



Improving occupational safety and health in micro and small enterprises – findings from the 3-year EU-OSHA project

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11 June 2018, Brussels



European Union - policy context

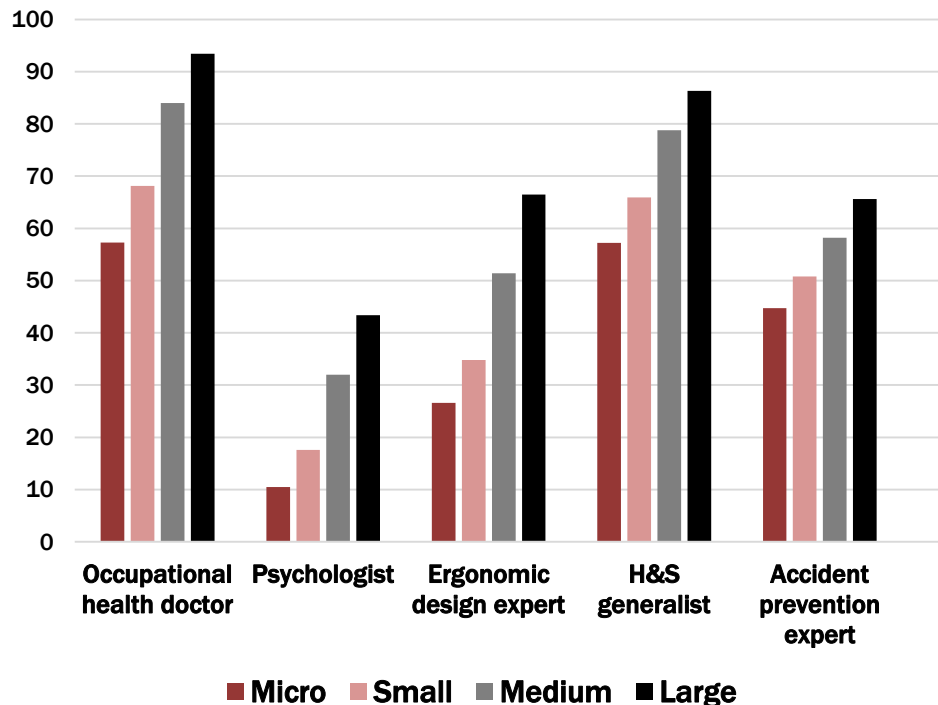
- **98.8% enterprises in the European Union are micro and small (1-49 workers)**
 - Nearly 50% of workforce
- **EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020**
- **Safer and Healthier Work for All - Modernisation of the EU Occupational Safety and Health Legislation Policy (2017)**

Top Three Occupational Safety and Health Actions

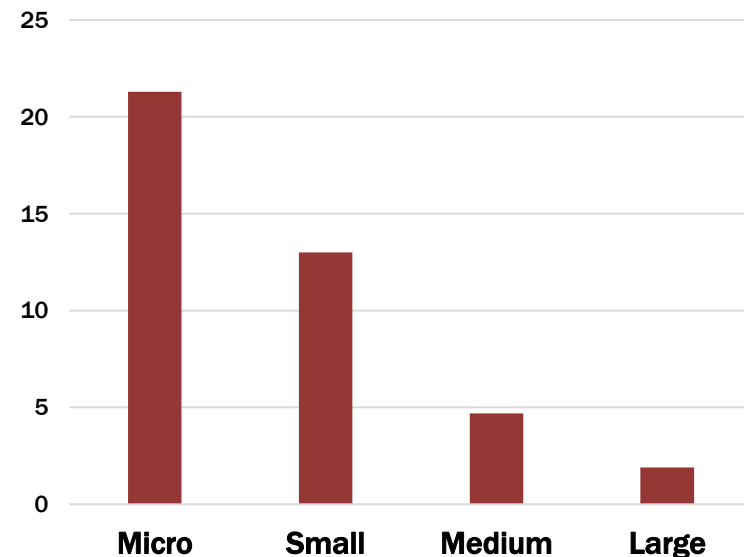
- 1) Stepping up the fight against occupational cancer through legislative proposals accompanied by increased guidance and awareness-raising;
- 2) Helping businesses, in particular micro-enterprises and SMEs, comply with occupational safety and health rules;**
- 3) Cooperating with Member States and social partners to remove or update outdated rules and to refocus efforts on ensuring better and broader protection, compliance and enforcement on the ground.

European Survey on New & Emerging Risks (ESENER-2): Challenges in handling OSH are significant as enterprises get smaller

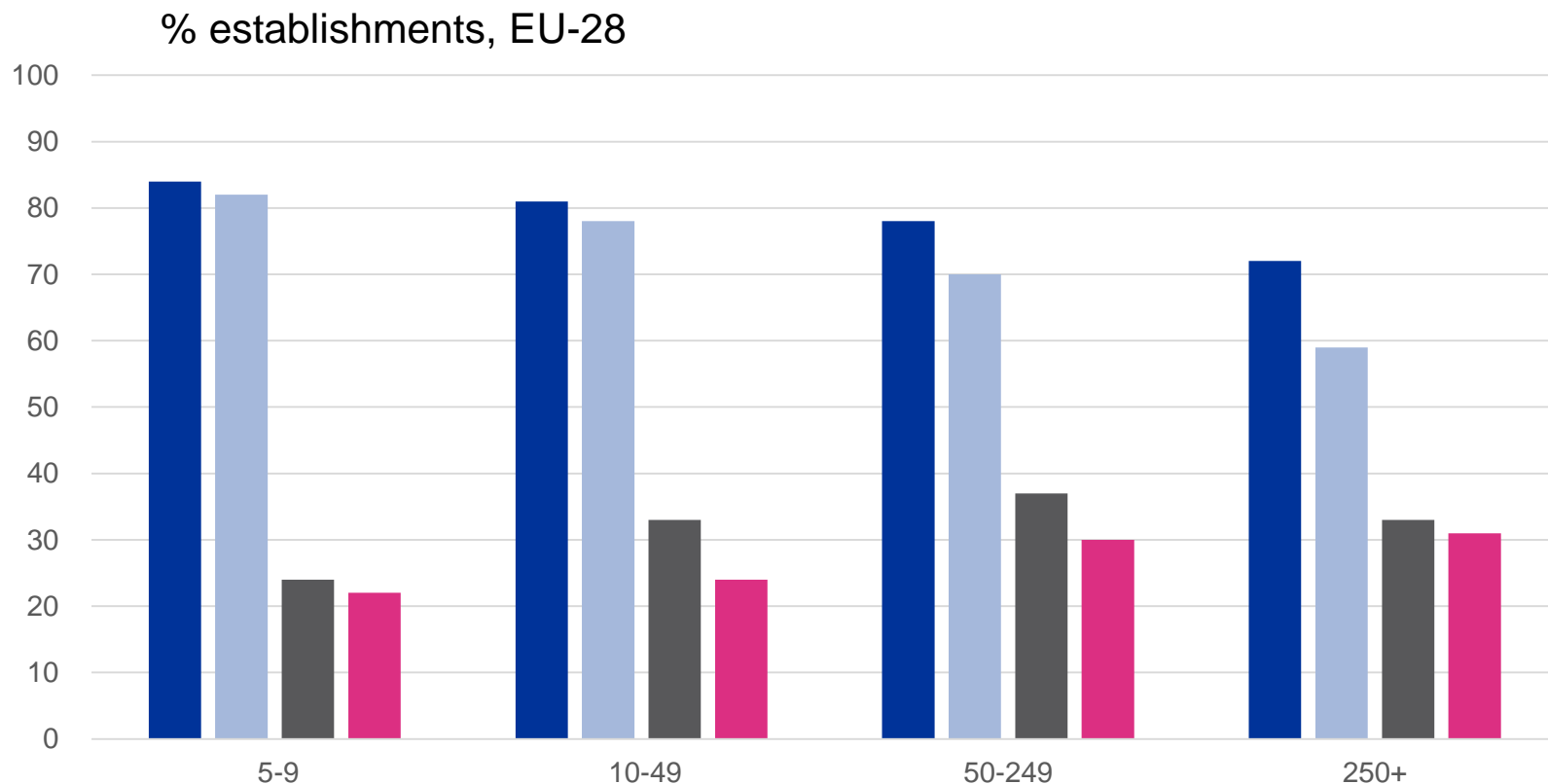
Use of OHS services by enterprise size (%)



Lack of risk assessment or other checks (%)



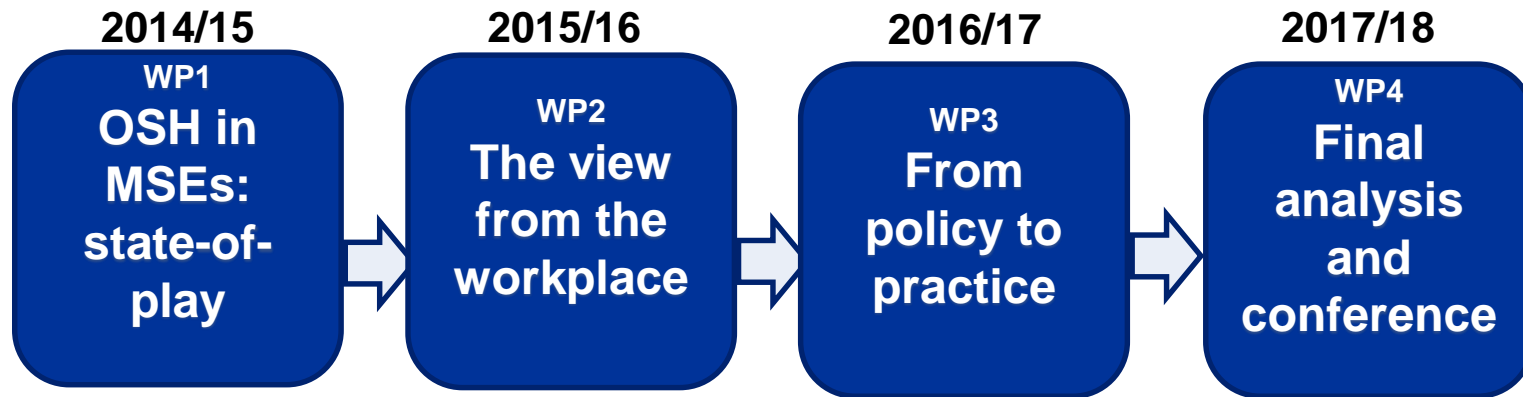
ESENER-2: Reasons why workplace risk assessments are not carried out regularly



- The hazards and risks are already known
- There are no major problems
- The necessary expertise is lacking
- The procedure is too burdensome

Base: establishments in the EU-28 that do not carry out risk assessments regularly

Improving OSH in micro and small enterprises (EU-OSHA, 2014-18)



➤ Aims

- Evidence-based support for policy recommendations
- Good practices in terms of policies, strategies and interventions

➤ Research methods: desk research and field analyses

- **Contractor:** **Belgium** (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), **Denmark** (Aalborg University), **Estonia** (Tallinn University of Technology), **France** (Institut Polytechnique de Bordeaux), **Germany** (Kooperationsstelle), **Italy** (Politecnico di Milano), **Romania** (INCDPM), **Sweden** (IVL Svenska Mijoeinstitutet), **United Kingdom** (Cardiff University)

Phase 1: The strategy dilemma

- ✓ 'General and multifaceted lack of resources'. A substantial proportion of MSEs are those pursuing 'low road survival strategies'



Phase 2: Interviews with MSEs (160 case studies)

➤ Different needs and motivation:

Avoiders

'Accidents are stupid coincidences which are very difficult to foresee'

'Musculoskeletal problems? Well, we all get worn down one day...'

Reactors

'Risk assessment is not what we really like doing in our jobs, but it has to be done'

Learners

'I know the knowledge is out there, I just have to find it'

'Risk Assessment is a living document, when a new risk is identified, we add it there'

Phase 2: Interviews with MSEs (160 case studies)

➤ Common and shared perspective (managers and workers)

- Reactive approach and ad hoc actions
- Strong believe in 'common sense'
- Social and spatial proximity, easy to normalize unsafe acts
- Risks perceived as 'part of the job', health risks underestimated
- Believe in individual responsibility for OSH



➤ Good practices - examples

- **Actions by Authorities** (Inspection Campaign, Denmark)
- **E-tools for risk assessment** (OiRA, EU-OSHA; Stress Management, Italy)
- **Sectoral Programs** (Agriculture Advisors, Estonia; BAMBUS, Denmark)
- **Training - traditional and online** (Synergy, France; Safe in the store, Sweden)
- **Inspections by other bodies** (General Pharmaceutical Council, UK)



Phase 3: OSH policies, strategies, interventions and existing support

➤ Success factors

- Recommendation by authorities, endorsed by the social partners
- Direct, face-to-face interaction
- Solutions to concrete problems
- Adapted to the needs and conditions in the MSE
- Simple, free of charge, no 'risk' of being inspected when using a tool

“You need to show genuine interest in their business and their needs”



Phase 4: Final Analysis

- Improving OSH in micro and small enterprises is possible – a wide range of tools and interventions exists
- However, there is a need for solutions which are effective in reaching out to the most vulnerable MSEs
- What works, for whom and under what circumstances? What is the role of:
 - Governance, regulation and enforcement
 - Social partners
 - Advisory services
 - Education and practical support
- Final conference: 19 June 2018, Brussels

Reports

1) Contexts and arrangements for occupational safety and health in micro and small enterprises in the EU

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/contexts-and-arrangementsoccupational-safety-and-health-micro/view>

2) Safety and health in micro and small enterprises in the EU: from policy to practice

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/policy-practice-policies-strategies-programmes-and-actions/view>

3) Safety and health in micro and small enterprises in the EU: from policy to practice — description of good examples

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/safety-and-health-micro-and-small-enterprises-eu-policy-practice/view>

4) Safety and health in micro and small enterprises in the EU: the views from the workplace

To be published 19 June

5) Safety and health in micro and small enterprises in the EU: final report from the 3-year Sesame project

To be published 19 June

Micro and Small Enterprises

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/safety-and-health-micro-and-small-enterprises>

Thank you!

EU-OSHA: www.osha.europa.eu

Safety and health at work is everyone's concern. It's good for you. It's good for business.

 European Agency
for Safety and Health
at Work



Micro and small enterprises & OSH

Working for safer, healthier and more successful small businesses



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