



**November 2019**

## Community news

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### ► [Member States urged to expand access to social protection for workers](#)

Since it has no powers to intervene in the domestic social security systems of its Member States, the European Union has "recommended" to the Member States to ensure that all workers have access to social protection. On 8 November, the Council definitively adopted a recommendation - a non-binding legal instrument - implementing Principle no. 12 of the European Pillar of Social Rights. This text states that "regardless of the type and duration of their employment relationship, workers, and, under comparable conditions, the self-employed have the right to adequate social protection". The recommendation notes that "some non-standard workers and some self-employed persons have insufficient access" to social protection, which in the long run could "put at risk the welfare and health of individuals", "contribute to increasing economic uncertainty, the risk of poverty and inequalities" or "reduce trust in institutions".

Member States should "guarantee access to all branches (unemployment benefits; sickness and healthcare benefits; maternity and equivalent paternity benefits; invalidity benefits; old-age benefits and survivors' benefits; benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases)". Employees should enjoy mandatory cover against these risks, and the self-employed should have at least voluntary access. Member States are also recommended to ensure that "entitlements – whether they are acquired through mandatory or voluntary schemes – are preserved, accumulated and/or transferable across all types of employment and self-employment statuses and across economic sectors, throughout the person's career or during a certain reference period and between different schemes within a given social protection branch". Member States have 18 months to implement these recommendations.

(With IRShare)

[Recommendation](#)

### ► [MSDs: prevalence, costs and demographic data in the EU](#)

As part of its coming 2020-2022 campaign to raise awareness of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), EU-OSHA has published a report on these risks, which remain the most prevalent work-related health problem in the European Union.

The document compiles and analyses information coming from the main EU surveys and administrative data, supplemented and enriched by national sources. It aims to provide a sound base of facts to assist policymakers, researchers and the occupational health and safety community on the European and national levels in their task of prevention of work-related MSDs. [To find out more](#)

### ► [Initial analyses of the findings of the ESENER-3 survey](#)

In a report published at end-October, EU-OSHA presented an initial analysis of the main findings of the third European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER), conducted in 2019. More than 45,000 firms in 33 countries were questioned about their occupational safety

and health management (OSH).

The most frequently identified risk factors in the EU-28 are repetitive hand and arm movements (65%, versus 52% in 2014), relations with troublesome customers, students and patients (61%, versus 58%), and carrying or moving heavy persons or loads (54%, versus 47%). Time constraints are the main risk factor in Finland, Sweden (74%) and Denmark (73%), and the No. 2 factor in the Netherlands (64%).

EU-OSHA emphasizes that 5% of firms in the EU-28 state that they have none of the general risk factors covered, and around 25% state that they face no psychosocial risks.

The 2019 survey includes additional questions on the impact of digitization and prolonged sitting positions. By comparison with the previous survey, it is encouraging to note that the proportion of firms performing risk assessments has increased in some countries.

[To find out more](#)

## Standardization

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### ► [France is one of the most active countries in standardization](#)

According to the 2019 global barometer published by French standardization association AFNOR, France ranks as the second most active country on the European level with regard to occupational safety and health, with a 13% share of responsibilities for active structures in the CEN. It ranks third on the international level (ISO). Germany tops the list on the European level (51%) and internationally (26%).

AFNOR emphasizes the mobilization of French stakeholders in the major Technical Committee ISO/TC 195 on Building construction machinery and equipment and the strengthening of their position in Technical Committee ISO/TC 96 on Cranes. Lastly, AFNOR mentions the initiative which involved promoting internationally the French standard on the acoustic quality of open office spaces.

For all subjects combined, France is sixth among the countries which are distinguished by their responsibilities in ISO technical committees and sub-committees. Ahead of it are Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, China and Japan.

[Baromètre international 2019](#)

### ► [ETUC priorities on standardisation 2019-2023](#)

For "a fairer Europe for workers", the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) presented its priorities on standardisation and its actions with this respect:

- Maintain an in-house ETUC competence centre on standardisation, coordinating and pooling trade union knowledge and expertise in the area;
- Following an ETUC evaluation, agree a new Framework Partnership Agreement with the Commission and EFTA;
- Watch over and contribute to the drafting of those European (and international) standards that could affect working conditions and ensure that standards bring about the highest quality working conditions and respect social dialogue and collective agreements.
- Participate at policy and technical level to ensure that European (and international) standards shall not encroach on labour laws, collective agreements and collective bargaining;
- Build standardisation capacity amongst the (national) trade unions, including via the expansion of a network of trade union experts;
- Contribute to standardisation bodies where the ETUC and its affiliates can actively participate (e.g. CEN, CENELEC, ETSI, ISO, IEC);
- Avoid the transfer of standard-setting activities to standardisation bodies that trade unions have no influence over (e.g. labelling organisations, certification bodies, closed consortia, industry bodies, etc.);

- Promote a reflection on whether there is a need for an (ETUC) social label, with underlying criteria (set by trade unions) as well as on better workers' participation in the audit process of ISO 45001 on 'Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems'.

Action Programme 2019-2023

### ► November 2019: What's new in health and safety at work standardization?

New standards publications, new works, registration of new subjects or comity creations... Below is the result of the monitoring that EUROGIP does, as part of its standardization activity in health and safety at work.

Download the "What's new in OSH Standardization?" of November 2019

To find out more, please write to Saphia Fortassi, [fortassi@eurogip.fr](mailto:fortassi@eurogip.fr)

## Abroad

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### ► ITALY: occupational safety as the focus of a campaign on the Rai

From 4 to 10 November, the No. 3 news channel of the Italian public television operator Rai broadcast in prime time an INAIL campaign on occupational health. Through the first-hand accounts of people directly concerned, the Institute wanted to emphasize the "unending massacre" of fatalities at work.

According to the INAIL's official statistics, there were 700 fatal occupational injuries in 2018, 4.5% more than the previous year.

Apart from the human aspect, one of the messages that the campaign aims to convey is that safety should not be considered as a cost, but as an investment which yields a return in terms of increased productivity and job satisfaction, for both the workers and employers. Training is one of the essential drivers along these lines.

To find out more

### ► BELGIUM: 2018 occupational injury statistics

The annual report of the Federal Agency for Occupational Risks (Fedris) reveals that, for the third year running, the number of occupational injuries in the private sector has increased, from 157,242 to 168,462 injuries. But given that the working population has also increased, one observes that in fact there has been a constant downward trend for some years now.

Most injuries occurred in industry and construction, and the 20-to-29 age group posts a higher-than-average injury rate.

Almost one out of two injuries (47.9%) led to a sick leave; 42.3% of the victims were able to keep on working, while 9.8% were reported as having a permanent work disability. There was a fatal outcome in 0.1% of cases.

Just like in previous years, accidents on the way to work had the most serious sequels. The percentage of injuries with an expected permanent disability stands at 11.3%.

### ► SWEDEN: the factory is closed while the employees learn how to fall correctly

Falls are the main causes of occupational injuries in Sweden. To prevent these risks, the firm Proplate has introduced training so that its employees may develop their balance and strength, and to acquire falling techniques.

Each Thursday for 10 weeks, production will halt and more than 100 square metres of judo mats will be placed in the factory's large machinery room. Training is provided by four judo instructors, in accordance with a programme developed jointly by the Swedish judo society and AFA Försäkring which brought together a doctor, an occupational therapist and three physiotherapists.

"It is extremely important to prevent injuries, and this training provides good physical exercise while being amusing", says Max Björk, Proplate's CEO. More generally, the goal is also to reduce sick leave and the costs of healthcare and rehabilitation for employers and for society in general.  
[To find out more](#)

### ► [GREAT-BRITAIN: Health and safety at work statistics 2019](#)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published occupational health and safety data for the period 2018/2019. The key facts are as follows:

- Work-related ill health cases (new or long-standing) in 2018/19: 1.4 million
- Work-related stress, depression or anxiety cases (new or long-standing) in 2018/19: 0.6 million
- Work-related musculoskeletal disorder cases (new or long-standing) in 2018/19: 0.5 million
- Workers sustaining a non-fatal injury in 2018/19: 0.6 million
- Fatal injuries to workers in 2018/19: 147
- Mesothelioma deaths in 2017, with a similar number of lung cancer deaths linked to past exposures to asbestos: 2,526
- Non-fatal injuries to employees reported by employers in 2018/19: 69,208
- Annual costs of workplace injury in 2017/18: 5.2 billion
- Annual costs of new cases of work-related ill health in 2017/18, excluding long latency illness such as cancer: 9.8 billion
- Working days lost due to work-related ill health and non-fatal workplace injuries in 2018/19: 28.2 million

[To find out more](#)

## Events

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► [Save the date: 12 March 2020, Paris](#)

► [SHO2020 - International Symposium Occupational safety and hygiene, April 6-7, 2020, Porto \(Portugal\)](#)

► [XXII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, October 4-7, 2020, Toronto \(Canada\)](#)

► [EPICOH 2020, 31/08 -3/09 2020, Montreal \(Canada\)](#)

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