory requirements,
 - identification, assessment and recording of risks,
 - programmed inspections,
 - processing suggestions,
 - control of purchases,
 - care and surveillance of employees' health,
 - control of hygiene risks,
 - selection and control of personal protection equipment,
 - investigation of incidents — an action plan for determining the causes of an incident, reporting on it and avoiding its recurrence,
 - adoption, control and monitoring of corrective and preventive measures,
 - creation, revision, control and management of occupational health and safety documentation,
 - internal audits,
 - occupational safety and health information and training,
 - occupational safety and health communication, consultation and participation,
 - contractors, subcontractors and temporary employment agencies — ensuring that all services provided by external companies meet all occupational safety and health requirements.



'Disability and prevention' contains technical and management recommendations for dealing with disabled workers. Throughout the documents produced, links can be found with access to applicable legislation at international and European levels, and to that for Spain and Northern Ireland. Links to websites of interest in the field of disability and risk prevention are included. Project material is also available online at the following websites:

www.fundaciononce.es/WFO/Castellano/Ambitos_Actuacion/Formacion_Empleo/Otros/Empleo_otros4.htm

www.discapnet.com/Discapnet/Castellano/Actualidad/Especiales/Noticia_9346.htm

www.usel.co.uk/health_safety.asp

www.workability-international.org/euroopenews.html

Information about the project was included in the European Disability Forum weekly mailing of 23 November 2004.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website for more information:
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Sweden (Sverige)

Safety and health for hairdressers across the EU

The working environment of hairdressers is characterised by a number of health risks, mainly relating to posture and movement, and to the effects of chemicals on the lungs and on the skin. In Sweden, as in the rest of Europe, small businesses have difficulty giving enough priority to occupational safety and health (OSH) and keeping up to date with developments in this field. This transnational project was based on well-tested Swedish training materials and set out to address occupational safety and health in hairdressing salons across Europe. The project-holders and their counterparts in other countries worked with management and staff to increase knowledge and understanding of OSH and to improve the working environment.

Who organised the project?

Handelsanställdas förbund

Who were the partner organisations?

Dansk Frisör och Kosmetikerförbund (Denmark)

CIC (Creativity and Innovation Centre) Europe

Uni-Europa (Union Network International)

What was it called?

Health and safety knowledge in working life for hairdressers in European cooperation

What was the project about?

In a Swedish survey conducted in 2000, 70 % of the hairdressers said they had had problems relating to occupational health during the previous year. Of these, 30 % said that the problems had been so great that they had not been able to carry out their work. The risk of being forced to leave the trade is considerable, with about 80 % taking early retirement due to health problems.

So the project-holders set out to reach Europe-wide agreement on a range of occupational health issues relevant to hairdressing salons. These included how to handle and use chemicals in salons; developing joint specifications on products that could be used with minimum risk; producing a database of chemicals (still being worked on at the conclusion of the project period); and developing common rules on responding to external threats, such as aggressive behaviour, robbery and violence.

What did they do?

They worked with existing occupational safety and health materials to produce a manual that could be translated and used by hairdressing salons across Europe. Having chosen a translation company, they held conferences to promote the project in each of the partner countries. These took place in Copenhagen (March 2004), Vienna (April), Helsinki (May), Amsterdam (June), Brussels (June), Athens (July), Milan (September) and Paris (September). They also promoted the project through articles in several union and employer publications.

Handelsanställdas förbund

Type of organisation

✓ Employees' Union

Sector

✓ Hairdressing

Activity

✓ Publishing and promotion

Output

✓ Manual (also on CD-ROM)

Total budget: € 138 048

Agency support: € 110 439

What was produced?

They published a 47-page manual in 11 languages, designed for a transnational target group. This is available in printed form and also on a CD ROM containing all the versions except Greek. It can be used as part of the basic training in salons and complements nationally produced information material. It is also on the hairdressing employers' website in the United Kingdom.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website: www.handels.se



The Netherlands (Nederland)

Drafting a code of practice for epoxy products in the construction industry

Epoxy-based products are increasingly popular in the construction industry because they provide coatings, flooring materials, adhesives and concrete and wood repair agents with superior technical properties. However, the uncured epoxy resin, its hardeners and reactive diluents are all potent skin sensitisers. Approximately one out of every five epoxy workers develops an allergic contact dermatitis, forcing them to change jobs. A low awareness of the health risk, together with unsafe work practices are major contributory factors. This project set out to develop a common European code of practice for handling epoxy products. The aim was to contribute to a reduction in skin allergies, contact dermatitis and respiratory problems among construction workers across Europe. A draft code, targeted particularly at SMEs, includes good practices in substituting non-epoxy products wherever practical.

Who organised the project?

IVAM UvA BV

Who were the partner organisations?

Health and Safety Executive (United Kingdom)

Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Bau-Berufsgenossenschaften (Germany)

Aalborg BST Center (Denmark)

Arbouw (Netherlands)

What was it called?

Epoxycode — Code of practice for epoxy workers in the construction industry

What was the project about?

This project was about developing a common, European code of practice for epoxy workers in the construction industry (especially in very small companies) that would highlight good practices in handling epoxy products. A draft code of practice was to be promoted in the sector through information materials, training courses and seminars. The project partners hoped ultimately to incorporate the code into governmental guidelines and/or industry agreements after monitoring its use and application for a year. It includes good practices in product substitution (by non-epoxy products).

What did they do?

During the first six months of the project they collected good practices, information and illustrations. They also compared classifications of epoxy products according to their health risks and looked at the potential for a new classification system. Based on this, a draft version of a code of practice was compiled.

During the second six months a 'final' draft of the code was achieved, after extensive discussion within the consortium and beyond. The code was made available in several forms to companies and their employers in the construction industry, as well as to suppliers of the products and consultants serving the industry. Pilot training courses were organised in each partner country, as well as national seminars to disseminate and discuss the project outcomes.

Following the initial comparison between existing classification systems, the feasibility of a new Dutch proposal for a classification system was discussed. International harmonisation within the time-frame of the project was too ambitious, but discussions were to continue.

IVAM UvA BV

Type of organisation

- Environmental research agency and consultancy

Sector

- Construction (epoxy-based products)

Activity

- Research, developing materials, training

Output

- Brochure (code of practice)
- Leaflet
- Training materials
- CD-ROM

Total budget: € 158 172

Agency support: € 123 849

What was produced?

They produced a brochure entitled 'Controlling skin diseases when handling epoxy resins — Examples of good practice for handling epoxy resins in the construction industry'. It contains the code of practice and is available in Danish (at Aalborg BST Center), Dutch (at Arbouw and IVAM), English (at HSE and IVAM) and German (at BG-Bau). The 'core' English version has 15 pages and the following contents:

1. Why a booklet on epoxies?
2. How do I recognise epoxy products?
3. How are epoxies labelled?
4. What are the health effects?
 - 4.1. Effects resulting from skin contact
 - 4.2. Effects resulting from inhalation exposure
5. How could you put yourself at risk?
6. How to reduce the health risks associated with epoxies?
 - 6.1. Measures at the source: alternative materials and techniques
 - 6.2. Measures at the source: less harmful epoxies
 - 6.3. Transportation to the workplace
 - 6.4. Safe handling and use: general measures
 - 6.5. Reducing (skin-)contact during application
 - 6.6. Cleaning of tools and machines
 - 6.7. Skin and eye protection and skin care
 - 6.8. Respiratory protection
 - 6.9. Early detection of skin complaints
 - 6.10. First aid



The brochure contains photos and illustrations and has been freely distributed.

A leaflet entitled 'Handle epoxy resins with care — Information for construction workers' is aimed at those actually using epoxies and includes the following headings:

- Leader, introducing the case
- How do I recognise the dangers of epoxy resins?
- What are the health risks associated with epoxy resins?
- When does the exposure happen?
- Consequences of exposure to epoxy resins
- How do I take preventive measures?
- First aid
- Where to get more information

The leaflet is available in Danish, Dutch, English and German.

Various training materials were developed according to national requirements, as well as a CD-ROM with a collection of photos, good and bad practices and helpful tools.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website for more information:
www.ivam.uva.nl

United Kingdom

Creating a safety culture at live music events

Live music events are not the first places you associate with attention to safety procedures. It became clear during the research for this project that there was a need for some kind of practical tool for assessing and minimising risk, which could be used across a range of disciplines but specifically in the context of live music and related events. Many of those involved in live music felt that occupational safety and health tended to be overlooked and there had been little opportunity for them to express their own concerns on the subject. A number of music events across Europe took part in the research, leading to agreement over safe working practices and the hazards to be managed.

Who organised the project?

Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College

Who were the partner organisations?

International Live Music Conference (ILMC) Safety Focus Group (France)

International Crowd Management & Security Groups (Netherlands)

Roskilde Festival (Denmark)

Peter Kriegel Konzertagentur (Germany)

Star Hire Ltd (United Kingdom)

Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College

Type of organisation

✓ Higher education institution

Sector

✓ Live music industry

Activity

✓ Research, seminar, web creation

Output

✓ Website

Total budget: € 203 326

Agency support: € 156 825

What was it called?

Development of a generic risk-assessment and management tool for the live music event workforce

What was the project about?

The project was about helping raise awareness of the need to manage and assess the risks to people working at live music events. The team set out to assess the competencies needed to ensure that work activities could be carried out safely, effectively and efficiently, and to develop a benchmarking system. The overall aim was to create a safer environment for staff, and conditions in which a safety culture could be perpetuated.

What did they do?

In the initial stages of the project, the holders studied relevant legislation from seven countries and found that legislation on workers' safety in the live music industry was either non-existent or limited. Then a questionnaire was distributed to individuals, companies and associations across Europe. Responses from 13 countries provided an extremely useful source of accident data and examples of good and bad practice.

A one-day seminar was held in London under the umbrella of the 16th International Live Music Conference and was attended by 59 people from 28 different European countries. Much of the time was spent networking and identifying differing work activities and responsibilities across Europe, types of employment and the safety issues. A further outcome of the seminar was the setting up of a web conferencing page on the college's website. This was a useful tool for making comments and could be accessed on INFX.co.uk. A delegate pack and an evaluation sheet were produced.

A series of articles was placed on the International Live Music Conference (ILMC) website and the project also received coverage in a number of high profile magazines within the industry.

A pilot study was carried out at live music events across Europe. These included the Exit festival (Serbia), Roskilde festival (Denmark), Rheinkultur festival (Germany), T in the Park festival (Scotland), a concert in Bourgas (Bulgaria), a David Bisbal concert in Barcelona (Spain), a series of concerts at Marlay Park in Ireland, and the Plein les Sens festival in Languedoc-Roussillon (France).

Those interviewed for the pilot included promoters, fork-lift truck drivers, communications people, those working with children, lighting technicians, stewarding personnel, information service providers and sound engineers.

What was produced?

The website (www.safety-rocks.org) contains the results of the project and is aimed at sharing health, safety and welfare knowledge, experience and practices throughout the European live music event sector. The site has two types of content: examples and resources. The examples will be presented to the user in the form of a template tool allowing them to be guided through the process of identifying the specific risks to workers at live music events.

The site is initially available in four languages (English, French, German and Spanish), but nothing in the design prevents this from being expanded at a later date.

Access to the main resource part of the website is unrestricted, but access to the template tool (and data-entering parts of the resource) requires a user to log on. This is primarily aimed at allowing a user to save and later retrieve data on the site.

The safety-policy template enables employers to create a document that contains a clear statement of responsibilities. It describes what the employers have deemed to be the basic requirements for health, safety and welfare, including emergency planning, lines and methods of communication, and welfare concerns such as drinking water, toilets and first aid. The tool will ask a sequence of questions and come up with text that the user can edit and customise. The team compiled a database of hazards, the risks they present and suggested solutions.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website: www.safety-rocks.org

26 National projects

AUSTRIA (ÖSTERREICH)

- Caring for carers: occupational health for staff in old people's homes (Lasata Betreuungs- und Pflegeheim GmbH)
- Mental health and motivation in small enterprises (Arbeitsmedizinischer Dienst Salzburg)

BELGIUM (BELGIQUE/BELGIË)

- Practical training in managing risks on small construction sites (CNAC-NAVb)

DENMARK (DANMARK)

- Direct counselling to screen out risks in SMEs (BST job+miljø a/s)
- Linking productivity and risk assessment in the metal industry (Dansk Industri (DI))

FINLAND (SUOMI)

- Reducing the rate of accidents to temporary labour (If P & C Insurance Company Limited)
- Towards a safety culture in small enterprises (PrizzTech Ltd)

FRANCE

- Safety training for hotel and restaurant managers (Union des métiers et des industries de l'hôtellerie)
- Safety training for SMEs in the Seine and Marne region (MEDEF (Mouvement des entreprises de France), Seine et Marne)
- Taking the hazards out of dry-cleaning (ACMS (Association des centres médicaux et sociaux de la Région Île-de-France))

GERMANY (DEUTSCHLAND)

- Alternatives to personal safety equipment in the roofing industry (ErgoTOP — Institut für Arbeitswissenschaft und Unternehmensoptimierung GmbH)
- Controlling dangerous substances: building a support network for SMEs (Landesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz Nordrhein-Westfalen (LArA) (State Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of North Rhine-Westphalia))
- From prevention to rehabilitation — a healthcare centre for SMEs (Phoenix Contact GmbH & Co. KG)

GREECE (ΕΛΛΑΔΑ/HELLÁDA)

- A training package for safety engineers in Greek SMEs (Hellenic Institute for Occupational Safety and Health)

IRELAND

- Safety in manual handling for migrant and seasonal workers (Windmill Lane Corporate Communications)

ITALY (ITALIA)

- Spotting the hazards in routine cleaning (Associazione cittadini per l'ambiente (ACPA))
- Tackling accident rates and the disability issue in agriculture (Agriform (Organismo Bilaterale Nazionale per la Formazione Professionale in Agricoltura))

PORTUGAL

- Online occupational health for Portuguese dental professionals (Universidade de Coimbra — Faculdade de Medicina)
- Online safety promotion in construction and power SMEs (ISQ — Instituto de Soldadura e Qualidade)

SPAIN (ESPAÑA)

- Handling chemicals safely in the wooden furniture industry (Consorcio Escuela de la Madera de la Junta de Andalucía)
- Occupational risks for women in metal industries (Federación Empresarial Metalúrgica Valenciana)
- Safety training for immigrant workers (Fremap (Mutua de Accidentes de Trabajo y Enfermedades Profesionales))

SWEDEN (SVERIGE)

- Preventing injuries in Swedish wood products SMEs (Arbio AB/TMF (Trä- och möbelindustriförbundet och Skogs- och träfacket))

THE NETHERLANDS (NEDERLAND)

- Risk prevention for small business insurance (Verbond van Verzekeraars)

UNITED KINGDOM

- Promoting safe practices in printing and retail (Stow College)
- Red Angels — a mentoring scheme for small firms (Business Link Kent)

Austria (Österreich)

Caring for carers: occupational health for staff in old people's homes

Employees in old people's homes frequently suffer from physical and psychosocial problems such as back complaints, stress, bullying and burnout. Small enterprises seldom have the staff or time to deal with them effectively through proper health promotion measures. Yet it is vital for the commitment and motivation of staff, and will ultimately have a positive impact on the welfare and quality of life of the residents; it will even help cut costs. This project's aims were to increase job satisfaction and reduce sick leave and turnover of staff in old people's and care homes in the Austrian region of Styria. The team created a catalogue of quality assurance standards that took account of what is practical in small enterprises. Care providers (currently 174 in Styria) and employees played an important role in providing expertise and feedback on the project.

Who organised the project?

Lasata Betreuungs- und Pflegeheim GmbH

What was it called?

Health promotion in care for the elderly, focusing on quality management

What was the project about?

The project was about raising awareness of the importance of good working conditions for employees in old people's homes, and of occupational risks such as back problems, stress, bullying and burnout. It aimed to show that healthy working conditions could reduce the number of staff on sick leave and staff turnover at the same time as increasing staff satisfaction and motivation. As people live longer and demand for residential care increases, this would at the same time have a beneficial effect on quality of life for residents of old people's homes. It looked for heavily practice-oriented methods in order to compensate for the homes' lack of resources in terms of staff, funding and time.

What did they do?

The holders extended the project's reach beyond the Lasata Alzheimer Centre to other facilities for caring for old people, in order to develop a common standard of good practice without the need for stringent legal provisions. The project's intentions were presented to approximately 60 interested parties at an introductory event at Attendorf Town Hall. Advertisements were placed in the regional and national media during the period of the project in order to raise awareness of the subject.

Permanent advice and training was available at the Lasata welfare centre and care home during the project. Employees took part in 30 or so training events alongside their regular, highly demanding work, as well as participating in coaching and supervision, looking at questions such as: 'Who are we, where do we want to go and how do we get there?'

The project holders provided job situation analyses, without charge, to all homes across Styria. They looked at enterprises' ethos, style, organisation and forms of communication. One important aspect of their analysis was that it included a test procedure (AVEM), well tried in the care sector, which shed light on the behaviour patterns and experiences that shaped the stress levels of staff as they confronted the demands of their jobs.

The results of this analysis were presented to the participating workforce in each care facility separately. Benchmarking highlighted the opportunities for improvement as well as employees' health hazards due, for example, to burnout. Interested employees were subsequently given personal feedback on possible risks and health hazards due to working conditions, identifying opportunities for reinforcing personal resources.

Lasata Betreuungs- und Pflegeheim GmbH

Type of organisation

✓ Private company

Sector

✓ Care of the elderly

Activity

✓ Research and counselling

Outputs

✓ Brochure

✓ 'Electronic' leaflet

✓ PowerPoint presentation

✓ Study

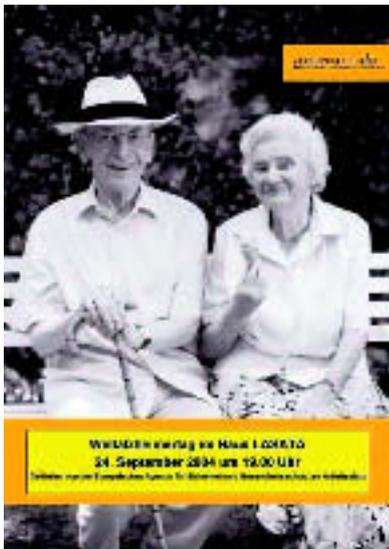
Total budget: € 69 732

Agency support: € 41 839

Analyses of employment situations confirmed the work accomplished on the one hand and identified any weak spots, with possible suggestions for improvement, on the other. These were accepted with great interest both by the operators of old people's homes and by the employees of these institutions.

What was produced?

They produced a 20-page colour brochure, with a print-run of 300, containing the practical results of the project, suggestions for action regarding quality management and employee support measures and an invitation to tackle problems of social provision together. They also wrote an 'electronic' leaflet on the project and possible risk-reducing measures, and a 9-page Power-Point presentation. They were due to bring out a comprehensive study of their findings following the project period.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Austria (Österreich)

Mental health and motivation in small enterprises

In the Austrian federal state of Salzburg 98 % of businesses have fewer than 50 employees. Those employees are commonly exposed to health risks caused by stress, heavy responsibilities and emotionally demanding relationships at work. In addition, employees tend to lack motivation as they are not sufficiently involved in their enterprises. Managers are often at risk of illness because of chronic pressure of which they are not fully aware. The aim of this project was to address these problems by persuading SMEs to involve their employees in occupational health management, by stimulating behavioural change and by encouraging managers to network and exchange experiences with other, similar small firms.

Who organised the project?

Arbeitsmedizinischer Dienst Salzburg

Who were the partner organisations?

Arbeiterkammer Salzburg

Wirtschaftskammer Salzburg

What was it called?

Health management in small enterprises

What was the project about?

The main aim of the project was to provide resources to SMEs in Salzburg to implement a health management system, bearing in mind their existing statutory obligations and particularly taking into account stressful situations. The target group were managers and, indirectly, employees of companies with 5 to 50 people in Salzburg. The training consisted of a two-day seminar covering: statutory obligations and options available to small enterprises; health management in small enterprises; consulting employees; group discussion of health issues; analysis of working conditions; recognising stress factors and making the best use of resources. It also involved a two-hour medical screening that focused in particular on a 24-hour measurement of heart-rate variability as an early warning of the consequences of stress.

What did they do?

The project-holders compiled a brochure with a code of practice for health management in the workplace that took account of the options open to small enterprises.

They held three events at which several institutions provided their perspectives on the topic. A total of 72 participants from 26 SMEs and multipliers attended. Contributors discussed:

- legal obligations relating to health and safety at work;
- free support for health and safety in the workplace and the work of safety specialists;
- health and safety management and the work of occupational doctors;
- practical issues in the workplace.

They organised eight training groups with a total of 59 participants from different companies and municipal authorities. After a preliminary medical examination and stress evaluation (using a specially designed questionnaire), a six-hour workshop was organised to discuss the health management system. Workshops covered banking, commerce, public administration (municipalities), small industrial/manufacturing enterprises, education and representative bodies.

At the request of the Chamber of Labour, they held a seminar entitled 'Health management in small enterprises' for safety officers.

Arbeitsmedizinischer Dienst Salzburg

Type of organisation

- ✓ Public institute

Sector

- ✓ General

Activity

- ✓ Training, publishing and information work

Output

- ✓ Brochure (including code of practice)
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Meetings

Total budget: € 66 616

Agency support: € 34 000

A lecture on the EU's priorities for health promotion in the workplace was followed by a workshop on how to mainstream health management in the workplace and initial steps towards implementing a health management system in the workplace.

They held a final two-hour meeting to present the project's results and discuss the formulation of support services needed in the future for small enterprises to be able to implement health and safety in the workplace as effectively as possible.

The final evaluation of the project was still in progress at its conclusion. The results, particularly the findings relating to the problems and methods of resolving them for health promotion in small enterprises, were due to be accessible on the homepage on completion.

The project was presented and advertised through sending out the information brochure to every Salzburg enterprise with between 5 and 50 employees. Media work included press releases, advertising information events on Salzburg TV and editorial contributions to the Salzburger Wirtschaft (the Economic Chamber journal). Detailed project presentation and dates for information groups were updated daily on the web (www.amd-sbg.at).

What was produced?

They produced 10 000 copies of an information brochure (32 pages), of which 6 000 had been distributed to small enterprises in Salzburg, chambers, trade federations, trade unions, social security agencies and events and information groups. It is also available at www.amd-sbg.at. It includes a code of practice for health management in the workplace, answers questions on how to implement the health management system and provides links to resources for SMEs and to relevant support partners in Salzburg.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website: www.amd-sbg.at

Belgium (Belgique/België)

Practical training in managing risks on small construction sites

Hazards in the construction sector include falls, mishandling materials, equipment and plant, being struck by falling objects and constructions, landslips, electrocution, explosions and intoxication. Accident rates are among the highest, partly due to the nature of the work and partly as a result of inadequate attention to occupational safety and health on the part of both management and employees. This project offered practical training in risk management to small and very small companies and followed the trainees back at their construction sites to assess the efficiency of the training. There was a particular focus on temporary and mobile sites.

Who organised the project?

CNAC–NAVVB

Who were the partner organisation

Social partners:

Confederatie Bouw
Bouwunie (formerly Nacebo)
ACV Bouw en Industrie
Algemene Centrale ABVV

Research and documentation:

Cerdecam
Veto & Partners

CNAC–NAVVB

Type of organisation

✓ Statutory body

Sector

✓ Construction

Activity

✓ Training

Output

✓ Manuals
✓ CD-ROMs

Total budget:

€ 183 233

Agency support:

€ 75 199

What was it called?

Practical training for OSH management on small construction sites

What was the project about?

This project was about occupational safety and health (OSH) risks in the construction sector. It set out to develop practical training tools for risk assessment on small construction sites and to test the material during a couple of pilot training sessions for trainers and for trainees.

The training was designed to be part of the assessment programmes 'Besacc' and 'VCA', used in Belgium (among other countries), and to constitute a part of the implementation of the regulations on 'coordination on temporary or mobile construction sites' (Council Directive 92/57/EEC).

What did they do?

The project-holders selected appropriate construction SMEs for pilot training sessions with a practical emphasis and focusing on the most common hazards in construction. All used facade scaffolds or mobile ladders and worked at small construction sites. The chief criterion for selecting temporary or mobile sites was that the work involved a danger of falling because of:

- scaffolds or ladders,
- roof works,
- working in front of vertical or horizontal openings,
- working in pits or trenches.

The training sessions were organised over five days, for a total of 30 hours, in September 2004. Seven companies took part and two CNAC–NAVVB advisors attended the training and later visited their construction sites to monitor its implementation. The participants were asked to draw up a limited plan of action and to complete monitoring tables 1, 3, 6 and 12 months after the end of the training, to allow measurement of the training's effectiveness.

What was produced?

They produced the following materials in Dutch and French:

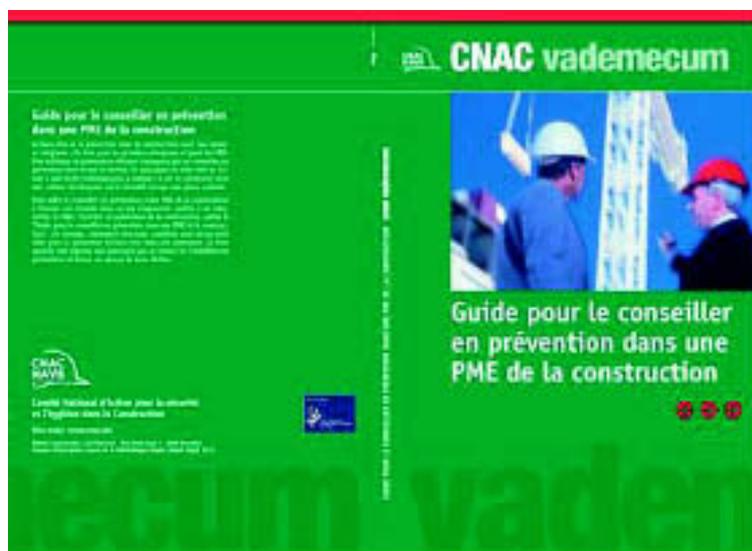
- a manual for trainees ('training guide book') consisting of five modules that include:
 - an overview of prevention and protection, including explanations of regulations, assessments, prevention policy, specific risks in a construction company, health hazards, electricity, tools and machinery, personal protection equipment and signage,
 - risk analysis,
 - working at heights — safety measures to take with ladders, various types of scaffolding, machines, roof works and excavations,
 - basic ergonomic principles for manual handling,
 - precautions for joint activities on construction sites;
- a manual for trainers ('guide book') dealing with 'practical training for OSH management on small construction sites' including: a training programme and its aims, methodology, advice on supporting slides, an evaluation form and an example of the monitoring system;
- a CD-ROM of good practices, containing the manual for trainees described above and the supporting slides for trainers, with various additional presentations and short video extracts containing practical examples;
- a CD-ROM with risk-assessment tools for construction sites, intended for trainees, including documentation on risk analysis for civil engineering and general risks, and the 'Sobane' method of risk-prevention strategy;
- a CD-ROM trainers' kit with comprehensive practical information and documentation as for the trainees (above);
- a monitoring system, including tables filled in by the trainees and evaluations by the advisors.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Denmark (Danmark)

Direct counselling to screen out risks in SMEs

There is still very little systematic risk assessment in Danish SMEs. In this project, the holders used their expertise as an occupational health service to organise online training and networking among 40 SMEs in high-risk sectors. These were invited to join a network of cooperation so that those in the same areas of business would be able to benefit from one another's experience, and to learn and work together. The project team visited and evaluated each firm and helped the management and staff organise risk assessments. Companies that did not already have safety representatives from management and from among the employees were encouraged to appoint them.

Who organised the project?

BST job+miljø a/s

Who were the partner organisations?

The Confederation of Danish Trade Unions, Vejle
 The Danish Employers' Confederation, Vejle
 The Danish Metal Workers' Union, Fredericia
 The General Workers' Union in Denmark
 Green Network
 The Business and Industry Council of the municipality of Fredericia
 The Business and Industry Council of the municipality of Kolding

What was it called?

Targeted health and safety intervention in SMEs

What was the project about?

This project was about improving safety and health conditions in 40 SMEs, each with between 10 and 15 employees, in the Danish county of Vejle, through counselling and promoting the exchange of experiences between companies. It was based on easily comprehensible and direct communication, using pictures wherever possible. Much effort went into persuading these firms to participate, as they had no tradition of seeking professional help with occupational safety and health (OSH). For technical and practical reasons the original concept of an electronic network gave way to networking through meetings between small companies

What did they do?

The project-holders sent a project brochure to 450 selected companies in several activity sectors — 11 trades singled out by the Priority Council of the Danish Working Environment. These were chosen as having the highest risks in four main areas: accidents, heavy lifting, one-sided repeated work and occupational psychology. They took out advertisements in local papers to promote the project (four companies took part as a result of the press campaign) and contacted businesses by phone when necessary.

Three network meetings were held with a total of 51 people from the participating companies; this led to further communication between them, directly and by e-mail. A total of 40 companies with 10 to 15 employees took part in the project: 10 were metal manufacturers; five were from the stone, clay and glass industries; four were master builders; four were master carpenters; three were timber manufacturers; two were in the lacquer industry, two were in the plastics industry and two were sales companies.

A team of OSH consultants visited the companies, sometimes on the same day as the matter was discussed at company level, and analysed their health and safety status, in order to provide recommendations later on how the working environment could be improved.

BST job+miljø a/s

Type of organisation

✓ Public body

Sector

✓ General

Activity

✓ Direct counselling

Output

✓ Brochure

✓ Recommendations and reports

Total budget: € 91 265

Agency support: € 54 293

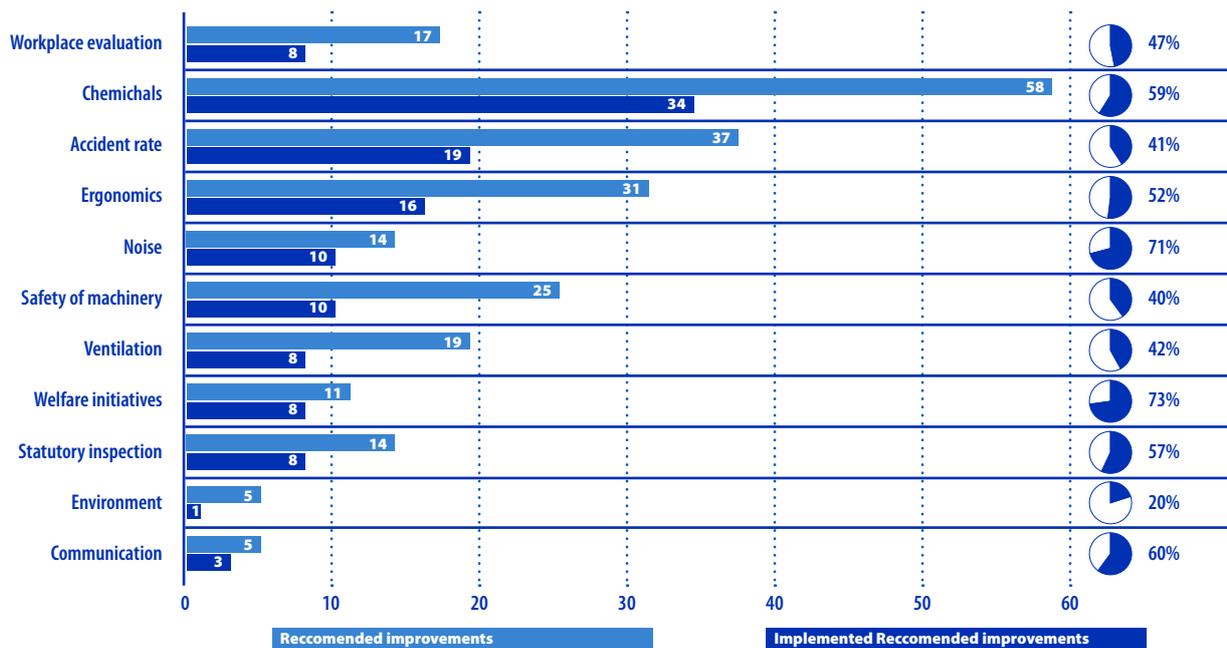
A total of 236 recommendations for improvement were handed over to the companies involved. Most of these concerned accident rates, the impact of chemicals and noise, machine safety and ergonomics. During the project period, 125 of these recommendations had already been implemented and most companies had expressed their intent to implement the remaining recommendations at a later date. Some companies had not been able spare the resources to have all recommendations implemented during the project period.

On completion of the project they published a report in Danish and carried out an evaluation of company satisfaction. In general, the companies were happy to have taken part in the project (the average level of satisfaction was 6.5 out of 8) and 88 % of them confirmed that changes had been made on the basis of the counselling given to them.

What was produced?

They produced a brochure on the project and the methodology to be put into practice, a 32-page project report available free at www.job-miljo.dk, and a CD-ROM that includes the report in Danish.

The following graph illustrates the implementation of recommendations during the project period:



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website: www.job-miljo.dk

Denmark (Danmark)

Linking productivity and risk assessment in the metal industry

The management of SMEs is often bogged down in the planning of day-to-day production and solving problems in an ad hoc way. This is certainly the case with problems relating to occupational safety and health (OSH). This project set out to challenge the general view in SMEs that ensuring OSH is an additional and peripheral activity, and to increase the incentive for management to plan and implement both short- and long-term improvements in OSH. The project-holders took production as the starting point for implementing improvements in health and safety alongside improvements in productivity and quality. They developed a tool for conducting risk assessments that incorporated OSH into business planning. A flow analysis enables managers to identify positive and negative factors at each stage of production and to assess their impact on production as a whole.

Who organised the project?

Dansk Industri (DI)

Who were the partner organisations?

Ledernes Hoved organisation

Danks metal

What was it called?

Occupational health and safety — productivity and quality: training in workplace assessments with inclusion of higher productivity/quality along with improvements in occupational health and safety and implementation strategies

What was the project about?

The project was about providing enterprises with simple tools for improving simultaneously occupational safety and health, and productivity and quality, specifically in SMEs in the iron and steel sector. It was targeted at the metal industries, but the ideas behind it were transferable to other sectors.

The method was designed to give a broad picture of the situation in enterprises, uncovering occupational safety and health (OSH) problems and waste as well as factors that might generate added value for the enterprise. It countered the widespread notion of a conflict between OSH and productivity.

More specifically it addressed the following risks:

- work-related accidents and their prevention, focusing on internal transport, handling materials, falls, stationary plants and surface treatment;
- chemical agents and substances, focusing on welding, grinding, cooling lubricants, painting and galvanic processes;
- lifting and working positions, focusing on internal transport, machining, assembly and packing;
- noise, focusing on handling, transport, machining, sandblasting and cleaning;
- psychological aspects of the working environment.

Dansk Industri (DI)

Type of organisation

- ✓ Industry confederation

Sector

- ✓ Metal industries

Activity

- ✓ Research and course planning

Output

- ✓ Teacher's manual
- ✓ Course guide
- ✓ Leaflet

Total budget: € 189 335

Agency support: € 80 000

What did they do?

They developed a course in cooperation with the Confederation of Danish Industries. A case study tested the course in a company of the type at which the project was targeted. It also obtained a realistic case history for use in teaching. They visited Olsen Metaltrykkeri A/S, a metal handicraft business with about 20 employees. The specific outcome of the visit was the preparation of a production flow chart with key figures for the various steps — an example of what course teams would be asked to make for their own products.

They decided that the course should involve representatives from a small number of companies, typically five, and should be spread over three days.

On Day 1 a product relevant to the company is selected and a product flow is drawn up with all steps including warehousing and transport. On Day 2 the teams are asked to analyse each individual step in the production flow. On Day 3 the teams must also, by preparing an adequate basis for decision-making, consider where improvements may best be introduced. An action plan must be drawn up for the proposals adopted. Finally, the teams prepare a strategy for continuing the work on improving productivity, quality and the working environment in the future.

What was produced?

The main output included a teacher's manual with a three-day course including the following items:

- a programme and kit list for each day,
- a description of each step in the course,
- team exercises,
- a slide show (included on a CD-ROM),
- a course guide with comprehensive explanations of the method and the tools introduced in the course.

The course guide was given to each participant at the start of the course in addition to the materials handed out during the course. It acts as a learning aid during the course and a memory aid to be used when participants return to work.

A brief leaflet was prepared as an introduction to the method and the course. It was primarily aimed at potentially interested companies. It was decided at an early stage that responsibility for holding courses should be given to the Confederation of Danish Industries. Seven courses were due to be offered during winter 2004/05. After that, it would be included in their permanent course programme.

The project-holders expected to achieve publicity in industry magazines.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Finland (Suomi)

Reducing the rate of accidents to temporary labour

The increasing use of temporary workers in many businesses in Finland is causing a high rate of accidents and other occupational health and safety problems. This is especially the case among workers hired out through temporary agencies for industrial jobs, notably in the construction industry.

There has been no research in this particular field and no publication of good practices, so this project set out to research and map the main safety problems from the point of view of both the firms that hire out labour and those that hire it in. This was followed by compilation of good practices and training (focusing on small enterprises). The object of the training was to increase understanding of the special problems that arise from using hired labour and to develop practical solutions to their management.

Who organised the project?

If P & C Insurance Company Limited

Who were the partner organisations?

Suomen Varamiespalvelu Oy

Rakennusliike Hartela Oy

Katepal Oy

Nestlé Lastenruuat Oy

What was it called?

Fewer accidents when using hired labour

What was the project about?

The project was about reducing the risk of occupational accidents to temporary labour — a group that suffers from a high occupational accident rate and insufficient knowledge of the occupational risks and responsibilities. The aim of the project was to map the central problem areas in businesses that hire out and use temporary labour. The project develops a set of practical tools (good practices) to help enterprises deal with temporary workers.

What did they do?

The project-holders set out to reduce risks to the occupational safety of temporary labour through the following phases:

- mapping the central problem areas:
 - contracts,
 - safety instructions,
 - education and training,
 - orientation of new workers,
 - cooperation between temporary agencies and hirers;
- enhancing the safety knowledge of both temporary and permanent employees;
- developing contract models;
- enhancing knowledge of the special problems relating to temporary labour and of how to minimise these problems, based on the results of the mapping:
 - by arranging an open seminar on the results of the project,
 - through information in the form of newsletters, magazines and e-information.

If P & C Insurance Company Limited

Type of organisation

- ✓ Private company

Sector

- ✓ General

Activity

- ✓ Research

Output

- ✓ Seminars
- ✓ Web pages
- ✓ Printed information

Total budget: € 62 603

Agency support: € 37 562

Mapping was done using questionnaires, interviews and reviewing the existing documentation on hired labour, permanent labour, occupational safety organisation and management at different levels of an enterprise.

Mapping of the problems has shown up the following development areas:

- deficiencies in contracts,
- lack of information about work tasks and the competence of applicants,
- unclear occupational safety responsibilities,
- shortcomings in familiarisation with the work and work environment,
- deficient arrangements for an occupational health service.

The suggestions for good practice were based on occupational safety and health regulations, a literature review, suggestions from the project participants (discussions about the problems found and ideas for improvements) and interviews with experts in occupational safety and health. An evaluation of the suggestions for good practice was carried out as a questionnaire study.

What was produced?

A number of conclusions emerged from the mapping and were grouped in the three problem areas, consisting of problems (i) between temporary agencies and hirers, (ii) between temporary agencies and temporary workers, and (iii) between hirers and temporary workers.

These can be found on the web pages they produced in English and Finnish at www.if.fi (which include the objectives, results and good practices). They made available abstracts and PowerPoint presentations from the Nordic Ergonomics Society (NES) conference in Kolding in August 2004, and from the Workingsafety.net conference in Dresden in September.

They presented the project to the media (15 journalists) in September in Helsinki. In the same month, 70 participants from both the hiring companies and temporary agencies attended a seminar on the project in Olen. An article was published in the Safety Science Monitor magazine.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Website: www.if.fi > Yritysiasiakkaat > Riskienhallinta > Työvoiman vuokraus

Finland (Suomi)

Towards a safety culture in small enterprises

The number of occupational accidents is growing in shared workplaces such as construction sites where different subcontractors occupy the same territory at the same time. One problem is uncertainty about where responsibility lies. Another is the absence of ground rules for cooperation between small enterprises. In the absence of any culture of occupational safety and health (OSH), attitudes toward safety tend to be nonchalant, and awareness of risks minimal. Safety is frequently regarded as an extra cost that disrupts normal work, and training for employees is irregular at best. This project sets out to bring safety culture to SMEs by working through their major clients and addressing new statutory OSH requirements.

Who organised the project?

PrizzTech Ltd

Who were the partner organisations?

Porin Tekniikkaopisto (The Technical Institute of Pori), Finland

Fennia Mutual Insurance Company, Finland

What was it called?

Occupational safety as a part of successful business environment

What was the project about?

Most of the SMEs targeted were working on shared sites as subcontractors, and the quickest and easiest way to make contact with them was by cooperating with their (larger) client companies. So the project-holders opened discussions with these so-called 'engine companies'. When the impetus came from the client company, the subcontractor was much more motivated to make a commitment to the project.

The SMEs (from the Satakunta region of Finland's west coast) were for the most part engaged in: the metal industry; the building trade; industrial maintenance and repair services; heating, plumbing, air conditioning and electricity; logistics, transportation and shipping; earth work; the rubber and plastics industry; and energy.

What did they do?

The project started with a seminar in November 2003 for occupational safety managers from the large client companies, to brief them on the project and to start to influence their subcontractors' networks. Soon afterwards a 'road show' visited six client companies for meetings with their occupational safety management: to give them more information, to commit their network to the project and to select subcontractors. Preliminary surveys were carried out in 10 enterprises to map the state of occupational safety and health at each one, and to identify their training and consulting needs.

They ran a series of 14 training courses for a total of 256 employees from the clients and the subcontracted companies. A presentation dealt with occupational safety and health, and with information about the project.

They also returned to seven companies to do a survey using the Elmeri method. This is a system of occupational safety and health (OSH) 'measurement' covering all the significant aspects of the physical work environment and safety behaviour. Observations are focused on seven categories (safety behaviour, order and tidiness, machine safety, industrial hygiene, ergonomics, walkways, and first aid and fire safety). Each item within these categories is assessed to be either correct or incorrect. A safety index is calculated as the 'correct' percentage of all the items observed.

PrizzTech Ltd

Type of organisation

✓ Private company

Sector

✓ Construction (and industrial)

Activity

✓ Training

Output

✓ Seminars

✓ Courses

✓ Surveys

✓ Website

Total budget: € 69 330

Agency support: € 41 598

The observers made an interesting finding: the first impression made at the company correlated with the index — for example when the yard of the company was tidy, the score was high.

It was clear from the start that the most important and current topic for training courses was the occupational safety card, required by law by the beginning of 2005. The card indicates that its holder has completed the national occupational safety training programme. To get the card, every employee must attend a one-day training course and pass a written exam. Occupational safety cards are valid for five years. The training is a basic package of the essential issues dealing with occupational safety. At the end of the project, evaluations were carried out in the participating enterprises.



What was produced?

They held four seminars for the business networks, 14 training courses for 256 trainees and wrote surveys of the state of OSH at the SMEs they visited. Preliminary surveys (through questionnaires) took place in 10 enterprises. Seven were surveyed by the Elmeri method. The project-holders produced training for the occupational safety card, and developed and tested a model to improve safety and health in SMEs working on shared sites.

A project website (www.prizz.fi/tyoturva) describes its aims, content, financing, the training programme, the partners, and the target groups.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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France

Safety training for hotel and restaurant managers

The restaurant and café/restaurant business in France has a 'frequency index' for notifiable accidents of 63 per 1 000 workers. This figure is significantly higher than the national average for all sectors, for which the frequency index is 46 (reference year: 1998). More than half the accidents in this sector are caused by falling or slipping and by manual handling. This project set out to provide training that could begin to save some of the EUR 34 million that such accidents cost the industry annually. The sector covered by the project is the hotel and catering industry, which represents hotels, restaurants, cafés and discotheques, 93 % of which employ fewer than 10 people.

Who organised the project?

Union des métiers et des industries de l'hôtellerie

Who was the partner organisation?

Caisse nationale d'assurance maladie (CNAM)

What was it called?

Training in occupational risks for managers in the hotel industry

What was the project about?

This project was about occupational safety and health training for professionals in the hotel and restaurant industry with a view to improving their knowledge and understanding of the risks to which workers in the industry are exposed. The aim was to focus the training on understanding risk assessment and putting preventive measures into practice. Particular attention was to be given to practical training on how to fill in the *document unique* established by recent national legislation.

The project's target was in several respects especially difficult to reach. First of all, the catering industry is highly pressurised and finds it difficult to release key staff for training, especially during the 'high season' (summer) and to a lesser extent spring and autumn. Secondly, they were trying to reach those very small enterprises (with fewer than five staff), at the heart of the agency's SME funding scheme, where it is much harder for staff to cover for one another during training. For this reason the holders planned further training during the winter season, after the end of the project period.

What did they do?

They distributed to all trainees a booklet on the prevention of occupational hazards in the restaurant business, which had already been produced by the project partners, CNAM, in collaboration with the Institut national de recherche et de santé (INRS — National Institute of Research and Safety). They also distributed a video made by CNAM Aquitaine and the Union des Métiers et des Industries de l'Hotellerie (UMIH) of the Dordogne on occupational risk prevention and ergonomics. This video showed examples of steps taken by hotel and restaurant professionals to minimise risks in their establishments.

They planned and publicised training sessions and recruited trainers. During the project period they ran eight sessions for 96 people. They put on their website a leaflet on the training session and an article following the first session. Another article was published in October's edition of 'The Hotel Industry'.

What was produced?

They produced 7 000 copies of a leaflet (A4, in colour) on the training sessions and included a registration form; this is also available on the Internet (www.umih.fr). These summarised the regulations on risk prevention in SMEs and the training available. They were sent out to the union offices of each département and further distributed from there.

Union des métiers et des industries de l'hôtellerie

Type of organisation

✓ Trade union

Sector

✓ Hotel and catering

Activity

✓ Training

Output

✓ Leaflet

✓ Training materials

Total budget:

€ 42 271

Agency support:

€ 23 071

A 46-page file was given to all the trainees, consisting of: an introduction and summary; regulations; how to produce a risk evaluation; examples and advice; the document unique for each trainee's company; and useful contacts. A 35-slide PowerPoint presentation was given to the trainers.

They arranged eight training sessions for a total of 96 participants.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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France

Safety training for SMEs in the Seine and Marne region

The employers' federation, MEDEF, recognises that the neglect of occupational safety and health in small businesses is short-sighted and costly not just in human and social terms, but also in economic terms. It set out to support small businesses in the Seine and Marne region of France in their efforts to minimise risks and improve working conditions, and ultimately to improve the health, safety and morale of employees and reduce the economic costs incurred by health-related problems.

Who organised the project?

MEDEF (Mouvement des entreprises de France), Seine-et-Marne

What was it called?

Prevention approach and reduction of occupational risk in SMEs of the Seine & Marne region

What was the project about?

This project was about promoting occupational safety and health (OSH) among members of the employers' federation, MEDEF, in the Seine and Marne region, especially SMEs in industrial sectors. The aim was to set up training in OSH planning in three stages over a four-month period, during which the firms taking part would be helped to plan and implement preventive strategies in their workplaces. Originally they had hoped to cover each of the 12 local MEDEF districts in cooperation with the regional health authority, CRAM, and employers and unions.

For various reasons the project-holders had to reduce the number of training sessions on occupational safety and health. They stressed the importance of a good working environment for economic and business reasons as well as legal ones. Speakers were from MEDEF (the employers organisation), Cramif (the statutory insurance organisation) and from the field of occupational medicine.

What did they do?

They devised sessions to train 10 to 15 people on the premises of CRAM Île-de-France covering:

- defining prevention and prevention-related issues;
- the stages of occupational risk prevention;
- methods of risk assessment;
- strategies for preventive action.

Training was to be both collective (exchange and group work) and individual (personal on-the-job support) and would be undertaken in three stages:

- a half-day interview with the head of the company and the director of training (roughly one month before the second stage);
- two consecutive training days at CRAM Île-de-France;
- the final half day.

Course materials would be sent to each participant in the form of a file.

They publicised each session among MEDEF affiliates and beyond, and organised direct mailing of some 3 000 company directors. The project was covered in several issues of the MEDEF newsletter.

MEDEF (Mouvement des entreprises de France), Seine-et-Marne

Type of organisation

- ✓ Business association

Sector

- ✓ General

Activity

- ✓ Training

Output

- ✓ Training materials

Total budget: € 9 287

Agency support: € 5 572

What was produced?

They ran two information/training sessions of half a day each: the first was in March in la Rochelle with 17 participants (business owners); the second was in June in Bussy Saint Georges with 41 participants. Each training session focused on the three themes listed below.

- Safety, hygiene and good health in the workplace are not only legal obligations, they are also economic necessities for a successful business.
- Risk prevention ought to be a constant concern of the top man in any business.
- In the battle against accidents at work and occupational diseases, employees should understand the importance of training and being fully aware of the reasons for and the practicalities of risk prevention.

The first part stressed the importance for an enterprise of carrying out its occupational safety and health obligations and the legal consequences of failing to do this; but it also pointed out the economic and business reasons for doing so, in terms of cohesion, motivation of staff and the image of the business both internally and to the outside world.

The second part outlined the roles of those involved in occupational safety and health, such as staff representatives, occupational doctors, works and statutory insurance (CRAM) inspectors and those internally responsible for safety in a business.

The third part concentrated on aspects of training and its importance.

These training sessions were publicised at routine branch meetings of MEDEF, Seine-et-Marne, and in its publications.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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France

Taking the hazards out of dry-cleaning

Those who work in dry-cleaning are subject to a number of occupational safety and health risks, including exposure to chemicals, musculoskeletal diseases, and posture-related and heat-related hazards. The aim of this project was to provide the industry with guidance, training and good practices in occupational safety and health (OSH), in order to minimise the risks inherent in cleaning work. This was done with the cooperation and involvement of union branch representatives and was targeted at managers, employers, employees, doctors in occupational medicine and engineers.

Who organised the project?

ACMS (Association des centres médicaux et sociaux de la Région Île-de-France)

Who were the partner organisations?

Caisse régionale d'assurance maladie d'Île de France (Cramif)

Conseil français de l'entretien des textiles (CFET)

Assurance maladie des professions indépendantes (AMPI)

Ministère de l'éducation nationale

Institut national de recherche et de sécurité (INRS)

What was it called?

Partnership for the promotion of safety and health in dry-cleaning activities

What was the project about?

This project was about promoting health and safety in dry-cleaning activities.

The holder published information and guidance manuals for the dry-cleaning sector, notably in the area of hazardous chemicals, musculoskeletal diseases and heat-related risks. These products were developed in close cooperation with union branch representatives and are aimed at employers and employees concerned with health and safety. The project set out to promote a guide put together by a multi-disciplinary group involved broadly in occupational safety and health (OSH).

What did they do?

They conducted three one-day training sessions for groups of 20 to 30 doctors working in occupational medicine. They also ran two 'medical days' for members of the Association des centres médicaux et sociaux de la Région Île-de-France – ACMS, making general presentations of their 'Guide to Good Practices' to two groups of 180 doctors and detailed presentations in small groups of 15 doctors.

Through the regional health insurance body, CRAMIF, they gave a presentation to doctors in occupational medicine on a practical case in a laundry illustrating the topic of the day: pregnancy and professional life (150 participants at the Institut interuniversitaire de médecine du travail in Paris).

They gave a presentation on laundry and dry-cleaning to some 30 occupational doctors of the 'Société de médecine du travail du nord et de l'Est parisien'. They trained trainers in the laundry and dry-cleaning sector. They distributed 8 000 guides to firms nationwide, and 3 000 at the National Congress of Occupational Safety and Health in Bordeaux, where they also gave a presentation.

ACMS (Association des Centres Médicaux et Sociaux de la Région Île-de-France)

Type of organisation

✓ Occupational medicine services

Sector

✓ Dry-cleaning

Activity

✓ Training, publishing and advising

Outputs

✓ Guides

✓ Leaflets

✓ CD-ROM

Total budget: € 57,172

Agency support: € 34,303

At government level they contributed to the work of the education ministry's commission on the renewal of official training and examinations.

They also published a number of articles in specialist journals and reviews on risk prevention in the sector. These were aimed variously at occupational safety and health specialists, employers and human resources managers. They included articles in:

- *Prévenir les risques professionnels* on risk prevention in laundries and dry-cleaners (60 000 copies sent to companies with more than 10 employees in Ile de France);
- *Travail et sécurité* with information on the project (60 000 copies sent to enterprises with more than 50 employees and to subscribers);
- *Revue du MEDEF Ile de France*;
- *Revue des directeurs des ressources humaines*;
- *Revue professionnelle pressing*



What was produced?

Their main product was a 40-page guide for professionals to health and safety risks and preventive measures, including a checklist for preliminary risk assessment. The guide was distributed to 8 000 enterprises in the dry-cleaning sector and covered the following areas:

- the profession
- sources of information on hazards relative to products
- perchlorethylene or tetrachloroethylene
- stain removal and pre-brushing
- dry-cleaning machines: general points
- dry-cleaning machines using perchlorethylene
- manual handling
- ironing
- role of the occupational physician
- legislation
- main compulsory texts: hygiene and safety – employment regulations
- the environment (Standard Order 2345, May 2002)
- design of laundry and dry-cleaning premises – main rules.



A leaflet (25 000 copies) was distributed first to employers and then by occupational physicians to employees at their annual medical examinations. It introduces the main chemical risks, clinical signs, carcinogenic and 'reprotoxic' classifications, and their different stages and means of prevention. On the reverse there is information on diseases linked to movements and postures, and their prevention.

A CD-ROM contains the guide and the leaflet in an electronic format, together with a video aimed at young people. Free training and information aids were produced in French and in English for various target groups. All the products are available on the Cramif website (www.cramif.fr) and the CFET website (www.cfet.fr).

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Germany (Deutschland)

Alternatives to personal safety equipment in the roofing industry

The point of personal safety equipment (PSE) is to minimise risks to safety and health in the workplace. However, it can often limit the user's freedom of movement and field of vision. As a result, employee safety in the workplace can actually be reduced. Or the equipment is simply ignored. This undermines the point of personal safety equipment and illustrates the importance of improving it so that it minimises inconvenience while maximising safety. The correct choice of work materials can in some circumstances reduce or eliminate the need for personal safety equipment. European occupational health and safety guidelines and German industrial safety law require that dangers be tackled at source and that individual protection such as personal safety equipment be considered in a subsequent step. The project-holders chose the roofing business in which to run a pilot scheme on this issue.

Who organised the project?

ErgoTOP — Institut für Arbeitswissenschaft und Unternehmensoptimierung GmbH

Who were the partner organisations?

Landesamt für Arbeitsschutz, Gesundheitsschutz und technische Sicherheit Berlin (LAGetSi)

Ministerium für Gesundheit, Soziales und Verbraucherschutz Schleswig-Holstein

Fachhochschule Kiel

What was it called?

Less is more — substitution of personal protection equipment

What was the project about?

This project was about the appropriate choice of work materials and how they can sometimes make the use of personal safety equipment redundant, reducing risks and increasing cost-effectiveness. It analysed and evaluated 20 building sites where roofing work was taking place. Hazards and preventive measures were documented. Best examples of practical work were photographed. Some 60 employees and employers were shown site hazards and counter-measures. The target groups were roofing firms and their employees, manufacturers of work materials, State and insurance agency investigators, safety engineers, entrepreneurs and interested workers.

What did they do?

The project started with an analysis of available roofing equipment with particular attention to the 'roof cutter'. Its function is to cut the roof coating into small strips, possibly releasing 'polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons' (PAHs).

PAH handling is a central issue in the assessment of health and safety risks for construction workers modifying, restoring or demolishing buildings. They have to wear personal safety equipment such as breathing protection.

The project-holders set out to have the roof cutter modified by one of the two makers and distributors, AWA GmbH. It was originally designed with spars to pull the cutter over the roof, but in such a way as to put the pulling hand in an awkward position that could cause long-term injury. This was eased by the installation of a handrail.

ErgoTOP — Institut für Arbeitswissenschaft und Unternehmensoptimierung GmbH

Type of organisation

✓ Research Institute

Sector

✓ Construction (roofing)

Activity

✓ Technical research, information provision

Output

✓ Web pages

✓ Handbook

Total budget: € 66 025

Agency support: € 38 638

They also reduced exposure to dust by irrigating the surface of the roof shortly before cutting. This effect was intensified by the use of an industrial vacuum cleaner. The project was supported by a software supplier developing solutions for health and safety coordinators. The company sold more than 2 500 licences and was receiving more than 5 000 page hits per month.

In February, they presented the first results to 10 participants of a seminar for health and safety coordinators. In June, representatives of roofing firms, safety engineers and State and insurance agency investigators (30 altogether) took part in a demonstration entitled 'Working on a roof — professional dismantling instead of demolition'.

Finally, over 420 people took part in a conference on contact with hazardous substances in buildings, organised with the project partner, the Berlin Bureau of Occupational and Technical Health and Safety (LAGetsi), in Berlin's University of Applied Sciences. This resulted in further ideas for new technical equipment and a proposal that occupational safety and health clauses should be included in calls for tender.

What was produced?

They produced a web page (<http://www.der-sicherheitskoordinator.de/bilbao/>) and 5 000 copies of a handbook of handling materials containing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the construction industry (<http://www.berlin.de/imperia/md/content/lagetsi/80.pdf>).

This site included the project partner's publications, photos of best examples of practical work and software solutions for health and safety coordinators. The results of the workshops and the final conference are also documented on the web.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Germany (Deutschland)

Controlling dangerous substances: building a support network for SMEs

Handling, using and storing dangerous substances in the workplace make up a complex set of problems that even specialists are not always able to solve satisfactorily. Experience has shown that SMEs, especially the smaller ones, tend to lack the skills and knowledge needed to deal with dangerous substances safely. Often they simply do not have access to enough information and guidance on how to deal with them at a practical level. This is the starting point for a project that set out to build up a 'Getting to grips with dangerous substances' network to help SMEs help themselves. The most important elements of a dangerous substances management policy include recognising them, assessing the risks, testing substitute materials, and drawing up lists of them together with operational instructions for employees in order to minimise risks.

Who organised the project?

Landesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz Nordrhein-Westfalen (LArA)
(State Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of North Rhine-Westphalia)

Who were the partner organisations?

ASER — Institute for Occupational Medicine, Safety and Ergonomics, Wuppertal

UZH — Düsseldorf Chamber of Small Industries and Skilled Trades, Düsseldorf

TBS — Technical Advisory Office of the German Trade Union Confederation, Oberhausen

Associated partners:

BAuA — Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Dortmund

StAfA — Workplace Health and Safety Offices in Aachen and Essen

BGW-BG — Institution for Statutory Accident Insurance and Prevention for the Healthcare Sector

What was it called?

SME network 'Hazardous substances under control': establishment and anchorage of pragmatic dangerous substances management in SMEs

What was the project about?

The project was about building an information and advice network for SMEs on dangerous substances, bringing together information providers and SME 'clients' in need of help with their management. The network is supported by an Internet-based communication platform. Specific networks were established for cleaners of buildings and for physicians. SMEs were encouraged to regard cooperation within the network as a strategic partnership that could be used to increase their flexibility and problem-solving abilities in the area of safety at work and to help them make efficient use of their own resources.

Landesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz Nordrhein-Westfalen (LArA) (State Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of North Rhine-Westphalia)

Type of organisation

✓ Regional government institute

Sector

✓ General

Activity

✓ Web portal design, promotion

Outputs

✓ Web portal/network

Total budget:

€ 160 716

Agency support:

€ 80 000



The primary target group, on the demand side, were small enterprises, many of them in the trade/craft sector, employers, their agents, safety specialists, company doctors and employees. The secondary target group, on the supply side, was made up of people and organisations involved in safety at work, such as State supervisory bodies, trade associations, industry-wide services and the social partners.

What did they do?

Throughout the project the holders sought to raise awareness of it among the target groups, through mailings, press releases, press conferences, a radio feature on WDR (regional public radio) and articles, including 'Hazardous substances under control' in the Deutsches Handwerksblatt (DHB), the regional newsletter of the Düsseldorf Chamber of Small Industries and Skilled Trades.



Their core activity was the creation of a hazardous substances portal and communications network. They also created and distributed 6 000 folders on working with hazardous substances to enterprises, associations, health insurances, statutory accident insurance bodies and labour inspectorates.

They attended a number of events and conferences to give presentations, and gave a workshop for doctors in Düsseldorf at the Academy for the Education and Training of Physicians in the North Rhine region.

They arranged the distribution of postcards drawing attention to the project and the website.

What was produced?

The main product was the network portal/communication platform (free access on www.gefahrstoffe-im-griff.de). It is divided into five areas of information: professions/branches; useful tools; information system on hazardous substances; KomNet online consulting; and 'About us'.

In three large cities of North Rhine-Westphalia (Essen, Duisburg and Düsseldorf), 38 000 postcards were distributed in pubs, cafes, restaurants and cultural institutions, as the targets group was primarily younger people.

An A4 'GIGA' folder publication provides information about the importance of adequate management of hazardous substances and about the solutions developed within the project. It also includes a short evaluation questionnaire for company owners on the status of their hazardous substances. This folder was created in cooperation with the non-profit 'Joint initiative for healthier work' (Gemeinschaftsinitiative Gesünder Arbeiten eV) under the title: 'Healthier working — also with hazardous substances' (Gesünder Arbeiten — auch mit Gefahrstoffen).

An interactive tool for managing hazardous substances (free on www.gefahrstoffe-im-griff.de) contains: a column-based calculator for comparing chemical substitutes; a calculator for estimating danger from asbestos; and a calculator for fire extinguishers. In addition to press and publicity materials seven presentations were made at seminars, workshops and conferences.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Germany (Deutschland)

From prevention to rehabilitation — a healthcare centre for SMEs

A private-sector health business promoted training and good health in the workplace to other companies, using the project-holder's existing health centre. These companies could access the project-holder's health, training and information courses at low cost. The project started from the premise that a private company that practices health promotion could act as a role model for other private companies, and would therefore be a good multiplier in winning them over to the cause of reducing health and safety risks. Courses run by the project-holder could convince representatives of other companies to produce health protection courses for their own employees.

Who organised the project?

Phoenix Contact GmbH & Co. KG

Who were the partner organisations?

Institut für Arbeitsmedizin (Institute for Occupational Medicine),
Detmold

Faculty of Economics, University of Paderborn

What was it called?

Safety and health promotion for SMEs with the Phoenix Contact health centre

What was the project about?

This project was about promoting good health in the workplace and training managers and owners in applying 'labour protection management systems'.

They used the fitness circuit at the holder's own health centre to focus on the cardiovascular system, orthopaedic support and stress.

A broad target range included managers and company owners, vocational schools — their teachers and students, working women, doctors as small business owners in the health industry and carers (working with long-term illnesses and the disabled), as well as healthy people.

What did they do?

They ran one-day workshops entitled 'Health and safety-conscious management', consisting of theoretical and practical components. The theory section looked at measures to promote health in the workplace. The practical session was held in the project-holder's health centre under the supervision of sports trainers and therapists, and focused on movement and cardiovascular training.

'From prevention to rehabilitation', an advanced training event, outlined their concept of health management and included reports on prevention and on rehabilitation and incremental reintegration. It concluded with a visit to the health centre.

The project-holders offered workshops/training courses for managers, with a programme identical to the one for external small and medium-sized enterprises. During the project period, 68 management personnel (from managing directors to department managers) took part in these. Additional courses were due to take place beyond the project period for a further 52 management personnel. An additional 150 management personnel (groups and workshop leaders) were due to be trained in similar workshops in early 2005.

Phoenix Contact GmbH & Co. KG

Type of organisation

✓ Private company

Sector

✓ Health

Activity

✓ Health promotion

Output

✓ Workshops

✓ Seminars

Total budget: € 98 326

Agency support: € 58 996

The opening of the health centre in April 2004 by the Minister for Employment and Economy for North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW) in the presence of the NRW President helped to promote the project, as the event was publicised by various regional newspapers, trade journals, local radio and WDR, the regional television broadcaster.

In addition: an article, 'Staying fit on the job' in the Landeszeitung Südostlippe referred to the planned seminars for external companies and the training courses for internal employees and managers; an article, 'Health is catching' in the Chamber of Commerce magazine described the health concept developed by Phoenix Contact; and a report entitled 'Leaders from Lipperland' in the newspaper Welt am Sonntag commented on HR management in relation to the newly opened health centre.

What was produced?

They ran three one-day workshops entitled 'Health and safety-conscious management', with a total of 16 participants from five companies; and a seminar ('From prevention to rehabilitation') for 25 doctors. During the project period, 68 people took part in management training (with further courses due to follow).

Promotional events included the opening of the health centre. The project was also publicised at some conferences and congresses. A flyer, 'Health is catching', was sent out to 5 000 SMEs and social partners.

A free excerpt from the presentation introducing the 'Staatsbad Pyrmont' health concept, entitled 'Taking independent control of health' was made available within the framework of the management workshop. It describes the health programme followed by the project-holders' employees.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Greece (Ελλάδα/Helláda)

A training package for safety engineers in Greek SMEs

In the absence of an easily accessible and comprehensive source of occupational safety and health information for small businesses, this project set out to fill the gap with a CD-ROM that could be used for training and for reference purposes, set at three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. It includes legal obligations, the responsibilities of businesses and of their employees, environmental factors, dangerous jobs and physical hazards. It was developed in collaboration with employers and unions and with the two best recognised occupational safety and health institutions in Greece.

Who organised the project?

Hellenic Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

Who was the partner organisation?

General Division for Occupational Conditions and Health of the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection

What was it called?

Development of training package for safety engineers in SMEs

What was the project about?

This project was about developing a comprehensive training package for safety engineers in Greek SMEs. It set out to provide them with a user-friendly tool to enable them to teach and communicate the basic occupational safety and health (OSH) topics to both employers and employees. They aimed to cover the basics of OSH and to focus on six broad areas, developed by six different working groups.

What did they do?

They spent five months collecting material on 38 different general topics, from both Greek and international sources. This included references to national and European legislation as well as good practices, safety rules and useful links. They then worked on the structure in order to achieve a coherent pattern of training material by topic. The material was assessed by all 10 members of the working groups and sent to an external specialist for editing and formatting as a CD-ROM. Further refinements were made before it was finally reproduced. It was presented in September to a conference of 500 people in Thessaloniki and included on the website of the Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety. Copies were also available at the institute's stand at the 69th International Exhibition of Thessaloniki.

What was produced?

The project's chief output was 25 000 copies of a training CD-ROM for safety engineers in small businesses in Greece. It includes four major menus (introduction, presentation of Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety, training material presentations and useful links), 10 submenus, 970 transparencies and 108 links. The training section itself contains 38 topics covering the most important aspects of occupational safety and health in SMEs and is structured at three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced.

The basic level introduces the topics and refers to national and European legislation. It includes the following modules:

- the role of the State and other occupational safety and health organisations,
- basic national legislation and European directives,
- employer's responsibility principles,
- employee's responsibility principles,
- penalties,

Hellenic Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

Type of organisation

✓ Public body

Sector

✓ General

Activity

✓ Research

Output

✓ CD-ROM

Total budget: € 134 744

Agency support: € 80 000

- duties and role of a safety engineer,
- duties and role of an occupational doctor,
- participation of employees in occupational safety and health — committees,
- security of personal data,
- occupational safety and health of expectant mothers and young employees,
- risk assessment.

The intermediate level considers environmental factors and work involving danger, and includes the following modules:

- construction specifications for workplaces,
- rest rooms and washbasins,
- first-aid rooms and pharmacies,
- signage in workplaces,
- personal protective equipment (PPE),
- fire protection,
- organising a fire-protection team,
- pathways and escape routes,
- hand tools,
- mechanical weightlifting,
- safe use of forklift trucks,
- safe weight handling,
- musculoskeletal disorders,
- electrical safety,
- welding using oxygen,
- gas under pressure,
- electrical welding,
- working at heights,
- scaffolding,
- safety rules and PPE,
- chemical substances — exposure limit values,
- occupational diseases.

The advanced level covers the main physical factors as well as financial issues and safety on construction sites. It includes the following modules:

- competitiveness in the work environment,
- financial issues for preventing danger,
- first aid,
- safety rules for dangerous chemical solvents,
- physical factors — noise,
- physical factors — lighting,
- physical factors — vibration,
- physical factors — radiation,
- physical factors — temperature and humidity,
- microclimate and ventilation,
- safety and hygiene plan — safety and hygiene file on a construction site,
- obligations of parties on a construction site,
- safety measurement book,
- construction site preparation.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Ireland

Safety in manual handling for migrant and seasonal workers

One aspect of employment that tends to be overlooked when a market is very buoyant is that of staff training, especially for employees in less-skilled jobs. In the hospitality industry, for example, staff with no experience of the sector and who do not have English as their mother tongue, do not receive the training they need in manual handling. Poor manual handling and lifting is a major source of back and other injuries in the workplace in Ireland. Although employers are under a legal obligation to provide comprehensive training in this and other relevant areas, they frequently lack the expertise or materials to do so for staff who are not fluent in English. This project sets out to provide the necessary guidance in four languages on an interactive CD-ROM.

Who organised the project?

Windmill Lane Corporate Communications

Who was the partner organisation?

The Health and Safety Authority of Ireland

What was it called?

Working wisely: a guide to manual handling in the workplace

What was the project about?

The project was about improving access to occupational safety and health (OSH) information on good practices among employees for whom seasonal working and language limitations currently create barriers to information. Its objectives were to reduce the levels of injuries to workers in Irish SMEs occurring as a result of incorrect manual handling, lifting and related activities, and to improve the standard of OSH training in SMEs.

The project-holders set out to create a safety information training resource of a high enough quality to enable the material to be used for a minimum of five years, with the capability of having further language versions added according to demand. They also wanted to make sure that it was relevant to a physically disabled audience.

What did they do?

They produced a training pack that included a CD-ROM in four languages (English, Mandarin, Romanian and Russian) and distributed it widely. It was due to be promoted on the Irish Health and Safety Authority's website and available to any group for the cost of postage and packaging only, for the remainder of 2004.

An accompanying booklet for employers was also produced, in English only, outlining the content, purpose and methodology of the programme. The project-holders sent an information pack on the initiative — containing the CD ROM, a leaflet and a questionnaire for feedback — to a number of social and trade body partners.

They sent a press release to State bodies and employment organisations to help promote awareness of the project and its availability through the Irish Health and Safety Authority. They were also due to send out a second press release to national and local radio stations to mark the official launch of the training pack.

Windmill Lane Corporate Communications

Type of organisation

✓ Private company

Sector

✓ Hotel and catering

Activity

✓ Providing training resource

Outputs

✓ Training pack (with CD-ROM)

Total budget:

€ 150 139

Agency support:

€ 80 000



What was produced?

Their main output was a series of health and safety training videos on an interactive CD-ROM, in consultation with experts from the Irish Health and Safety Authority. The authority advised on the languages they felt were key to training minority sectors in Ireland in the hospitality sector. Hence the production of the videos in English, Mandarin, Romanian and Russian.

The approach was to use engaging, humour-based drama to illustrate the principals of safe lifting and manual handling. They were written and designed to make the message easier for non-English native speakers to understand. The videos on the CD-ROM covered: problems to look for when making an assessment, including tasks, loads and the working environment; and ways of reducing the risk of injury.

The CD-ROM has additional links to the Irish Health and Safety Authority and to websites of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. The pack also contains a leaflet, in English, with information about the content of the CD-ROM, explaining the purpose of each part of the video and describing the discussions, exercises and lessons within each of the modules.



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Italy (Italia)

Spotting the hazards in routine cleaning

The cleaning sector is dominated by small and very small firms and has a poor accident rate. These firms generally pay insufficient attention to occupational safety and health (OSH) and tend to underestimate the risks to which their employees are exposed. As a result unsafe working practices are common. Most employees are women and/or immigrant workers who start work at a young age. They have little or no training and learn from experience and by imitating their older colleagues. They generally have a low level of education and are willing to work in conditions where there is almost no protection for their health and safety. So the aim of this project was to make cleaners more aware of the inherent risks in their jobs, by giving them opportunities to relate and discuss their own experiences.

Who organised the project?

Associazione cittadini per l'ambiente (ACPA)

Who were the partner organisations?

Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL)

Confederazione Italiana Sindacati dei Lavoratori (CISL)

Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL)

Confederazione Nazionale Artigianata Piccole e Medie Industrie (CNA)

What was it called?

Risk perception in the cleaning sector, with identification of good practices and active participation of workers (males and females)

What was the project about?

This project was about making employees of both sexes aware of the dangers inherent in their work and, through discussion and team work related to their direct experience, to identify the good practices that will minimise occupational risks. This involved analysing – through the direct involvement of workers in this particular sector – the 'risk perception' that they have when carrying out their daily duties.

The risks in cleaning work include slipping, falling and impact, electrocution from using machinery in wet areas or from loose connections, cuts during refuse collection, and musculoskeletal problems from moving heavy loads, poor posture and repetitive movements. Cleaners also handle a range of chemicals such as disinfectants, detergents and de-greasing agents, solvents, polishes, descaling agents and waxes.

By comparing studies from the literature, accident statistics and the information coming from those directly involved, the aim was to identify weaknesses in the link between occupational risk and workers' individual understanding. By providing opportunities for staff to recount their personal experiences, they hoped to strengthen that link and to identify good practices.

Associazione cittadini per l'ambiente (ACPA)

Type of organisation

✓ Non-profit body

Sector

✓ Cleaning

Activity

✓ Research, fieldwork, publishing

Outputs

✓ Guide
✓ CD-ROM
✓ Leaflet

Total budget:

€ 107 270

Agency support:

€ 64 362



What did they do?

They studied technical and scientific literature on risks in the cleaning sector, and analysed the types of risk and of accident that have occurred, with a view to highlighting the main causes and their consequences. They undertook a field study questioning 319 workers (127 men and 192 women) in the cleaning sector across Italy. The workers were employed in hospitals, regional health structures, schools, public and private offices, railway and tram stations, factories, and parks.

On the basis of the results they carried out an in-depth study of a selected sample of 30 workers. Interviews were based on a series of open-ended questions on risk perception and prevention, and on good practice. Communication activity followed with worker safety and union representatives in cleaning companies throughout Italy, starting from the three areas involved in the fieldwork study undertaken. The project holders also produced a good practice guide, a CD-ROM and a printed publication.

The results of the project were also publicised by the backers of the project through their websites. The 30-plus workers involved in the study and in producing and disseminating the final products also took part in a final meeting in Rome to review the project.

What was produced?

The results of the research and fieldwork were translated into content-specific and graphically striking messages represented in 32 images (double-sided) on the 16 sheets that make up the good practice guide. The guide was designed to provide practical answers to staff at work. The sheets are divided into different types of risk, each of which has a different colour:

- blue – risk of falling over
- green – risk of falling from a height
- orange – risks of electric shock
- purple – chemical risk
- yellow – biological risk
- red – injuries caused by cuts
- grey – risks connected to poor posture and repetitive movements.

They distributed (free) 1 000 copies of the guide, the sheets of which are joined together by a ring and can be hung at waist level or around the neck.

A CD-ROM brings together the results of the project and 1 000 copies have been widely distributed throughout Italy. A printed version of the contents of the CD-ROM has also been produced (100 copies distributed).



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Italy (Italia)

Tackling accident rates and the disability issue in agriculture

As in the rest of Europe, Italian agriculture has a higher accident rate than any other sector including construction (7.5 % in 2002 against 4.5 % across the service and industrial sectors). It has come down a bit in recent years, possibly due to European (and national) legislation on the subject. But arguably it could come down more with better coordination between the social partners.

The project-holders addressed the problem with the provision of information on the web and the promotion of greater co-operation between the parties involved. They worked with the seven major bodies in agriculture, which are members of Agriform: three are employers' organisations and four represent employees. They looked especially at the conditions of disabled workers, who have until now have received very little attention, despite the large numbers employed in agriculture.

Who organised the project?

Agriform (Ente bilaterale nazionale per la formazione professionale nel settore agricolo)

What was it called?

Development and dissemination of a protocol between the social partners for preventive measures and safety in the agricultural sector

What was the project about?

The project's objective was to spread good practices in agriculture and to increase awareness of risks in the sector. Working with representatives of employers and employees, they analysed the problems faced by disabled workers — problems that appear to have been largely overlooked until now.

They also established common ground between the social partners as a basis for agreeing good practice in different agricultural processes.

What did they do?

They held meetings to spread good practice at a number of venues: at the Millennial Fair of Gonzaga (Mantua), an event dedicated to the agriculture of the Padana Lowland and of particular interest to the beef sector; and at the 'Fair of the east' in Bari, a major event for the south of Italy, with a section devoted to agriculture. A meeting was devoted to the project in Cagliari and a similar meeting was organised in Rome at one of the foremost Italian agricultural firms (Maccarese SpA, owned by the Benetton Group). During the meeting there were a number of safety demonstrations of agricultural machinery and equipment. In Modena there was a national event on the theme of safety in the workplace. Around 500 people attended the events, which were covered by the press and local television services.

Two working groups dealt with the technical content of the documents: the first put together the basic protocol; the second tackled disability issues. About 80 people, mostly occupational safety and health (OSH) specialists in agricultural firms, were involved in their evaluation, in Cremona, Grosseto, Brindisi (representing different agricultural production sectors) and in Rome (specifically devoted to disability).

What was produced?

The main product was a CD-ROM (equivalent to more than 16 000 pages), of which 10 000 copies were made, with extensive links to other relevant websites. Because agriculture is such a vast field the CD-ROM is confined to four sectors, particularly important for Italian and Mediterranean agriculture. They are olive growing/production, viticulture, seed cultivation and dairy farming.

Agriform

Type of organisation

✓ Professional organisation

Sector

✓ Agriculture

Activity

✓ Information provision

Output

✓ CD-ROM

✓ Web materials

Total budget:

€ 132 758

Agency support:

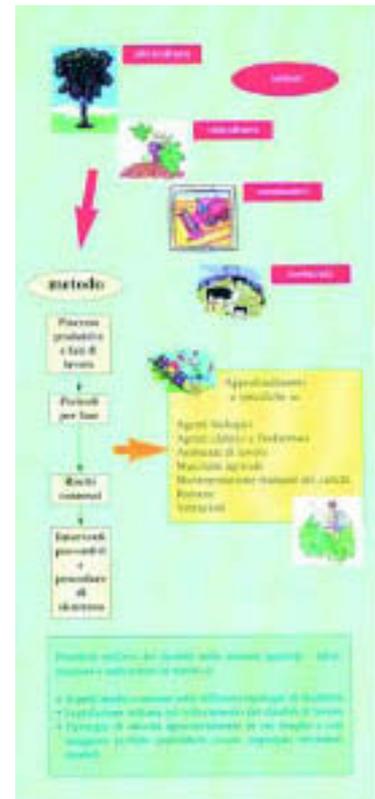
€ 73 123

Each dossier contains: a synthesis of the principal risks (for example, those relating to machinery, the immediate environment and biological agents); a list of the principal tasks (such as moving animals and mucking out) which can give rise to OSH hazards; and recommended preventive measures and safety procedures, with examples of good practice.

In addition, seven specific risk factors are analysed: the working environment, machinery and equipment, noise, vibration, chemical agents (and pesticides), biological agents and manual handling of loads. Each of these sections provides information specific to the risk factor, statistics, health implications and injuries arising, notes for employers and employees, safety procedures, check lists and improvement goals.

The most important and relevant legislation has been summarised and explained, with texts where appropriate. A separate section has been devoted to the employment of disabled workers in agricultural firms with reference to different types of disability relevant Italian legislation, and the principal risks for disabled people and the best areas for their employment.

There is also a special section on Agriform's website (www.agriform.org) devoted to the project. It contains the CD-ROM described above, a section devoted to texts on the different sectors, a section with other documents on safety at work, a section on links to other websites, and a dialogue box for questions on the subjects dealt with.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Portugal

Online occupational health for Portuguese dental professionals

The oral care industry employs a wide range of specialists, including dentists, dental hygienists, technicians and assistants. They mostly work in very small firms, are mainly female and are routinely exposed to chemical, physical and biological risks. In addition, stress factors include rising costs, competition, patient and family pressure (including physical violence), contact with infection and a sense of isolation at work. Occupational safety and health (OSH) is not a regular component in their training curriculum. This project used a website to reach busy professionals who might not take advantage of more conventional training methods to raise their awareness and understanding of OSH.

Who organised the project?

Universidade de Coimbra — Faculdade de Medicina

Who was the partner organisation?

Ordem dos Médicos Dentistas

What was it called?

Health and safety for dental professionals — a website

What was the project about?

The project targeted occupational safety and health in Portuguese dentistry, where OSH risks are often underestimated or little understood and where most of the staff are women working in very small firms. The project seeks to develop a website for dental professionals: dentists, dental hygienists, technicians and assistants. The project's aim was to get round organisational and logistical problems by using new technology. Problems in using conventional methods included shortage of time, costs and travel. By creating a website, they hoped to provide on-the-spot information and support with a view to improving understanding of OSH issues and reducing exposure to occupational hazards.

What did they do?

They developed an easily accessible website attached to the main site of the Portuguese Dentists' Association. It was specifically designed for oral health professionals (dentists, dental hygienists, dental laboratory technicians, dental assistants) who work mainly in small firms in the private sector. They launched the project at the annual meeting of the Portuguese Dentists' Association in November of 2003 (this is one of the country's major health-related events and well attended). All participants received on arrival a promotional leaflet. Another two leaflets were distributed with the monthly bulletin sent out to the 5 000 members of the Portuguese Dentists' Association, as well as a further two update mailings.

Universidade de Coimbra — Faculdade de Medicina

Type of organisation

✓ Further education institution

Sector

✓ Dentistry

Activity

✓ Information provision

Output

✓ Website

Total budget: € 37 724

Agency support: € 22 257



The website was formally launched in July 2004 in Coimbra's University Medical School and was covered by the local press. The project was well supported by the Portuguese Dentists' Association, enabling it to run beyond the funding period. Occupational safety and health was also to be on the agenda at the next annual meeting of the association.

What was produced?

The website (<http://www.ond.pt/shst>) offers a range of information on occupational safety and health issues including: OSH legislation; potential risks in the profession, how to identify them and put preventive measures in place; the main occupational health disorders relating to the profession; a discussion forum; an online system for notifying work-related accidents; useful links; and a search function. The website was freely accessible, except the online notification section and the discussion forum. It was available in Portuguese only but translation was foreseen in the project's follow-up phase.

Promotional activities included the project launch and its accompanying one-page leaflet (3 500 copies, A4, colour, in Portuguese), and two two-page leaflets (5 000, A5, colour, in Portuguese).



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Portugal

Online safety promotion in construction and power SMEs

Construction and power industry workers are exposed to a wide range of dangers such as working at heights and the effects of noise, vibrations and chemicals. For various reasons, of which poor training is one, they frequently ignore agreed good practices in occupational safety and health such as using protective clothing and equipment in the proper way. This is especially true of those working in SMEs. Therefore, this project focused on trying to reduce the number of accidents by promoting risk assessment and the identification of potential dangers by employers (in line with European and national legislation). It also sought the support of employers in setting up an online guide to good practices as part of an online advisory service provided by the companies themselves.

Who organised the project?

ISQ — Instituto de Soldadura e Qualidade

Who were the partner organisations?

AECOPS — Associação de Empresas de Construção e Obras Públicas

APIRAC — Associação Portuguesa da Indústria de Refrigeração e Ar Condicionado

What was it called?

SMEs' virtual community — OSH

What was the project about?

This project identified areas susceptible to accidents and in which there was typically a lack of investment in training: construction and power (refrigeration and air-conditioning). The holders sought to help to reduce the number of occupational accidents in these sectors by creating a tool for identifying existing risks (self-diagnosis) and through contributions from each employer to set up an online network of good practices. This was to form part of a permanent online consultancy system provided by the companies themselves — a tool for the exchange of effective good practices.

At an operational level, the project sought to encourage SMEs to take part in an integrated approach to occupational safety and health, involving prevention and sustainable action on safety and risk prevention, based on three complementary areas: prevention, education and awareness-raising.

What did they do?

The project-holders' main activities were the creation of a risk analysis tool for the sector, and of a supporting website and CD-ROM. They held a first seminar in September 2004, primarily to raise people's awareness of the value of the risk analysis tool in field conditions. They asked 30 participants from 30 different SMEs to fill in questionnaires designed to test their interest in taking part in the next phase of the project. They received a draft version of the CD-ROM and the printed guide.

In the next phase, they tested the diagnostic tool in collaboration with people involved in risk analysis in civil construction and public works. Finally, 10 people used the tool to perform risk analysis at work and evaluated the experience in a questionnaire.

ISQ — Instituto de Soldadura e Qualidade

Type of organisation

- Private non-profit association
- R & D and engineering services providers

Sector

- Construction and HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning)

Activity

- Research and seminars

Output

- Website
- CD-ROM
- Promotional material

Total budget: € 60 888

Agency support: € 36 533

A second (half-day) seminar was held in October to present the project and its products, and to plan final evaluation, transferability and follow-up of all the products developed after the end of the project period. With the feedback of the users, it was also possible to perform SWOT analysis, of which results were:



- strong points: the risk analysis tool is intuitive and easy to use;
- weak points: it is difficult to keep the content up to date;
- opportunities: market needs and the current legislation;
- threats: the follow-up depends on the achievement of a financing model that ensures sustainability.

What was produced?

The project-holders created a website (<http://www.institutovirtual.pt/id/@risco>) covering all aspects of prevention, education and awareness of safety in the building industry through its various capabilities:

- performing accident risk analysis with a tool that foresees the more usual situations in the field and provides a checklist of proper prevention measures (it can also keep these analyses for historical purposes);
- exchange of good practices through the discussion forum;
- online consultation with a safety specialist;
- consulting safety legislation.

They produced '@Risco', a CD-ROM containing the static material on the website, enabling offline access to the legislative references, glossary, checklist and risk analysis tools. It includes a guide (available in PDF format) to the website. They also produced a promotional poster and leaflet.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Spain (España)

Handling chemicals safely in the wooden furniture industry

The chemicals most often used in making wooden furniture are non-volatile solvents such as glues, paints and dyes. Handling these products tends to involve two kinds of risk: inhalation of organic vapours and skin contact. Here the partners set out to work with SMEs in the Andalusia region in Spain, to raise awareness of the risks of using chemical products in the furniture industry and to promote good environmental management. This involved creating a best-practice manual, investigating and recommending alternative furniture finishing products that are not harmful to human health or to the environment, and improving waste management.

Who organised the project?

Consorcio Escuela de la Madera de la Junta de Andalucía

Who were the partner organisations?

ENKEN Servicios de Prevención

CEAM (Confederación de Empresas Andaluzas de la Madera — Confederation of Andalusian woodwork companies)

What was it called?

Risk prevention and environmental management: compatible concepts using chemical products in the furniture industry

What was the project about?

This project was about promoting best practice in the handling and use of chemicals in the furniture industry, through the use of posters, written and electronic materials, and seminars. Specifically they set out to promote the use of alternative furniture finishing products that are not harmful to human health or the environment, to improve the management of waste in order to minimise risks in the workplace, and to help raise awareness among those in contact with chemical products of the importance of taking proper preventive measures.

What did they do?

They created a logo and slogan for the project ('If we invest in the environment in the wood and chemical industries we guarantee our future'). After a press conference launch, a mailing was sent to 700 companies in the furniture industry in Andalusia and to business associations representing the sector. A questionnaire was then sent to 100 companies in the furniture sector — all were SMEs with less than 100 workers, 95 % of them with less than 30. They also asked some 200 distributors throughout Spain for information about alternative products available on the market (10 % responded with information), sent questionnaires on chemical products to experts in the sector, and carried out their own research.

The results of all this, together with a good practice manual, formed the basis of four seminars, in Lucena (Cordoba), Mancha Real (Jaen), Pilas (Seville) and Sanlucar de Barrameda (Cadiz), attended by 131 people in total. The manuals were subsequently sent out to representative associations in Andalusia, trade unions, the Andalusian administration department of health and safety at work, and to national organisations involved in these issues.

Consorcio Escuela de la Madera de la Junta de Andalucía

Type of organisation

✓ Public training centre for the woodwork-ing industry

Sector

✓ Wooden furniture manufacturing

Activity

✓ Seminars and promotional activity

Output

✓ Posters

✓ Leaflet

✓ Manual

✓ Seminars

Total budget: € 67 419

Agency support: € 40 451



What was produced?

The project partners produced: 500 posters (with a project logo and slogan); a leaflet (3 000) describing the content of the project and the manual (see below) and another (1 000) with the seminar programme; project information on the CEMER web page (free access), a good-practice manual (1 000 copies) including practical sheets on chemical products and a CD-ROM with a presentation on the main results of the surveys, the content of the project and an introduction to the manual.

The manual itself consists of three main parts. Part A describes the situation of the companies in the sector regarding the use of chemical products, the main risks and accidents and actions to better deal with prevention and environmental management, including good practices that are in place or could be applied. Part B gives data on chemical products and safety sheets and theoretical information on dangerous substances and risks in the sector. Part C contains practical data sheets for the chemicals most used in the sector.

Other output included photos and a press release from the launch, a mailing to companies with a poster and leaflet, mailings to chemical distributors and to experts in the field, and seminars.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Spain (España)

Occupational risks for women in metal industries

Some industrial hazards, such as heavy lifting and exposure to chemicals, are better understood and acknowledged than others, notably those relating to mental health such as stress. In Valencia the federation of metalworking businesses drew attention, through training and publications, to what they called 'new labour risks' (NLR) and how women in particular are affected by them. They included bullying, intimidation, violence at work, anxiety, depression and stress — areas which have been poorly understood or neglected in the past and where levels of awareness are relatively low. The project set out to raise awareness among companies, employees and the whole of society, to develop an ethical code for management and workers and to carry out training courses offering practical solutions.

Who organised the project?

Federación Empresarial Metalúrgica Valenciana

What was it called?

NLR (new labour risks) metal: preventive strategies in the SMEs from the gender perspective

What was the project about?

The project was about raising awareness of issues relating to the health and safety of women in the metalworking industries — in particular 'new labour risks', referring to problems like bullying, intimidation, violence at work, anxiety, depression and stress. It also looked at how these risks can be minimised — at preventive action and solutions.

The aims of the project were:

- to prevent 'new labour' risks in metallurgic SMEs;
- to incorporate the 'gender perspective' in dealing with these risks;
- to elaborate an ethical code appropriate to contemporary labour relations;
- to implement management models that will prevent and eradicate 'new labour risks';
- to train experts to tackle and provide solutions to these problems;
- to raise awareness levels of companies, workers and society as a whole in relation to their causes and consequences.

What did they do?

They produced a good-practice guide, aimed at SMEs and their staff, at public bodies and labour organisations and institutions, as well as at OSH professionals interested in the subject.

They set up a course (in Valencia) to train people who could promote the prevention of 'new labour risks' faced by women, to train those responsible for this area within their companies, and generally to integrate the gender perspective within occupational safety and health. The 150-hour course was broken into the following units:

- introduction to gender theory, analysis and perspective
- interpersonal and group communication
- legal aspects of NLR
- NLR prevention
- NLR definition, description and analysis
- conflict resolution and negotiation
- practical application of the gender perspective to the prevention of NLR.

All the SMEs (some 3 000) belonging to the Federación Empresarial Metalúrgica Valenciana (Femeval) were invited to take part in the course, and 25 people (15 women, 10 men) applied and finished it.

Federación Empresarial Metalúrgica Valenciana

Type of organisation

- ✓ Industry federation

Sector

- ✓ Metal industries

Activity

- ✓ Training

Output

- ✓ Guide
- ✓ Leaflet
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Conference

Total budget: € 128 458

Agency support: € 77 036

They produced a brochure summarising the guide.

A press conference presented the project to the main Valencia media, and a final conference, attended by some 100 people, was held to present and disseminate the activities and products of the project, as well as its philosophy. It included a guest lecture by Marie-France Hirigoyen, a specialist on harassment at work. An edited version of her lecture, translated from French into Spanish, was distributed and is available in print form or on the Internet (www.femeval.es).



What was produced?

The project-holders published 'Good practices guide for the prevention of new labour risks from the gender perspective', a guide with the following contents:

- Introduction;
- Concepts, definition of the gender approach, prevention and new labour risks;
- Basic legal and political framework;
- Theoretical framework of NLR prevention with a gender approach;
- Definition of an ethical code for good practices in NLR prevention with a gender approach;
- Methodological proposal to develop good practices in NLR prevention with a gender approach;
- Bibliography;
- Glossary;
- Annexes:
 - ISTAS21 method
 - How to adapt a prevention tool integrating the gender approach.

Of the 5 000 copies of the guide printed, some 100 were distributed to the press and the public, and 4 000 have been sent to SMEs and to the bigger Femeval members in the metal sector. Another 400 were sent to public institutions working on OSH, trade unions and other institutions. The guide is also available at Femeval's homepage (www.femeval.es) in PDF format.



They produced 'Prevention of NLR with a gender perspective', a brochure summarising the guide; 10 000 copies were printed and mostly distributed together with the guide itself. Further copies are available from Femeval or at www.femeval.es.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Spain (España)

Safety training for immigrant workers

Immigrant workers are frequently hired for the most dangerous jobs and exposed to a high level of risk without being properly trained in the relevant aspects of occupational safety and health. This project provided training materials on DVD in Arabic, English, French, Romanian and Spanish and was aimed at immigrant workers themselves and at those responsible for their employment and safety. The training covered three broad areas: construction hazards, the operation of forklift trucks and risks in the farming sector.

Who organised the project?

FREMAP (Mutua de Accidentes de Trabajo y Enfermedades Profesionales de la Seguridad Social)

Who was the partner organisation?

Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo

What was it called?

Complete training system for occupational risk prevention — red series

What was the project about?

This project was about addressing the occupational safety and health needs of immigrant workers, who are frequently overlooked by employers and who may be further disadvantaged by language and culture. It set out to produce training material on DVD to raise awareness of the occupational risks in construction, agriculture and dealing with forklift trucks, in view of the large number of immigrants in these particular sectors. Consequently the material was produced in Arabic and Romanian, as well as English, French and Spanish.

What did they do?

The work of the project-holders focused on the development of three DVDs. During the production phase, round tables were organised with a number of companies, which contributed to the content and monitoring of the material.

Feedback was sought, not only from experts in occupational safety and health, but also from workers in construction and agriculture and operators of forklift trucks.

The second phase of the project was a series of seminars to present the products and further modify them. One seminar was held for each of the target sectors and one for middle management responsible for risk prevention in larger companies. Specialists from the partner institution and from private companies assured the final quality of the product and drew up guidance for its use. This phase also included the development of interactive communications tools based on a Spanish television game.

A press release was sent out to national and specialist media in Spain drawing attention to the value of the DVDs as training tools, and an explanatory press pack was made available at a subsequent press conference. Further communication activities were planned.

What was produced?

They produced three DVDs, available free of charge to all associated companies in the sector (details on the websites). The cover material has a brief description of the contents and instructions for its use. It can be viewed in five languages: Arabic, English, French, Romanian and Spanish. Following the choice of language, signposts to at least five items are displayed. Sub-

menus cover approximately 15 points that explain the content with a film. Each DVD can be browsed in around 30 minutes, not including the section on interactive exercises. It is designed for both group training and individual training and covers:

- construction risks: working at heights (group protection, scaffolding and hand ladders), manual load handling, manual tools, machinery and vehicles, trenches and excavations, electrical installations and signalling;
- forklift truck operations: restrictions on their use, driving, loading and unloading, transport, equipment maintenance, battery charging and driving rules;
- farming and fisheries: risks in handling agricultural machinery, tractors, manure and fertilisers, handling of pesticides, confined spaces, zoonosis and fieldwork.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Sweden (Sverige)

Preventing injuries in Swedish wood product SMEs

The timber industry is the most injury prone in Sweden and is short on knowledge of working environment issues and occupational safety and health (OSH) solutions. Many of the accidents occur during the use of machinery such as circular saws, planers and milling machines, sometimes because they are inadequately guarded. The cost of injuries is high, both in terms of individual suffering and as an economic burden on society. Most of the small companies in the industries lack any 'systematic working environment management'. The aim of this project is to ensure that the companies taking part will gain both a better understanding of these issues and the tools to create a 'preventive working environment'. In the long term this will also reduce occupational injuries in the industry.

Who organised the project?

Arbio AB/TMF (Trä- och möbelindustriförbundet och Skogs- och träfacket)

What was it called?

Prevention of injuries in small companies in the wood product industry Arbio AB/TMF in Sweden

What was the project about?

The project was about reducing the number of occupational injuries in the Swedish wood product industry in the long term by promoting awareness of what makes a good working environment. By offering a training programme the project-holders tried to interest employers and employees in work environment management. The training would enable participants to carry out 'systematic work environment management' (SAM), including risk assessment, management routines and preventive measures. An important aspect was investigating accidents and narrow escapes, in order to prevent future accidents. The project was directed towards small companies (all those taking part had fewer than 50 employees). The training programme was free of charge.

What did they do?

The project-holders ran 20 occupational safety and health courses based on 'Inga skador i jobbet' ('No accidents at work'), their existing training programme. The training programme was focused on good practice and minimising risks in the use of machinery. During the period of the project, a total of 191 people completed the programme, which targeted one employer and one employee from each company attending the same course. Where possible, each group consisted of five to six companies. Every course was based on four to five meetings to discuss different work environment topics.

They ran the courses at the workplaces of the companies taking part. Participants usually visited units of production and discussed work environment issues on the spot. In between (one to three weeks), they had homework on which they reported at the next meeting. The homework from the first meeting was to investigate and report injuries and narrow escapes that had occurred at their companies. The aim was to promote an accident reporting system and to prevent similar accidents in future.

Occupational safety and health (OSH) topics on the agenda, sometimes at the request of the participants, always included noise, wood dust, machinery risks, information on CE marking and how to buy safe machinery. By the end of the training programme, most of the companies had started up systematic work environment management in accordance with Swedish legislation, had investigated their working environment, made a risk assessment, decided on priority actions and prepared a risk prevention plan.

Some 20 trade union safety representatives (from the Swedish Forest and Wood Trade Union) received a special training session in taking the training programme to workers. Eight have subsequently been active leaders.

Arbio AB/TMF

Type of organisation

- ✓ Furniture industry employers' association

Sector

- ✓ Timber

Activity

- ✓ Training

Output

- ✓ Courses
- ✓ CD-ROM
- ✓ Promotional materials

Total budget: € 79 887

Agency support: € 47 932

What was produced?

They organised 20 OSH courses for 191 participants.

A collection of the already existing video films was made with the National Institute for Working Life. This led to the production of a CD-ROM (1 000 copies) focusing on work environment questions in wood-producing industries. Issues such as machinery safety, wood dust, noise, cleaning procedures and solutions to problems are dealt with in text and short videos. It was intended for free distribution among participating companies and relevant organisations, and was presented at the Wood and Technical Fair in Gothenburg (shown permanently on a plasma screen).

Promotional output relating to the training programme and the CD-ROM included:

- an article in a circular issued by the Work Environment Committee for Swedish Wood Industry (900 copies distributed);
- meetings with companies to raise interest in the training programme;
- a leaflet distributed by trade union safety representatives when visiting companies (900 copies produced);
- a request form for the CD-ROM;
- information at www.traindustrin.org and www.skogsindustrierna.org;
- a poster and distribution of leaflets and lists of regional contacts at the fair in Gothenburg.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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The Netherlands (Nederland)

Risk prevention for small business insurance

Small and medium-sized enterprises make up the majority of companies in any industry or occupational group in the Netherlands; altogether there are 345 000 firms with between 1 and 100 employees. Insurance companies have moved into the occupational safety and health (OSH) sector in Holland and issue policies on injuries involving employers' liability to many of these firms. As a result, the insurance companies are encouraging their client firms to improve their safety and health performance. But in trying to help SMEs minimise their risks, they have encountered huge difficulties in finding appropriate OSH information. To meet this need the project-holder developed a website with practical and detailed information about occupational accidents and illnesses, risk assessment and preventive measures in about 300 classes of business and 500 occupations.

Who organised the project?

Verbond van Verzekeraars

Who were the partner organisations?

TNO Arbeid

Nederlands Centrum voor Beroepsziekten NCvB

What was it called?

Internet site for the prevention of occupational and work-related diseases

What was the project about?

The project was about raising the level of awareness and knowledge about occupational risks and diseases amongst (liability) insurers, allowing them to make better risk assessments and to offer better advice to businesses.

It also set out to raise awareness in business and industry at large, and in SMEs in particular. The project-holders established a non-subscription website providing practical and detailed information about all occupational risks and diseases and about preventive measures. It was intended as a focal point for insurers and businesses to gain quick access to practical information. Summaries of rates of sick leave and numbers of people taking up disability insurance are given, by industry.

What did they do?

They made a formal presentation of their proposals, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Netherlands Focal Point for Health and Safety AP-NL. They organised eight workshops, attended by over 100 representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises, during the first four months of 2004 at different locations in the Netherlands. The goal of the workshops was to find out what information they needed in order to prevent or reduce occupational risks and diseases. Each workshop lasted for about two and a half hours.

They sent out a press release nationally and also specifically targeted employers in SMEs. They held a workshop for the insurance industry and wrote an article in their own bi-monthly magazine 'Verzekerd!' (3 000 subscriptions) encouraging insurers and brokers to use the website, especially when visiting potential clients to fix policy conditions and prevention measures required for risk assessment.

Verbond van Verzekeraars

Type of organisation

✓ Professional body

Sector

✓ Insurance

Activity

✓ Research, workshops and web creation

Output

✓ Website

Total budget:

€ 272 274

Agency support:

€ 80 000

What was produced?

They produced a 2 000 page, non-subscription website providing information about occupational risks and diseases and their prevention in about 125 classes of business and 500 occupations, covering some 2 million employees. Decisions on the structure and the size of the website followed two user tests.

The site gives a comprehensive description of the occupational risks and diseases that arise for each company and occupation. For each risk, the health, safety and well-being issues are addressed. It also gives summary statistics of sick leave and the incomes of people receiving disability insurance, by industry. For each business and occupation, preventive measures to minimise occupational risks and diseases are outlined. Subjects covered include: the prevention of serious physical injury and combating noise and vibrations; safe handling of tools and machinery and of hazardous substances; the promotion of good internal air quality; and the provision of personal protection equipment.

Most of the information is available as content on the website itself and is easy to print in hard copy. Sometimes relevant information is provided through the links to other websites. The site focuses on practical information such as descriptions, tips for good practice, and checklists that are of immediate use to businesses. Navigation is by industry, class of company and by occupation.

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United Kingdom

Promoting safe practices in printing and retail

Workers in the paper, printing and publishing industries and in the retail sector often have to handle dangerous substances as part of their daily work, and they face a higher than average risk of exposure to toxic vapours. In the retail sector of the print industry two thirds of employees are women, so this project paid particular attention to combating gender-specific risks. As in most small businesses the level of training and awareness of occupational safety and health issues tends to be low and they engage in training activities with some reluctance. A partnership with a strong trade union base set about overcoming that reluctance through the promotion of standard and online training.

Who organised the project?

Stow College

Who were the partner organisations?

Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers
Graphical, Paper and Media Union
Health and Safety Executive Scotland
Scottish Retail Consortium
Trades Union Congress Education Service

What was it called?

Adopting safe practice for the retail and printing sectors

What was the project about?

This project was about raising awareness of occupational safety and health (OSH) issues within SMEs in the retail and print sectors. It set out to foster a more preventive approach to OSH, including gender-specific risks, by bringing together social partners from the further education, trade union and private sectors and engaging with owners, managers and union member employees of SMEs within the paper, printing and publishing, and retail industries.

What did they do?

The holders carried out the project through a mixture of vocational training activities (accredited by the national open college network): online using Stow College's virtual campus and face-to-face plus online learning delivery and promotion; and through awareness-raising activities carried out by social partners across Scotland. Training activities focused on the owners and managers, workers and health and safety representatives in SMEs and enabled beneficiaries to effectively manage and face occupational safety and health (OSH) challenges within their workplaces and industry sectors.

One-day workshops (11) were delivered in various locations across Scotland both independently and also with large enterprises, not involved in the project, delivering training to their subcontractors or donating their premises for training. A total of 68 participants (49 male and 19 female) from 17 different employers took part in the 11 workshops.



Stow College

Type of organisation

✓ Further education

Sector

✓ Retail and print-related industries

Activity

✓ Training

Output

✓ Courses

✓ Booklet

✓ Web materials

Total budget:

€ 55 117

Agency support:

€ 33 070

One two-day workshop was delivered with six participants from three SMEs. The aim of the two-day workshop was to provide a more intensive programme of training, concentrating on identified occupational health and safety themes (e.g. gender health issues) than could be covered in the one-day sessions.

All registered as Stow College students and received formal accreditation of their learning through the national open college network (NOCN) (<http://www.nocn.org.uk>).

Project learning materials, guidance and NOCN-accredited courses were all placed online at <http://home.teknical.com/stow/> which is the URL of the Stow College's managed learning environment (MLE) and is designed specifically for the online provision of course materials.

The 'adopting safe practice virtual classroom' has allowed project staff to publish course materials, manage tutorials and provide access to project documentation and output while using modern technology such as online chat, conferencing and instant messaging to deliver course materials to trade union members across Scotland.

What was produced?

There were 11 one-day workshops with 68 participants, one two-day workshop with six participants, and 74 participants were registered to undertake various learning activities online.

A 24-page glossy loose-leafed booklet entitled 'Adopting safe practice' (1 200 copies) was designed to be used in conjunction with the one- and two-day training courses. They could also be used as 'stand alone' health and safety induction packs by SMEs when training new members of staff, as a checklist of best practice examples, a subject specific pull-out guide or a document to aid discussions on preventive safety in the workplace.

The pack was flexibly designed by the Stow College project team, in consultation with partners from the Scottish Health and Safety Executive, GPMU, USDAW, SRC and Skillsmart Sector Skills Council.

In addition, project learning materials, guidance and course notes were placed on to Stow College's managed learning environment at <http://home.teknical.com/stow>. The Trade Union Education Department microsite within the college MLE website offered the opportunity for all participants, following registration as Stow College students, to undertake the available courses.

Some 43 people attended a dissemination event in September at the Scottish TUC's headquarters in Glasgow.



Would you like to know more about this project?

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Red Angels – a mentoring scheme for small firms

SMEs are often pressed for time and short of cash, and their managers tend to lack the background knowledge needed to promote safety and health in their companies. In turn, their staff frequently do not have the training and skills they need to compete successfully, and occupational safety and health (OSH) often comes at the bottom of the list. This project offered qualified mentors, Red Angels, to small businesses in Kent (south-east England) to help assess their OSH needs and provide flexible training, on site and online, and subsequent back-up. As well as staff training, the chosen firms received a health and safety audit that formed the basis of a development plan highlighting future needs.

Who organised the project?

Business Link Kent

Who were the partner organisations?

KITA Ltd
British Standards Institute (BSI)
MEDIA Kent Ltd

What was it called?

Red Angels

What was the project about?

This project was about occupational safety and health mentoring, and finding and training OSH 'champions' within small companies. The partners identified 40 companies (SMEs and micro-enterprises). From these, 61 staff were trained through the allocation of OSH mentors (Red Angels), backed up with access to flexible health and safety training for managers and supervisors. A chosen OSH 'champion' from each attended an intensive two-day training course, followed by a risk-assessment course. Each company received a health and safety audit, carried out by a partner organisation (KITA Ltd) together with the company champion. The results of this audit formed the basis of a development plan highlighting the various areas the company needed to focus on.

What did they do?

Each company champion attended an intensive two-day training course to achieve a 'certificate in working safety' from the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). The objectives of the course were to make the company champions aware of the safety responsibility chain in the workplace, recognising hazards and taking relevant precautions. The British Standards Institute outlined the concept and procedures involved in the management of health and safety. At the end of the course, company champions sat a test, marked by KITA Ltd, with audit control factors and checks established by IOSH. The course syllabus included:

- introduction to working safely,
- hazard, risk and control,
- common hazards,
- fire and noise,
- vehicular movement,
- electricity,
- movement of people,
- manual handling,
- chemicals and substances,
- display screen equipment,
- accident reporting procedures,
- management of health and safety.

Each company champion then attended a risk-assessment course at KITA. The objective of the course was to ensure that each champion understood the requirements of risk assessment and what effects they had in the workplace. Risk assessments were also reviewed on an individual basis in each workplace. The course syllabus included:

- duties under the management of health and safety at work act regulations,

Business Link Kent

Type of organisation

- ✓ Business support

Sector

- ✓ General

Activity

- ✓ Mentoring

Output

- ✓ Project manual

Total budget: € 201 187

Agency support: € 84 800

- purpose, approach and process of risk assessment,
- risks and hazards,
- action ranking,
- control of risks and hazards,
- recording assessments,
- generic assessments,
- review and updating.

Each company then received a health and safety audit, carried out by KITA in conjunction with the company champion on company premises. The audit involved reviewing 87 areas of health and safety control within the company and was the basis that formed the development plan. The audit covered:

- health and safety law,
- policies and procedures,
- first aid and accidents,
- reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences,
- control of substances hazardous to health,
- workplace facilities,
- access,
- personal protective equipment,
- electrical installation,
- fire,
- display screen equipment,
- manual handling,
- noise,
- provision and use of work equipment regulations,
- cranes and lifting equipment,
- waste,
- risk assessments,
- training,
- management of health and safety.

What was produced?

A project manual was published with a complete record of project activities, management controls and processes. It is available for general distribution only after consultation with Business Link Kent. The manual contains sections on:

- project objectives,
- key stakeholders,
- project strategies: information on funding, marketing and evaluation,
- project controls: descriptions of all control documentation, communication systems, the project databases, data protection and confidentiality and the acceptance criteria,
- project delivery: including the content of the training undertaken by the companies and beneficiaries.

At the launch of the project, a press release achieved coverage in 'Business works', the magazine of Business Link Kent, as well as in the local business press and on radio.

Would you like to know more about this project?

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Appendix – Acknowledgements

The successful administration of the SME funding scheme 2003–04 is the culmination of many months of intensive work by a wide group of people. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to the following for their unswerving professionalism and dedication.

The SME/EW group members, the European jury members, the agency focal points and their national tripartite networks and the agency staff members responsible for the management and promotion of the SME funding 2003–04.

Last, but by no means least, the agency would like to thank the SME project-holders for all of the work they put into the projects from conception to realisation. Although the projects may differ in background, they all show how improved safety and health can make a difference to both the workplace and the profit sheet.

We would also like to acknowledge that all of the photographs in this report, unless otherwise stated, were provided courtesy of the project-holders.

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

Promoting health and safety in European Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

2005 — 94 pp. — 21 × 29.7 cm

ISBN 92-9191-141-0

Price (excluding VAT) in Luxembourg: EUR 15

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European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

<http://osha.eu.int>



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ISBN 92-9191-141-0



9 789291 911417