

## Summer update from the EWA project

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## 10 key messages from EWA

The EWA project presents 10 key messages for alcohol in the workplace

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## Information about MEPMIS

Learn about substances and the workplace from the project “Maximising employee performance by minimising the impact of substances in the workplace” (MEPMIS)

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## Healthy Workplace Campaign (HWC)

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) presents its campaign

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## DHS, one of the EWA partners, recently launched its website “Sucht am Arbeitsplatz“

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## Reports on health and workplace

Find more information about health and workplace in WHO Europe’s report “Alcohol in the European Union” and “Health and Safety at work in Europe”

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For more information about EWA:  
[www.ewaproject.eu](http://www.ewaproject.eu)



## Summer update from EWA

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Welcome to the second newsletter from the European Alcohol and Workplace (EWA) project. In this edition, you will get news from some of the EWA partners, information about the Healthy Workplace Campaign from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work as well as information about new reports relevant for alcohol and the workplace.

From the management's side, interim reports have been made and are available online on the EWA page ([www.ewaproject.eu](http://www.ewaproject.eu)). The reports give insight in the progress of the project so far and please access the EWA webpage for more details.

The project is now entering the last phase of the project, and we expect to show the results of the project at the EWA conference May 2013.

With best wishes for a nice summer,

**EWA Management Team**



## EWA 10 key messages

By: Lidia Segura Garcia and Mari Cruz Rodriguez Jareño,  
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### Evidence

- Alcohol consumption has a very negative impact on work: globally, alcohol is the world's number one risk factor for ill-health and premature death amongst the 25-59 year old age group, the core of the working age population.
- Workplace alcohol consumption has economic, safety and legal implications. Overall, lost productivity costs feature as the dominant element in social costs studies arising from the harm done by alcohol, being about half of the total social cost of alcohol to the European Union.
- Evidence suggests that prevention activities at the work place to reduce the harm done by alcohol should be embedded in broader workplace health promotion and well-being at work initiatives.

### Best practice

- Alcohol affects all environments thus a percentage of the workforce will have alcohol problems: a proactive approach to addressing the situation with professional expertise is the best way to benefit both the company and the employees.
- Benefits for companies for undertaking a workplace intervention:
  - Improved safety: especially important if risk to third parties is an issue
  - Improved productivity: by reducing absenteeism, presenteeism and injuries.
  - Improved corporate image and working environment (social corporate responsibility)
- Doing a basic intervention is better than not doing anything, and might be a good first step. Quality has to be assured, though, and in enterprises with significant resources comprehensive programmes should be encouraged. A transparent process within a trusting and confidential environment will help overcome potentially initial hostility / suspicion.

- Good team work, high participation and commitment of the whole company including employees, workers' representatives, management, production departments, human resources, occupational medicine and health and safety departments, and health and safety committee are very important. In particular, including employees' representatives in this process is likely to increase success, and the occupational health professionals will often be the best situated for confidentially dealing with the medical aspects of the case.
- One of the most cost effective single interventions is to design and implement an alcohol policy:
  - if well planned and conceived, it should not generate much cost;
  - implementing it in itself has a lasting, on-going effect unlike other one-off activities;
  - its mere existence might act as a deterrent too;
  - policies make procedures clearer and fairer as the same rules will apply to everybody and avoid improvisation;
  - policies should have clear disciplinary procedures, but should include supporting mechanisms too (both medical and occupational).
- To improve effectiveness:
  - the target group for the intervention should be clearly defined. If the intervention is addressed to several target groups, the content will have to be adapted accordingly. Managers, in particular, should have enough training (knowledge and skills) so as to act appropriately on alcohol issues.
  - an implementation schedule should be carefully designed and planned as the most useful interventions are long term, on-going and developed in stages.
- Evaluation is of utmost importance to assess the effectiveness of the intervention and adjust objectives accordingly: a baseline assessment should be performed for comparison reasons.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



## Information about MEPMIS

By: Piotr Plichta  
NIOM Poland

The National Centre for Workplace Health Promotion (Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine in Lodz - Poland) participated in the project entitled "Maximising employee performance by minimising the impact of substances in the workplace" (MEPMIS) within the framework of LifeLong Learning Programme (LdV TOI) UK/09/LLP-LdV/TOI-163\_265 from 1-10-2009 to 30-09-2011 by the Consortium consisting of seven EU Member States with the Work2Health (Great Britain) as a coordinator.

The reason: In the context of the global marketplace and the need to remain competitive, inappropriate use of substances by employees is presenting an increasing number of European employers with problems in their workplaces. These include increased sickness absence, lower levels of performance and reduced productivity of staff.

In small and medium size enterprises line managers and supervisors have a key role to play in developing and promoting good corporate practice and minimising the effects on the company of inappropriate use of alcohol and drugs by staff.

However it is line managers and supervisors, who may well use alcohol or drugs themselves, who are required to take action when someone they manage uses substances in a way that impacts on their ability to do their job. Unfortunately, guidance for managers on how to act in these circumstances is often inadequate, incomplete or missing altogether, and many companies do not possess the tools to enable managers to deal with substance use at a corporate level.

The aim of the MEPMIS Project is to develop a training resource (web based, & face to face for trainers and managers in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that will equip them with the appropriate skills and sufficient knowledge and understanding to enable them

to deal both proactively and reactively with the issue of substances and their impact on work / employment.

The project has four objectives:

- to identify the learning and skill needs of line managers in European SMEs in terms of addressing substances use, work and employment
- to use the experience gained in two UK training projects to develop a training resource
- to identify and incorporate innovative experience from the UK, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland into the resource
- to develop the resource to publishable condition – including textual development, piloting, evaluation, publication, launch and dissemination

The partnership: The agencies involved in the project all have extensive experience in the development and implementation of workplace programmes which are designed to improve the health, wellbeing and performance of employees. The partners include a university, a research agency, a web design and IT company and three consultancies, all of whom specialise in organisational and employee performance.

The outcomes: The project will deliver three main outcomes. These will be:

- the creation of a dedicated website which will provide an e-learning platform <http://www.alcoholdrugsandwork.eu/?i=mepmis.en.about>
- the presence in each of the partner countries of expertise and capacity to develop and provide 'face to face' training courses
- resources on the subject of substances and work which can be used by line managers and supervisors in SMEs and larger companies as well.

See more: <http://www.alcoholdrugsandwork.eu>

By:  
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work  
<http://osha.europa.eu>

## Healthy Workplace Campaign (HWC)

### Our Healthy Workplaces Campaigns are now the biggest occupational safety and health (OSH) campaigns in the world.

#### Safety in numbers

But more than five and a half thousand people are still dying in the EU every year, as a result of workplace accidents. Thousands more die of occupational diseases. Research tells us that most of these accidents and cases of ill-health are preventable: lives could be saved if we did more to prevent workplace risks. That's why we're focusing on risk prevention in our new campaign, which is launched on 18 April 2012. The campaign is designed to help businesses, workers and their representatives to cooperate, to evaluate and reduce the risks that Europe's workers face.

This working together is crucial. Of course, good leadership is vital for risk prevention: you need visible commitment from managers. But managers also need to engage their workforces in the process of preventing risks: workers are often the real experts on their workplaces, after all, and their buy-in is essential if changes are to be made.

Running something as big as our Europe-wide Healthy Workplaces Campaigns means working with the big European institutions. We've been lucky to have had high-level support, as for previous campaigns, from the European Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Council Presidencies. And our current campaign theme – Working together for risk prevention – fits clearly with the EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work, as well as with the 2020 Strategy for inclusive growth in the EU.

#### Reaching out

The Healthy Workplaces Campaigns aren't just about working with the big European institutions, though: they only succeed if we can also reach workplaces in the



Christa Sedlatschek, Director of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, on the Agency's new Healthy Workplaces Campaign for 2012-13, entitled Working together for risk prevention.

remotest corners of Europe. That's why, in the campaign, we'll be drawing on all our experience of working through our networks of focal points and partners.

There's our important collaboration with the Enterprise Europe Network, for example, which gives us access to Europe's SME community. We've been working with the EEN since 2009, enabling us to reach SMEs with important health and safety messages.

And the involvement of our official campaign partners is vital. With every campaign, more and more organisations have been joining as partners (including some big names from around Europe). In exchange for promoting the campaign, we give our partners high-profile recognition and practical support: that includes providing publicity material, such as publications, posters, leaflets and films – all freely available through the campaign website, [www.healthy-workplaces.eu](http://www.healthy-workplaces.eu).

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## Healthy Workplace Campaign (HWC) - part 2

As with previous years, highlights of the campaign include Good Practice Awards (to be presented in April 2013), to recognise organisations who have found innovative ways of communicating our campaign messages. And many awareness-raising events are organised around the European Week for Safety and Health at Work, in October every year. Our new campaign sends a strong message, emphasising the importance of investing in OSH in difficult economic times: it shows that good OSH is good for business, increasing competitiveness by increasing productivity, reducing absenteeism and reducing staff turnover.

The campaign's ultimate aim, though, is to reduce accidents and illness. Get it right, and we'll start to see a fall in the estimated cost of workplace accidents and illness, of 490 billion Euros every year. And more importantly, we'll be reducing the human suffering that they cause.

For national organisations, the point of reference is the national focal points. To find these and more information about the campaign, see [www.healthy-workplaces.eu](http://www.healthy-workplaces.eu)

## Launch of the DHS Website „Sucht am Arbeitsplatz“



By: Peter Raiser

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**In April 2012, the DHS and the health insurance company “BARMER GEK” launched a website on the topic of addiction problems at the workplace. A press release supported the launch which was well perceived in the media.**

Successful prevention needs to reach all persons in their everyday life and living environment. The workplace is a setting, where major parts of the adult population can be addressed. Good concepts, strategies and programmes are available in Germany for addiction prevention at the workplace. The website contributes to the dissemination of knowledge and good practise.

The website offers a comprehensive overview of the topic for companies and public administration bodies. The site aims to inform the public as well as all target groups from management, supervisors, human resource managers, staff council and staff.

All interested persons can find information about prevention, intervention, counselling and treatment as well as policies for the workplace. The webpage links to brochures, examples of written policies, guidelines for intervention and more information material as well as referrals to counselling and treatments centres, local and regional networks or research groups.

When employees develop substance related problems, their performance and the workplace are affected directly. It is the employer's responsibility, to implement strategies and programmes for the prevention of substance abuse in the workplace. Counselling, help offers, referral systems and intervention plans should also be part of programmes and be constituted in written policies. The website helps companies and workplaces to develop programmes by providing information material and guidelines, checklists and examples of good practise.

The website in German is a national information offer for all persons interested in matters of prevention and help for addiction problems in the workplace: [www.sucht-am-arbeitsplatz.de](http://www.sucht-am-arbeitsplatz.de)

## Reports on health and workplace

### WHO Europe with new report on “Alcohol in the European Union”

In March 2012, WHO Europe launched a new report on alcohol, which gives a comprehensive overview of alcohol in the European Union.

The report presents new data and analyses both the alcohol consumption patterns and the resulting harm to health of both drinkers and non-drinkers. Most importantly, it presents actions to be implemented to improve the health of the European population. The report makes it clear that harm from alcohol is not only a health issue, but is also effects our workplace, productivity and the economy overall. “The EU faces an urgent need to reduce the burden of alcohol, not only to improve the health and well-being of its citizens but also to strengthen the economic sustainability and productivity of the Union as a whole” (Alcohol in the European Union:134).

Alcohol and the workplace is one of the areas covered in the new report, where the topics alcohol and workplace, as well as alcohol and unemployment, are being explored. The chapter also gives recommendations for policy and practice.

Access Alcohol in the European Union report  
<http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-publish/abstracts/alcohol-in-the-european-union.-consumption,-harm-and-policy-approaches>

### Health and safety at work in Europe – A statistical portrait

The 2010 edition of the Health and safety at work in Europe (1999-2007) – A statistical portrait presents a statistical portrait of the situation in Europe from 1999 to 2007. It focuses on accidents at work, work-related health

problems and occupational diseases, and exposure to risk factors at work.

Data from different European surveys are presented in this report, including the Labour Force Survey (LFS) (more specifically the ad hoc modules on safety and health at work), European Statistics on Accidents at Work (ESAW), European Occupational Diseases Statistics (EODS), The European Survey on Working Conditions (EWCS), and the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER).

The publication is part of Eurostat’s monitoring activities, and aims to support the Community Strategy of the European Commission to improve health and safety at work in Europe.

Access the 2010 edition of the Health and safety at work in Europe (1999-2007) – A statistical portrait  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-31-09-290/EN/KS-31-09-290-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-31-09-290/EN/KS-31-09-290-EN.PDF)



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