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| Vorstand

**Prevention of work-related stress
needs shop floor initiatives
and obligatory regulation**

Berlin 29.-30. October 2014



Work-related stress



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- **World Health Organisation (WHO): „one of the biggest health risks in the 21st century“**



- **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work: EU-15: costs of stress-related health problems = 15 – 20 billion € per year**



- **„Work-related stress can be caused by different factors such as work content, work organisation, work environment, poor communication. If a problem of work-related stress is identified, action must be taken to prevent, eliminate or reduce it.“**

Framework agreement on work-related stress 2004

- **Esener Survey: 79% of European managers are concerned by work-related stress, but less than a third of the companies have set procedures ready to deal with it.**



Drivers for OSH



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Table : Major reasons for addressing health and safety in the establishment (% establishments, EU-27)

Fulfilment of legal obligations	90%
Requests from employees or their representatives	76%
Requirements from clients or concern about the organisation's reputation	67%
Staff retention and absence management	59%
Pressure from the labour inspectorate	57%
Economic or performance-related reasons	52%

Base: all establishments.

The questions were addressed to managers

2009

ESENER



Drivers for psychosocial risk management



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Table : Major reasons for addressing psychosocial risks in the establishment (% establishments, EU-27)

Fulfilment of legal obligations	63%
Requests from employees or their representatives	36%
Requirements from clients or concern about the organisation's reputation	26%
A decline in productivity or in the quality of outputs	17%
Pressure from the labour inspectorate	15%
High absenteeism rates	11%

The questions were addressed to managers

Base: establishments with procedures and/or measures in place to deal with psychosocial risks

2009

ESENER



Workers' involvement is a key factor in health and safety management



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Figure : Health and safety management measures, by existence of a formal employee representation (% establishments, EU-27)



Base: all establishments (management interviews).

ESENER shows that workplaces with employee participation are much more likely to see successful health and safety measures implemented. This is particularly the case for smaller workplaces where it is an important trigger for effective management of psychosocial risks.





Multi-level-strategy to prevent psychosocial risks



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Level of action	Implementing
Company	To enforce best practice examples and to use them for practice transfer
Organisations	To prioritize prevention in all organisations and to build alliances. Important step: the joint declaration between Labour Ministry, employers association and trade unions (Sept. 2013)
National strategy	Preventing psychosocial risks as a main goal of national strategy for all actors
Science and research	To work on the gaps in research (i.e. combination of hazards) and to evaluate the process of implementation
Legislative authority new	To close the gap in the legislation



theguardian

Germany ponders ground-breaking law to combat work-related stress

Draft proposal states employees should be protected from being 'permanently reachable by modern means of communication'

[The Guardian](#), Thursday 18 September 2014

Now the German labour minister, Andrea Nahles, has commissioned an in-depth study to establish a definition of work-related stress and calculate its economic cost. "Noise can be measured in decibels, but with stress it is much harder to say what it actually is," a spokesperson said. "So we are trying to establish a scientific foundation."

The study could pave the way for an "anti-stress act" as proposed by [Germany's](#) metalworkers' union. The draft includes a demand that employees should be protected from being "permanently reachable by modern means of communication" such as email or mobile phones.



To close the gap in the legislation



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- ➔ There is obligatory prevention in Germany for most of the hazards (chemicals, noise, vibration, working time etc.).
- ➔ But there is still a gap in legislation concerning psychosocial risks.
- ➔ There is further need to act both on European and national level.
- ➔ Stop the deregulation and the REFIT-programme. REFIT is not only 'used as an excuse to get rid of various pieces of legislation, but it is also a serious attempt to destroy the social dialogue and the whole social acquis'. (ETUC)