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**SUMMARY of the proceedings of
the European conference held on 19.03.2015 (Paris):**

Les Débats d'EUROGIP

**Europe and occupational
safety and health:
What achievements?
What outlook?**

EUROPE AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH WHAT ACHIEVEMENTS? WHAT OUTLOOK? European conference held on 19.03.2015 (Paris)

PROGRAMME

Introduction to the Discussions

- Patrick NÉRON, Chairman of EUROGIP's Board
- Gérard VERNIER, Former Official at the European Commission and Lecturer at the University Paris X

Round table: European impetus given to the health and safety at work issue

- William COCKBURN, Acting Head of the Prevention and Research Unit, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA, Bilbao)
- Matthias FRITZ, Administrator, Education, Health and Social Protection Unit, Eurostat, European Commission
- Franck GAMBELLI, Director, Health, Security, Work Conditions and Environment Direction, Union of Metallurgy Industries and Businesses (UIMM) - Representative of BUSINESSEUROPE
- Zinta PODNIECE, Policy Analyst, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Unit Health, Safety and Hygiene at Work, European Commission
- Laurent VOGEL, Researcher, Working conditions, Health and Safety Unit, European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)

Impact of this impetus in France

- Bénédicte LEGRAND-JUNG, Deputy Director for Working conditions, Health and Safety at work, General Labour Directorate, France

Round table: Strategic approaches and tools developed in the European Member States and abroad to cope with tomorrow challenges

- Jennifer WOLF Horejsh, Executive Director, International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC)
- Walter EICHENDORF, Deputy Director General, German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), Germany
- Angela JANOWITZ, Head of the Occupational Health and Ergonomics Department, Commission for Occupational Safety and Health and Standardization (KAN), Germany
- Georges LISCHETTI, Occupational Risks Director, Retirement and Occupational Health Insurance Fund (CAR-SAT) Alsace-Moselle, France
- Kevin MYERS, Deputy Chief Executive, Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Great Britain - President of the International Association of Labour Inspection (IALI)
- Patricia MURRAY, Senior Work and Organisational Psychologist/Inspector, Health and Safety Authority (HSA), Ireland
- Stéphane PIMBERT, Director General, National Research and Safety Institute for the prevention of accidents at work and occupational diseases (INRS), France
- Daniel PODGÓRSKI, Deputy Director for Management systems and certification, Central Institute for Labour Protection - National Research Institute (CIOP-PIB), Poland

Conclusion

- Marine JEANTET, Occupational Risks Director, National Health Insurance Fund for Employees (CNAMTS), France

The Discussions were moderated by Régis de CLOSETS, journalist



SUMMARY

COMMUNITY IMPETUS IN THE AREA OF OSH

According to Zinta Podniece, representing the European Commission, the new strategic framework for occupational safety and health 2014-2020 is intended to be broader than the strategies adopted previously. It sets strategic objectives, challenges to be taken up, action to be taken and the actors concerned, on the European, national and international levels (e.g. the International Labour Organization and OECD). “Dynamic, and not set in stone”, this framework will be revised in 2016, notably on the basis of the current evaluation of the 24 occupational safety and health directives. On the subject of musculoskeletal disorders in particular, Podniece gave a reminder that it “is not because there is no legislative work that nothing is achieved”, referring to the guides, exchanges of good practices, campaigns and tools developed.

Speaking for the EU-OSHA, William Cockburn recognizes how deeply the Agency is involved in establishing this new framework, which is along the same lines as the EU-OSHA multi-year plan adopted previously. Both texts identify similar priorities: SMEs/VSEs, emerging risks and population ageing.

According to Franck Gambelli, representing the European employers' organization, this new strategic framework represents a growing awareness of the size of the European regulatory corpus and the gap between it and reality in the field. Science provides initial guidelines, then come political and administrative compromises, and only “at the end of the chain are enterprises, as adjustment variables”. The challenge is therefore a better allowance for the working world, and a concrete and precise operational translation of the regulations.

For the European trade unions, Laurent Vogel states that “there is a need for clear texts that can provide a framework for action”. He considers that the Community framework is “irrelevant” because it is unable to respond to the deterioration of working conditions. He also regrets that the consultation of the social partners on legislative proposals has become “a purely formal exercise”. The European trade unions and the employers' organization have agreed, for example, on the need to revise the directive relating to carcinogenic agents, and yet nothing changes. Likewise, although a European agreement has been reached concerning the hairdressing sector in Europe, why has the Commission not carried this compromise over into a directive? “We don't expect everything from the European Commission, but when we reach an agreement on a concrete document, we at least expect some respect for the work performed”.

The new strategic framework also mentions European statistics relating to occupational injuries and diseases. Matthias Fritz, representing the Statistics DG of the European Commission (Eurostat), confirmed that this organization was working on a more restricted list of ODs, in order to overcome the incomparability of national data, which are often very heterogeneous. As regards OIs, the difficulty at present is the comparability of data relating to less serious injuries, since some countries report ten times fewer injuries than the European average per 100,000 workers.

THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THIS COMMUNITY IMPETUS IN FRANCE

Bénédicte Legrand-Jung (DGT) referred to the guidelines of the Workplace Health Plan ('PST') currently being prepared and convergences with the European strategic framework. Generally, the draft French legislation asserts the role of occupational risk prevention, which should take precedence over compensation, and the importance of “viewing work as a factor of health and workplace health as a factor of economic competitiveness”. More concretely, the French guidelines, like the European text, aim to improve risk prevention in SMEs and VSEs. In France, thinking is under way on the measures to be taken to avoid “being out of step with the actual practices” of these enterprises. In terms of risks, the social partners' guidelines give priority to falls (from a height and on the same level), chemical substances, nanomaterials, and psychosocial and cardiovascular risks. Giving a reminder of the preponderant role of the social partners, “wanted by the Ministry of Labour” in France, Legrand-Jung stressed the potential benefits of considering more sector-specific European legislation or of giving more importance to tools and social dialogue. Regarding musculoskeletal disorders and psychosocial risks, for example, although these expressions do not appear in the Labour Code, they are priorities of the 'PST' and are issues which are more a matter for tools and social dialogue.

THE STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND TOOLS DEVELOPED IN THE MEMBER STATES AND BEYOND TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF TOMORROW

“In general, greater progress regarding OSH has been achieved in Europe than in the United States”, according to Jennifer Wolf-Horejsh. She adds that there are major differences from one US State to another, whether for the definition of an occupational injury, the coverage of occupational diseases, access to medical care for victims of occupatio-

nal injuries and diseases, or benefits paid. Only four States have opted for a public system and there is no national OSH policy. The State of Montana is especially advanced in a current debate concerning the relationship between occupational risk prevention, compensation and the return to the workplace, notably via social dialogue.

Walter Eichendorf (DGUV, Germany) presented the “Zero Vision” strategy, developed in the past few years, which tends not to accept serious and fatal accidents. “Employers have to go beyond the legal provisions to prevent these accidents”. So the DGUV talks to them about a return on investment, of approximately 1.6 to 2.5.

To “inculcate a workplace safety culture”, Angela Janowitz (KAN, Germany) pointed out the essential contribution of standards, which enable safety to be factored in as of the product design stage. So Germany chose to establish the KAN, a unique organization which brings together all the OSH stakeholders: employers, insurance funds, government, employees and the national standards organization.

The approach adopted in the UK in the past 40 years is to try to change the behaviour of those people who create risks, according to Kevin Meyers (HSE). Accordingly, the standards produced in cooperation with those people have more weight than the legislation and will be better complied with.

With regard to human behaviour, Patricia Murray (HSA, Ireland), as an occupational psychologist, mentioned two studies: one on farmers, who obey the rules and respect the experience of the “oldies”, and the other on young construction workers who are not aware of the danger and therefore take more risks. Moreover, she considers that a workplace safety culture cannot be established without the support of the leaders capable of managing their teams.

In France, Georges Lischetti (CARSAT Alsace-Moselle) confirmed this view: “If we are unable to convince a manager or the CEO, we don’t change the culture”. He also described the Synergie programme developed in the region at the end of the 1990s to include OSH in training courses (CAP, BEP and BTS vocational training certificates). The programme is now nation-wide and the objective is to include engineering and management training schools, and even universities. The concept was also extended to newcomers to a work station, with the idea that a tutor should train them in OSH in accordance with a national reference framework. The results are there: attitudes are changing and the accident rate among young people, although it is still higher, has nevertheless fallen (1.9 times higher than average, versus 2.6 times).

In a different vein, the Polish OSH research organization CIOP has chosen to develop cutting-edge tools (virtual reality, innovative personal protective equipment, analysis of the quality of work performance, etc.) to deploy a workplace safety culture. Apart from financial issues relating to government funds, and competitive issues relative to other research organizations, Daniel Podgorski said the aim was to improve efficiency with these new-generation tools.

“The approach at the INRS is also very forward-looking” stressed Stéphane Pimbert (INRS, France). It involves using simulators or software such as MAVImplant as an aid for workplace design, especially for bakers and pastry makers, and “serious games” for training courses. This forward-looking approach also concerns the study of hypotheses on subjects such as human work with collaborative machines, or nanoparticles in 2030, which “oblige us to look into the future”.

CONCLUSION

“I think that we are always more intelligent together. [...] We have huge riches to exchange, even though we have our differences” said Marine Jeantet (Occupational Risks Department-DRP, France). The DRP drew inspiration from German and Swiss experience to start a service to provide support for the victims of very serious occupational injuries. It is currently studying the practices of its European counterparts with regard to OI/OD risk premium rating. As regards the Community strategic framework, Marine Jeantet noted the convergences with the objectives and management agreement (“Convention d’objectifs et de gestion” - COG) signed between the government and the Health and Occupational Risk Insurance organization on the subjects of VSEs, work-related diseases, psychosocial risks and ageing of the working population. More concretely, the DRP has chosen to target four high-risk occupations: masons, garage mechanics, restaurant operators and road freight transport operators. Regarding musculoskeletal disorders, the most prevalent occupational disease, “we have targeted 8,000 enterprises which by themselves account for 35% of cases of MSDs recognized as ODs and we propose to them a voluntary policy of membership and management of their internal risks.” Regarding cancers, Jeantet stressed the measures taken since 2009 which have protected 68,000 employees exposed to this risk, “which is enormous”. And she concludes “If we are able to demonstrate to a firm that it is possible to reconcile the cultures of workplace safety and performance, perhaps based on what is done in the other countries, then that would be really interesting.”

The proceedings are available in French at

http://www.eurogip.fr/images/documents/3847/Actes_DebatsEUROGIP2015_UE_SST.PDF



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Founded in 1991, EUROGIP is a French organization, whose activities are organized around five areas: enquiries, eu projects, information-communication, standardization and coordination of notified bodies. all have in common european aspects of the insurance or the prevention of accidents at work and occupational diseases.

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comprendre les risques professionnels en Europe
understanding occupational risks in Europe