



EU-OSHA MULTI-ANNUAL STRATEGIC PROGRAMME (MSP) 2014-2020

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Abbreviations

AMP	Annual Management Plan
CLP	Classification, Labelling and Packaging (EU Regulation)
ECHA	European Chemicals Agency
EEN	Enterprise Europe Network
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ESENER	Enterprise Survey on New and Emerging Risks
EU-OSHA	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
MSD	Muscular Skeletal Disorder
MSP	Multi-annual Strategic Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OiRA	Online interactive Risk Assessment
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (EU Regulation)
SLIC	Senior Labour Inspectors Committee
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Foreword

Work in Europe is changing rapidly. The economic crisis, demographic change, new risks, and emerging sectors of work all demand an approach to occupational safety and health that is coherent, and integrated into other policy areas as well as based on tripartism. Tripartism is the bedrock upon which all work of the Agency is built, and a key element of the European Social Model as inscribed in the EU Treaties.

Action is required, as the cost of work-related accidents and ill-health is considerable. Published studies suggest that there may be as many as 167,000 fatalities attributable to work-related accidents and diseases in the EU each year. That is on top of the approximately 20 million people of working age in the EU who report that they are suffering from a work-related health problem, according to Eurostat. The cost of all this, to workers, businesses, and the EU Member States, is one that we cannot afford – estimates put it at around 3 per cent of GDP. There is compelling evidence that money spent on occupational safety and health should not be viewed as a cost but an investment, particularly in the light of economic recovery.

EU-OSHA's Enterprise Survey on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER) shows that it is Europe's smallest employers that require the most support. They need to be made aware of the hazards and risks that their workers face, and provided with accessible, interactive tools to support their risk prevention activities. The Agency's Online interactive Risk Assessment tool (OiRA) will continue to provide the basis for effective, efficient prevention in small and micro-enterprises, with the tools for end-users being tailored to the requirements of specific sectors with the active involvement of the social partners.

With the retirement age being raised in many countries, occupational safety and health has a major role to play in ensuring that Europe's citizens can work longer, and stay safe and healthy until retirement. 'Work ability' can be seen as the balance between a worker's resources and the demands of their work, taking a holistic view of how the worker and the work interact. There is a need to consider the work ability of those at work through actions such as workplace health promotion.

In addition, we need to consider the 'gender dimension' of occupational safety and health, to ensure that women's health issues are not lost in a broad statistical picture of occupational health and safety in the EU. We also need to ensure that the health and safety of younger workers is protected.

The public perception of occupational safety and health issues is varied. We see recognition across Europe that OSH is needed to ensure economic competitiveness and that it is important for a later retirement, but the level of information about health and safety risks is varied, as is the level of confidence that health and safety problems will be addressed. Musculoskeletal disorders, and psychosocial issues such as job-related stress, are causing particular concern, and this concern is shared by experts, employers and workers. EU-OSHA will be running a two-year campaign, starting in 2014, to raise awareness of psychosocial issues, and the tools available for their prevention.

The evolving nature of work in Europe means that there is a need for joined-up, tripartite policy actions and on-going research in a broad range of areas, to ensure that those who are working to prevent risks in Europe's workplaces are suitably well-informed. EU-OSHA has a long-term commitment to the 'mainstreaming' of occupational safety and health into other policy areas, such as education. The Agency also has a unique network of officially appointed focal points in all Member States ensuring that the Agency reaches far into the Member States and can rely on a long-lasting, fruitful cooperation with Eurofound.

EU-OSHA will contribute to keeping the European workforce healthy and safe by contributing to evidence-based information on all aspects of occupational safety and health, by raising awareness of the importance of health and safety at work, and by working with stakeholders to ensure that there is a coherent approach to prevention. In doing so, and through the development of a more 'portfolio-based' approach, to respond to the differing needs of the Member States, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work will support the key areas of the Europe 2020 growth strategy.

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1. EU-OSHA's mission, vision and values

When the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) was established, with the adoption of its founding regulation in 1994¹, it was with the aim of providing the EU bodies, the Member States, the social partners and those involved in the field with useful technical, scientific and economic information relating to safety and health at work. This aim has guided the work of EU-OSHA since then, and also forms the framework for the current Multi-annual Strategic Programme (MSP).

In order to fulfill the aim defined in its founding regulation, EU-OSHA collects, analyses and disseminates technical, scientific and economic information on occupational safety and health.

To ensure a clear focus for its activities over the period of the MSP, EU-OSHA's Governing Board has defined the Agency's mission and vision (below). A clear focus in the MSP will be to ensure that the resources that EU-OSHA has available contribute in the best possible way to achieving the aim set out in the founding regulation.

The formulation of the mission and vision statements is based on the experience that EU-OSHA has gained so far, and on an analysis of the most likely challenges and opportunities over the next MSP period. In the next chapter more details will be provided on these issues, but one of the key learnings has been the need for a clearer definition of the nature of the Agency's contribution and work. A clear objective with the new statements is therefore to stress the Agency's facilitator role in information development and exchange, and to better cover the active role of the Agency in communication and networking. In line with this, the Agency also wants to stress the important role that intermediaries play in its work.

The **mission** is a brief statement of the fundamental purpose of EU-OSHA. The statement makes clear what the Agency provides to its users, and informs staff about the overall goal of the Agency:

We develop, gather and provide reliable and relevant information, analysis and tools to advance knowledge, raise awareness and exchange occupational safety and health (OSH) information and good practice which will serve the needs of those involved in OSH

The **vision** is a precise statement defining the ultimate goal for the MSP period. The goal is external to the Agency:

To be a recognised leader promoting healthy and safe workplaces in Europe based on tripartism, participation and the development of an OSH risk prevention culture, to ensure a smart, sustainable, productive and inclusive economy

While the mission and vision statements define the content and purpose of the Agency's work, the **values** set out the way that EU-OSHA operates:

Pan-European

We create European added value by bringing together actors from across Europe and by providing the tools to create a common approach to occupational safety and health while respecting national specificities

Relevant

We ensure that our activities are relevant to the most pressing OSH needs in Europe and contribute to the realisation of wider EU policy objectives

Tripartite

We work on the basis of, and promote, tripartism as the cornerstone of our work

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 2062/94 of 18 July 1994

Partnership- and network-based

We participate in and connect networks and build communities to create European added value

Reliable

We see the quality assurance of our work as a key condition for success

Responsive and innovative

We are responsive to new OSH developments and innovative in addressing them

Good governance

We place great importance on accountability and transparency towards our stakeholders and efficiency in the use of our human and financial resources

2. The context: challenges, opportunities and EU-OSHA

The context in which EU-OSHA operates has evolved since its establishment, and it will continue to evolve over the period of the next Multi-annual Strategic Programme (MSP), not least regarding the effect of the economic crisis and the contribution of OSH to a recovery based on quality jobs and sustainable growth. This also means that the challenges and opportunities that we are presented with have changed, as have the needs that the Agency has to address. At the same time the Agency is developing, and has by now a rich experience from which to draw lessons. To ensure that the resources that EU-OSHA has available are used in the best way, the Agency's activities must be matched against the needs that it aims to meet. This chapter provides a brief overview of key elements in the Agency's environment and in the profile of the Agency itself. These factors have been decisive in defining both the mission and vision statements in the previous chapter, and the strategic objectives, priority areas and activities described in the following chapters.

2.1. The policy context

The policy context for the EU-OSHA (MSP) is dominated by the clear objectives at the European level that are set out in the Europe 2020 strategy and, at the same time, by the impact of the economic crisis on policy and OSH. The Europe 2020 strategy sets the objective of creating a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy in Europe, and sets out targets to achieve this. Of particular importance to EU-OSHA are the targets of having 75 per cent of 20-64 year-olds in employment (compared to 68.5 per cent in 2012), and reducing the number of people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion. As is clearly stated in the Europe 2020 strategy, these targets are common objectives requiring effort from a variety of actors at Member State and EU level.

Better OSH can make an important contribution to achieving the targets in the Europe 2020 strategy. Poor OSH is one of the reasons why many people leave the labour market before the official retirement age. In order to make it possible for people to work longer, it is essential to ensure that their health allows them to do so. A Eurobarometer survey shows that 57 per cent of EU citizens consider that people aged 55 and older may stop working because workplaces are not adapted to the needs of this group.² In the same survey, Europeans said that on average they are capable of doing their current job until they are 61.7 years old.³ This, of course, puts a responsibility on everybody involved in OSH, including EU-OSHA. However, the responsibility goes beyond the OSH community: we need to 'mainstream' OSH in areas such as employment policy, public health policy, transport policy, education policy and research policy.

Consequently the Agency finds itself in a situation where it faces increasing demands and expectations, without an accompanying increase in resources. To meet this challenge, the Agency will aim at increased efficiency via various measures. It will focus on fewer but larger-scale activities (see below), and make sure that decisions on new activities or management of existing activities is taken on the basis of good evidence. In relation to its network partners the Agency will adapt its processes to ensure that its activities meet their needs, and involve the network partners at an early stage.

2.2. The macro-economic and employment context

Occupational safety and health has to be situated within a broader context, and take into account changes in that context. Important and profound changes are going on in a number of areas, and over the MSP period further changes can be predicted.

At a macro-level, the EU is currently experiencing a major economic and social crisis that will continue to affect the labour market, in terms of unemployment (with a fall in the employment rate from 70.3 per cent in 2008 to 68.5 per cent in 2012), restructuring and job insecurity, as well as the resources available for OSH and OSH policies. This may in turn have an impact on trends in occupational exposures and risks, work-related accidents and diseases as well as workers' groups at risk. Bearing in mind the length and severity of the crisis, its far-reaching consequences on OSH need to be analysed and addressed. In order to achieve the target set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy, the employment rate has to increase by 6.5 percentage points between 2012 and 2020. OSH systems

² Eurobarometer, January 2012, Active Ageing, QB9, p 52.

³ Eurobarometer, January 2012, Active Ageing, QB13, p. 55.

have to play a role in reaching this target, while also adapting to the new situation in which more people are at work.

It is likely that we will continue to see increasing diversity in the European workforce. The challenges faced by this diverse workforce, especially in the context of the economic crisis, and their possible implications for OSH, deserve special attention. For example the difficulties that those in certain groups (such as young people or migrant workers) have in entering or remaining in the labour market may mean that they find themselves pushed into accepting jobs where OSH standards are lower.⁴ The recent dramatic rise in youth unemployment in several Member States suggests that the economic crisis is likely exacerbate this effect.

Another aspect of an increasingly diverse workforce is the growing number of working women. Within the overall increase in the workforce, the participation of women is likely to increase more than the participation of men. Employment rates were 62.4 per cent for women and 74.6 per cent for men in 2012, and the trend so far has been for women's participation rate to increase and for men's to remain stable.

The age composition of the employed population will also change, with the workforce gradually becoming older. Achieving the Europe 2020 objectives as regards employment rates to some extent means that people will have to work longer, but to help bring this about we need to ensure that employees' health allows them to work longer. Ageing workers are at risk of occupational health problems, such as back pain, because they have been exposed for longer to certain hazards.⁵ An older workforce reflects the general development in the population, in which the group aged 50-64 in EU-25 is expected to increase from 17.2 per cent of the total population in 2000 to 21.3 per cent in 2025⁶.

Among the working population, there are important differences. Women tend to work in part-time or temporary jobs, which tend to offer fewer training opportunities, be lower-paid, and in the case of different work places such as home care and cleaning may be subject to limited OSH preventive services (such as labour inspection, medical surveillance by occupational health services, OSH monitoring, etc.).⁷ Different forms of self-employment are relatively widespread: self-employment accounted for around 10 per cent of all employment in Europe in 2009. Other aspects to take into account are the fact that many workers have multiple jobs in areas such as cleaning and home care, and the increasing numbers of migrant workers working in Europe.

Having said this, the traditional open-ended 'permanent' contract is still the most common form of employment contract in Europe, covering around 80 per cent of all employees.

At the same time there is a shift going on from employment in agriculture and industry to the service sector. Around 70 per cent of those employed in Europe in 2011 worked in the service sector, with 5 per cent in agriculture and 25 per cent in industry.⁸ Figures for 2000 were 66 per cent for the service sector and 7 and 27 per cent for agriculture and industry respectively. This structural change has to be reflected in work on OSH. Also within industry sectors, new developments need to be taken into account, such as the growth in 'green jobs'.

2.3. The OSH challenges

8.6 per cent of workers in the EU-27 experienced a work-related health problem in the past 12 months – this corresponds to 20 million people. A further 3.2 per cent of workers in the EU-27 reported having an accident at work during a one year period – the equivalent of almost 7 million workers. Bone joint or muscle problems, and stress, anxiety and depression, were the most prevalent health problems.

Estimates of fatalities attributable to work range between 5,000 and 7,000 for occupational accidents, depending on the source (Eurostat and ILO), and 167,000 deaths in total attributed to work-related diseases and accidents. Official accident numbers and frequencies are going down in most Member

⁴ "Occupational health and safety risks for the most vulnerable workers", 2010, European Parliament

⁵ "Occupational health and safety risks for the most vulnerable workers", 2010, European Parliament

⁶ UN World Population Prospects (2002 Revision) and Eurostat 2004, Demographic Projections (Baseline scenario).

⁷ "Occupational health and safety risks for the most vulnerable workers", 2010, European Parliament

⁸ Eurostat, Statistics in Focus, 40/2012, Population and social statistics.

States, in part due to the economic crisis. As the economic recovery gains momentum, Europe must be vigilant that this positive trend continues.

The impact of the economic crisis on longer term health problems, including numbers of work-related diseases and accidents, and exclusion from the work force, is difficult to gauge. There are likely to be specific occupational health and safety challenges as the workforce becomes more 'atomised,' with increasing numbers of micro-enterprises and people who are self-employed – which is an on-going trend being reinforced in the context of the economic crisis – as well as people who work in several workplaces, this being linked with the increase in sub-contracted work, in short-term contracts and in people having multiple jobs. These fragmented workforce, workplaces and working lives pose specific challenges to OSH in terms of OSH monitoring and medical surveillance (with the increasing difficulty to link health effects to work exposures), of awareness-raising and enforcement as it gets more difficult to reach smaller workplaces. Budgetary constraints have had a significant impact on prevention services and national OSH authorities in some countries. In addition, micro- and small enterprises typically have a lower OSH awareness and OSH expertise, with fewer resources being made available for OSH. It will therefore be increasingly important to continue providing them with adequate support to manage OSH efficiently (for example with the Agency's Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tool) while reducing their overall administrative burden, thus helping them to increase their competitiveness and at the same time improve their OSH.

Among workers with work-related health problems, 22 per cent experience considerable limitations in normal daily activities. Sickness absence is reported by 62 per cent and absence for at least one month by 27 per cent of those with a health problem. Therefore, 1.9 per cent of all workers in the EU-27 were off work for at least one month in the past 12 months due to their most serious work-related health problem. Workers with atypical working hours, or who work shifts, are more likely to report work-related health problems.

Roughly estimated, about 2-2.5 per cent of the working population, about 4.5 - 5 million workers, experience a work-related health problem that causes them considerable limitations in normal daily activities and at work, and may lead to absences of more than a month per year. A higher proportion of older workers tend to be affected by long-term health problems, and their needs are a particular issue if we are looking to encourage people to continue working longer. But the proportion in the younger working population should also raise concerns: the younger working population now is the ageing workforce of the future, and so to prevent long-term OSH problems we need to target prevention efforts at this group in particular. This all represents a considerable economic cost. There is, however, still a significant need for better data on the economic aspects of OSH, in terms of the costs of under-investment in OSH, and in terms of the business case for OSH.

At the national level, negative patterns of job quality, such as weekend and night work, are declining almost everywhere. Workers' rights have improved in terms of consultation and information about risks. However, other negative job quality patterns – such as jobs with poor learning opportunities and poor access to training, shift work or non-fixed working schedules, greater work intensity and health-related absenteeism – are on the increase in almost all countries.

It may be the case, though, that the economic crisis means that we cannot simply extrapolate from past trends in looking at future OSH challenges. We know for example that some of the groups of workers who are expected to increase as a proportion of the total – migrant workers for example – are among those who already face considerable OSH challenges. With unprecedented economic pressure being put on many organisations, and with increases in the diversity and 'atomisation' of the workforce, it may be that we see a break from the past in terms of exposure to risks (not only psychosocial risks, but also physical and chemical hazards), with a sudden increase in the OSH challenges that we face.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent a particular challenge in terms of OSH and are at the same time the key to getting out of the crisis. SMEs have retained their importance throughout the crisis. More than 99 per cent of European enterprises are SMEs, and of these, around 90 per cent only employ between one and nine persons. The SMEs account for some 67 per cent of employees in the non-financial sector of the economy. Various studies, including the Agency's own ESENER survey, show that the challenges in handling OSH are particularly significant the smaller the enterprise gets. A particular focus must therefore be on SMEs and, especially, on the very small enterprises.

For dangerous substances, current systems for the assessment of health risks as well as for the workplace risk management may have to be adapted to address the risks posed by nanomaterials. While REACH and CLP are a valuable input to knowledge about chemical substances, and promote

communication up and down the supply chain, there is a need to consider wider issues (such as how to measure exposures to workers with multiple jobs or who work on temporary contracts, how to assess exposures to the increasing number of maintenance workers whose work is outsourced, how to assess exposures to part-time and shift workers, etc).

Additionally there is a need for better assessment and better understanding of the link between the health effects and workplace exposure in relation with reprotoxic and neurotoxic effects, and the effects of combined exposures, including low-dosage exposures. Adapted methodologies for toxicological and epidemiological assessment should be provided, as well as tools to manage these risks at company level, and improving monitoring systems for these exposures and effects.

Changes to the way that work is organised and to industry structures have an impact on exposures and patterns of exposure, and are a particular challenge to the implementation of current legislation by authorities, and at the enterprise level.

For psychosocial risks, many Member States estimate that the trend is increasing.⁹

In the EU-27, 27 per cent of workers are exposed to one or more factors that can adversely affect mental well-being in the workplace: this corresponds to 56 million workers. In general men report the same factors as women, while the greatest exposure is reported by workers in the Health and Social Work sector, and by highly skilled non-manual workers.

2.4. Building on EU-OSHA's experience

EU-OSHA is in a good position to meet these challenges. The Agency has continually delivered on the objectives defined for it. This is both the case when it comes to objectives set by the Board in its Strategies and Management Plans and when it comes to tasks given to it by the European Parliament or the European Commission. The achievements of the Agency are widely recognised.

Before formulating the current MSP, an extensive evaluation of the EU-OSHA Strategy 2009-2013 was carried out.¹⁰ The evaluation looked at the relevance of the Agency and its activities, its effectiveness in reaching its objectives, and the added value of its activities.

The conclusions from the evaluation show that the activities of the Agency are relevant to its key audiences: unsurprisingly, different activities were relevant to different audiences. At a more detailed level, it was concluded that individual products could be better adapted to the needs of the target audiences. The conclusions on effectiveness were also positive: for example, the work of the Risk Observatory was viewed as valid and credible, relevant and useful, by both of its target audiences (policy-makers and researchers). The main challenge that was identified relates to the provision of practical and user-friendly information on good practice. Finally, regarding added value, the Agency is considered to have contributed positively to achieving OSH objectives in the EU. Its contribution to Member State objectives depend on the Member State in question.

There is therefore a very positive basis on which to build the new EU-OSHA MSP. The Agency has proved that it can deliver relevant activities, meet objectives, and add value to the activities of its key stakeholders. This does not mean that the new MSP is a continuation of the current one. The Agency, its Board and staff, have reflected on results of the 2009-2013 Strategy and the conclusions are reflected in the following chapters. Some of the key learnings taken forward are to focus on fewer, but larger activities, to define target audiences very clearly, and to develop a portfolio approach adapting activities and deliverables to the target audiences.

2.5. How can EU-OSHA contribute to meeting the challenges?

Reflecting on the experience that it has gained and the challenges ahead, the Agency has defined six priority areas. These are all areas where there is a particular need for action and where the Agency's profile allows it to add considerable value. The starting point for the development of any activity under this MSP has been an assessment of the intended beneficiaries' needs, as meeting these needs is the ultimate success criterion for the Agency. From the analysis in this chapter, the Agency would focus on the following topics throughout the different priority areas and activities:

⁹ "Scoreboard 2009", European Commission, p. 44

¹⁰ Institute for Employment Studies, Mid-term evaluation of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work's 2009-2013 Strategy. 2011.

- Economic and demographic change
- OSH Management at enterprise level, in particular for micro and small sized enterprises:
 - o Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)
 - o Psychosocial risks
 - o Effective involvement of workers and social dialogue
 - o Approaches and systems for OSH management
 - o Promotion of well-being and safety culture.
- Dangerous substances, both in terms of OSH management at enterprise level, and the need for more research, as well as improved monitoring and recognition at policy level
- Combined exposures: in particular multiple exposures to dangerous substances, including chronic low-dose exposures, and the need for more research, toxicological and epidemiological studies, as well as practical tools at workplace level
- Work-related diseases: including better understanding of the cause-effect relationship between exposures and outcomes and support for the development of instruments for monitoring, and for workplace level management (in particular for MSDs, diseases linked to work-related stress and to dangerous substances, such as for work-related cancers, reproductive disorders, neurological diseases, immunological diseases, cardiovascular diseases, diseases caused by biological agents lower limb diseases, etc.) and possibly looking at specific sectors (e.g. the service sector) and workers' groups (e.g. gender aspects, age)
- Health outcomes, with a specific focus on specific workers' groups and employment situations as currently recognised occupational diseases do not reflect the health problems and issues relevant for an increasingly diverse workforce on temporary contracts in a service-dominated industrial structure, with more and more varied work biographies, multiple jobs and multiple working sites (e.g. as a consequence of a growth in sub-contracted work, short-term contracts, changing work organisation, personal services).
- New technologies (e.g. nanomaterials, biotechnologies, technologies involving electromagnetic fields, ambient intelligence)
- Economic aspects of OSH, including the costs of poor OSH as well as the benefits of good OSH, at the macro- and company levels, and in particular for micro and small enterprises
- Impact of the economic crisis on OSH and contribution from OSH to getting out of the crisis
- Challenges and needs of a diverse workforce in terms of inclusive growth (including gender aspects, age, workers with chronic diseases, migrant workers)
- Mainstreaming OSH
- OSH Strategies and Programmes

In meeting the challenges that it faces, EU-OSHA will have to do so with limited resources, reinforcing the importance of increasing efficiency. The multi-annual Financial Framework implies a reduction of establishment plan posts of 5 per cent. Through efficiency gains, the Agency would be able to deliver the activities foreseen in this MSP and possibly incorporate Iceland into its activities without additional compensation, even though the inclusion of Iceland together with the non-compensated inclusion of Croatia would represent additional costs of around five per cent per year. Depending on the final resources allocated the plans may have to be adapted: it has to be kept in mind that even with constant resources, significant efficiency gains will have to be realised.

The resource situation facing EU-OSHA is mirrored among its network partners. The Agency has developed a wide-ranging network which allows it to have an impact far beyond what its resources would suggest. This does, however, mean that the Agency is very dependent on these networks and on their engagement. The Agency has no decision-making power over resources that are available among its network partners, or over their activities. The Agency is therefore vulnerable to decisions on resources among its network partners. Having said this, it should be stressed that it is exactly the network which allows EU-OSHA to have the impact it has.

3. EU-OSHA's strategic objectives

As we look towards the future, then, we have set out a number of objectives for EU-OSHA for the period covered in this MSP. These objectives are based on the challenges that we face and on the opportunities that we have, as well as on the Agency's founding regulation, the Europe 2020 Strategy, and the experience that the Agency now has. Our strategic objectives attempt to use our mission and vision statements to guide our activities within each of our priority areas (see next chapter). It has been very important for us to come to a clear understanding of the role that the Agency plays, and this role is expressed in our objectives. Taken together our objectives implement our mission and vision statements in the best way possible, given the resources that we expect to be available.

Strategic objective 1: The provision of credible and good quality data on new and emerging risks that meet the needs of policy-makers and researchers and allow them to take timely and effective action

Through its European Risk Observatory, the Agency will aim to identify new and emerging risks in occupational safety and health, to provide a basis to set priorities for OSH research and actions and to improve the timeliness and effectiveness of preventive measures. Following the Community Strategy 2002-06, which said that “*anticipating new and emerging risks, whether they be linked to technical innovation or caused by social change, is vital if the risks are to be brought under control*”, the Observatory has already piloted forecast and foresight techniques as the best available instruments to identify new and emerging OSH risks.

Strategic objective 2: The provision of an accurate and comprehensive picture of current OSH risks, their health effects, and how they can be prevented and managed, to allow a better understanding of these issues among policy-makers and researchers

Decision-makers need to have an accurate and comprehensive picture of OSH risks, their health effects, and how they can be prevented and managed in order to set priorities. The Agency's regulation requires it to “*supply the Community bodies and the Member States with the objective available technical, scientific and economic information they require to formulate and implement judicious and effective policies designed to protect the safety and health of workers*”. Tools such as ESENER, EU-OSHA's European survey of enterprises on new and emerging risks, aim to contribute to such an evidence base for policy-makers and researchers. These tools can be complemented with data from other sources, such as estimates of the occupational burden of disease and injury, or the costs of under-investing in OSH, to better guide decision-making and the allocation of resources.

Strategic objective 3: The provision of relevant tools for smaller workplaces to manage health and safety, and the engagement of intermediaries in the further development and dissemination of these tools

Risk assessment is the cornerstone of health and safety management and OSH legislation, but its implementation and quality need to be improved: the evidence¹¹ shows that there are major shortcomings in complying with essential elements of EU health and safety legislation among SMEs, especially micro- and small enterprises, and particularly with regard to risk assessment. It is essential therefore to provide tools for smaller workplaces to manage health and safety, and the Agency aims to do so through its Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tool, and related future products. The OiRA tool has tripartism at its core, in the way that it involves the social partners, as well as governments, in its development and diffusion.

Strategic objective 4: To get the occupational safety and health message across to multiple beneficiaries by raising awareness about workplace risks and how to prevent them, together with the Agency's intermediaries

Getting the occupational safety and health message across to multiple target groups and beneficiaries¹², including policy-makers, researchers, social partners and others, and raising

¹¹ COM (2004) 62 final: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions on the practical implementation of the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Directives 89/391 (Framework),... pp.15-17.
(<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52004DC0062:EN:NOT>)

¹² **Beneficiaries** are those who an activity is designed to support or help. The Agency, in most cases, does not work directly with beneficiaries but with others (**target groups**) who are in contact with or can influence the beneficiaries. The Agency, in

awareness about workplace risks and how to prevent them, are key elements in the creation of a culture in which occupational safety and health risks are prevented. The Agency's Healthy Workplaces Campaigns, and its more focused promotion and communication activities on specific topics, play an important role in reaching this goal by bringing the available information to the different target groups, primarily intermediaries and other message multipliers, with the ultimate aim of benefiting people in European workplaces.

Strategic objective 5: The mobilisation of the OSH community through new tools to promote and facilitate the generation and maintenance of a body of high quality knowledge

A key role for EU-OSHA is to “*collect, analyse and disseminate technical, scientific and economic information*” on risks, good practices and research aspects of occupational safety and health. This represents a very broad remit which – combined with different information needs across the Member States, the goal of supporting multilingualism, and the ever-growing task of maintaining the currency of the information – represents a considerable challenge, given the resources available. Recently, the growing availability and popularity of social media and collaborative tools has provided a great opportunity to bring together all the available knowledge across the large ‘OSH community’ of practitioners and researchers. By mobilising this OSH community through instruments such as the OSHwiki, the Agency can promote and facilitate the generation and maintenance of a body of knowledge well beyond what would be possible with its own limited resources.

Strategic objective 6: To develop and implement networking and communication activities to ensure that the Agency's activities meet the needs of its key stakeholders, to promote tripartism at European and Member State level, to enable networks to take an active part in the Agency's activities, and to ensure that Agency information reaches the intended beneficiaries and intermediaries

EU-OSHA is a small Agency working with information and knowledge. This makes networking and communication decisive for achieving its objectives. Networking activities are a way of ensuring the relevance of the Agency's work and creating a multiplication effect in the implementation phase. Of particular importance is the tripartite character of the key networks. The Agency's communication activities provide a vehicle for communicating a wide range of information to a very broad group of intermediaries and beneficiaries.

most cases, aims at increasing the capacity and understanding of target groups (e.g. by providing them with tools) for them to better help and support beneficiaries.

4. EU-OSHA's priority areas

4.1. Priority area 1: Anticipating change and new and emerging risks to occupational safety and health

This priority area involves anticipating future challenges to OSH linked to changes in the world of work, in order to provide policy-makers, researchers and workplace intermediaries with reliable data, allowing them to set priorities for OSH research and actions and to implement timely and effective prevention (see strategic objectives, chapter 3). Effective prevention can make an important contribution to the overall Europe 2020 objectives¹³ of achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, as well as of increasing the employment rate from 69 to 75 per cent: poor OSH is a significant factor in people not taking active part in the labour market. Therefore, better risk anticipation is essential for improving prevention and consequently for sustainable working lives and higher employment rates in the medium- to long run.

Over the period of this MSP, the Agency will build upon the foresight studies that it has already piloted, and will continue anticipating new and emerging risks and challenges to OSH through a series of **foresight activities**. The specific benefits that this will deliver include the provision of useful information which will allow policy-makers, researchers and workplace intermediaries more generally, to decide whether to take action, and to set priorities.

This priority area relates directly to one of the three key elements of EU-OSHA's mission (advancing knowledge), as well as to the Agency's vision statement in terms of creating an OSH risk prevention culture.

4.1.1. Foresight activities

During the period of this MSP, EU-OSHA will carry out foresight activities aimed at identifying and addressing future OSH challenges that are likely to result from the changing world of work and the impact of the economic crisis on workplaces and OSH (such as fragmented working lives, workplaces and workforces with the increase of micro-enterprises and self-employment, multiple jobs and worksites); the increased diversity of the workforce; demographic trends, the emergence of new types of jobs linked to the development of the knowledge-based economy; advances in research and innovation; climate change, and changing life-styles). As 45% of workers in the EU¹⁴ report experiencing such change (linked to restructuring or reorganisation and to the introduction of new processes and technologies), it is necessary to provide future-facing data and tools enabling policy-makers, researchers, workplace intermediaries and the OSH community to anticipate the impact of these changes on OSH.

Building upon its 2010-2012 pilot foresight project¹⁵, EU-OSHA will organise a range of foresight activities seeking to: [a] identify and anticipate new and emerging challenges to OSH linked to the changes mentioned above; [b] provide instruments for policy-makers, researchers and workplace intermediaries to address adequately the future challenges that are identified, and [c] explore how best to transfer the findings from its foresight activities into policy-making, as well as to provide input into OSH research and good practice. Findings of other foresight and future-oriented projects (including outside the area of OSH) commissioned by EU, governmental and other organisations will be taken into account, as well as EU-OSHA's work on OSH research priorities and relevant findings from major sources such as the European Working Condition Surveys and EU-OSHA's European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks, and activities under key programmes such as the EU Research and Innovation Framework "Horizon 2020". The scope of these foresight activities will possibly be narrowed down to specific sectors, topics or workers' groups, to be addressed successively over the period of this MSP. This will be decided in consultation with EU-OSHA's stakeholders. Following the model of EU-OSHA's 2010-2012 pilot foresight activity, these activities

¹³ Communication from the Commission, *Europe 2020, A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, COM(2010) 2020 final, Brussels 3 March 2010. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>

¹⁴ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/ewcs/2010/index.htm>

¹⁵ EU-OSHA – European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, *Foresight of new emerging risks to occupational safety and health associated with new technologies in green jobs by 2020*, 2013. Available at: <https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/green-jobs-foresight-new-emerging-risks-technologies/view>

will be implemented through a combination of: exploratory literature reviews; consultation and consolidation by means of phone interviews, focus groups, workshops and/or electronic surveys involving key people with a range of expertise (such as experts in OSH as well as other disciplines – research and innovation, sociology, economics, demography, politics, public health, etc.) from the public and private sectors, including at company level, and representatives of EU-OSHA's stakeholders, and scenario-building modules. The findings of the foresight activities will be disseminated to stakeholders as appropriate in order to assist in policy-making, input into the setting of priorities for OSH research preventive actions, and raise awareness of the OSH challenges that are identified. Over the MSP period two foresights will be implemented, each of which will have a duration of two years plus a one year review period.

The specific objective is to produce new, timely and useful high quality data on new and emerging OSH challenges, and provide policy-makers and the broader OSH community; in particular researchers and workplace intermediaries, at EU and national levels with instruments to best address them as well as with a basis for priority setting for OSH research and actions.

4.2. Priority area 2: Facts and figures

Priority area 2: facts and figures deals with the provision of useful information to policy-makers and researchers (see strategic objectives, chapter 3), and relates directly to one of the three key elements in EU-OSHA's mission statement (advancing knowledge) and also to the vision statement in terms of creating an OSH risk prevention culture. The specific benefit of this priority area is the provision to policy-makers and researchers, but also to workplace intermediaries, of the sound and reliable information they need to decide on action. This will be achieved through the continuation of the **European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER)**, a series of **large-scale comprehensive overviews** of specific issues, and **opinion polls**.

4.2.1. European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER)

ESENER is among the tools contributing to an evidence base for policy-makers and researchers in the field of OSH. It aims to provide an accurate description of how OSH is currently being managed in European workplaces, in order to provide real-time, policy-relevant information.

Operating on a five-year cycle, the second survey in 2014 (ESENER-2) will provide updated (and new) information on how workers' safety and health is managed in enterprises throughout the EU, and will continue to identify factors that encourage preventive measures and those that discourage or impede them, as well as helping to define enterprises' needs according to their characteristics – size, sector, location and age. It will also prepare the ground for setting up time series, enabling trends to be monitored over time – provided the survey is carried out in five-year intervals – and will take important steps towards improving the quality of the data that is collected. Topic coverage will be extended to include musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), for example, and further information on workplace arrangements for managing OSH (including worker participation) and a diverse workforce (with a possible focus on older workers), as well as an attempt to measure OSH performance in a valid way. Proposals for improving the survey's methodology include broadening its scope to include establishments with five or more workers, more rigorous testing of national surveys in all countries, including new countries, increasing sample sizes to allow for better analysis by sector, and revising the definitions of respondents.

The specific objective for ESENER is thus to provide a uniquely rich source of data for policy-makers and researchers on how companies manage OSH, on what their needs and weaknesses are, on what motivates and hinders them, and on how they involve their employees. It provides policy-makers and researchers with internationally comparable information and thereby contributes to the design, implementation and monitoring of effective OSH policies (whether regulatory, guiding or supportive) which support companies by being comprehensive, targeted, and focused on key issues. This is achieved not only through presentation of the findings in a series of reports, but also through follow-up studies, independent research and campaigns that draw on its data. As many of the issues explored in ESENER are closely linked with the context in which enterprises operate, ESENER also contributes to the evaluation of both the EU and national OSH strategies, by providing an additional indicator for monitoring the state of OSH. Additionally, by making available to researchers the comprehensive data that it captures, ESENER encourages further independent research and contributes to knowledge development. Finally, it provides support to companies, as they are able to use the survey questions directly at workplace level to set a benchmark and compare their own OSH management practices with others in their country, sector or size class.

Over the MSP period two ESENERs will be carried out with five years between each. In time between the surveys, secondary analysis will be carried out, covering topics such as the management of OSH, drivers and barriers, and the importance of social dialogue. The Agency will continue to develop synergies using ESENER data together with data from other relevant surveys.

Fieldwork for ESENER 3 will take place in 2019.

4.2.2. OSH overviews

Instruments such as ESENER can be complemented with data from other sources, to help inform policy development and the improvement of health and safety in relation to a specific area of concern.

Large-scale activities of two to three years' duration will address different risks, sectors or workers' groups or issues, such as work-related diseases and the occupational burden of disease and injury, the costs of underinvestment in OSH, and the benefits of good OSH. The scope of these activities will be determined in consultation with EU-OSHA's stakeholders. Such activities will include the collection, analysis and dissemination of comprehensive information regarding policy, research and good practice, following the example of the 2013-2014 pilot project for the European Parliament on older workers. They will deliver an overview of: policies and strategies; trends in exposures, workers' groups at risk and safety and health outcomes, as well as the monitoring tools that are available, and state-of-art research and research needs. They will also contribute to the development and sharing of good practice. Depending on the focus and scope of the project, they will involve a combination of literature reviews, case studies, interviews with key people at policy, research or company level, focus groups, workshops and seminars. Over the MSP period several such overviews will be carried out, each of a duration of two to three years.

The specific objective of this activity is to provide policy makers, researchers and intermediaries with useful high quality policy, research and good practice data, as well as examples and recommendations of what constitutes good strategies and practice, in order to help them to better guide decision-making and prioritise resources at policy, research and company level.

4.2.3. Opinion polls

Since 2009, the Agency has been monitoring public opinion regarding OSH in the Member States and partner countries. During the MSP period, EU-OSHA will carry out periodic pan-European opinion polls (focused primarily on the opinions of workers) on occupational safety and health, with particular emphasis on the key topics/projects included in its annual management plans. Healthy Workplace Campaigns and major activities will be supported and will benefit from input from the polls. The polls will also provide information to support the Agency in its collaboration with the national focal points and the European Institutions. The specific objective is to provide a comparable, international picture of public opinion on OSH-related issues, which will be of value for policy-makers to help identify issues of particular concern to EU citizens. The comprehensive nature of the polls will provide a valuable insight into the views and opinions of workers across Europe, and will help in raising awareness of the overall subject of occupational safety and health throughout Europe.

4.3. Priority area 3: Tools for OSH management

The Agency's founding regulation emphasises the need for "methods and tools for implementing preventive activities, paying particular attention to the specific problems of small and medium-sized enterprises". Yet there is evidence that SMEs especially are failing to meet their legal obligations to carry out workplace risk assessments (see strategic objectives, chapter 3). The Agency will therefore continue to provide support to SMEs, and in particular micro- and small enterprises, in carrying out risk assessments and managing OSH, by developing the Agency's **Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tool**. OiRA will be enlarged with **additional modules**, dedicated to specific risks (for example psychosocial risks, and risks posed by dangerous substances) and complemented by the development of specific tools to enable effective follow-up of risk assessment, with the implementation of practical solutions. OiRA tools help micro- and small organisations to put in place a risk assessment process, and supports them in general risk management – from the identification and evaluation of workplace risks, through deciding on and taking action, to monitoring and reporting. Tripartism will remain a key factor in the development of the tool.

Compared to some of the others, this area of priority may contribute more quickly to the Europe 2020 objective of increasing the employment rate. It is in line with EU-OSHA's mission statement concerning the exchange of information and good practice, and can also make a significant contribution to EU-OSHA's vision of creating an OSH risk prevention culture.

4.3.1. Development of the Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tool

The Agency will continue to develop the OiRA tool, facilitating the development of more risk assessment tools at both the national and EU levels, and focusing particularly on the needs and challenges of micro- and small enterprises.

To do so, EU-OSHA will further encourage EU and national (sectoral) social partners and other organisations (such as Government Ministries, Labour Inspectorates and OSH institutes) to develop and share their national or pan-European sectoral OiRA tools, and to put in place a (national) overall strategy to encourage companies to use the tools that have been developed. Collaboration with the social partners will ensure that the OiRA tools that are developed will meet the real needs of small organisations in a particular sector. Therefore social partner 'ownership' of the tool is crucial in encouraging widespread take-up and use of the tool at enterprise level. While other incentives can be introduced into the diffusion strategy, it is this 'peer-to-peer' communication that is central to encouraging the use of OiRA tools in Europe's 19.39 million micro- and small enterprises.

The specific objective is to continue to adapt, improve and maintain the OiRA software, to promote the development of OiRA tools among intermediaries, to provide training and support to stakeholders, and to encourage information exchange amongst the OiRA partners through the setting up of an OiRA community. The potential of an OiRA tool to make a significant contribution to improving OSH in Europe's workplaces lies as much in its development, diffusion and marketing as in its technical characteristics.

The outcome at company level should be an increase in (especially micro- and small) companies carrying out their own, good quality and up-to-date risk assessments through the provision of free of charge, easy-to-use, state-of-art OIRA tools adapted to the sectors in which the companies operate. Good quality risk assessment will help them to manage OSH efficiently and reduce administrative burdens, helping to improve productivity as well as OSH in micro- and small enterprises. The outcome for workers should be that they are properly involved in risk assessment and that the risks in their workplaces will be adequately assessed and managed. The outcomes for these beneficiaries are expected to be sustainable over the longer term. Better OSH in micro- and small enterprises, and fewer work-related accidents, cases of illness and related absences from work, are part of the expected longer-term outcomes.

4.3.2. Development of tools for implementing OSH solutions

In order to strengthen support, for micro-enterprises and SMEs in particular, in the choice and implementation of prevention measures following the risk assessment process, the Agency will explore options to develop tools, for example that are under development or that have been successfully developed at national level, for uptake across Europe. Preference will be given to tools that support SMEs to take preventive action. Some of these tools may be developed to tackle specific risks. Close collaboration with intermediaries will be essential in ensuring the adaptation of the tools to the real needs. The specific objective of this activity is to make free-of-charge, comprehensive and practical information easily accessible to companies, for them to better manage OSH risks and comply with the OSH legislation. This will create an innovative channel to foster the exchange of good practice information among EU Member States and industrial sectors, and to improve the dissemination of good practice information to micro-enterprises and SMEs.

This, together with Activity 3.1, is a way of increasing awareness among micro-enterprises and SMEs of the need for OSH prevention, and to convince them that OSH management is not a burdensome process, and that practical solutions exist and can be easily implemented. This should empower micro-enterprises and SMEs and make them more autonomous in the way they manage OSH.

4.4. Priority area 4: Raising awareness

This area covers activities aiming to get the occupational safety and health message across to multiple intermediaries and beneficiaries by raising awareness about workplace risks and how to prevent them. This includes the Agency's flagship Healthy Workplaces Campaigns, but also more focused promotion and communication activities dealing with specific topics, which are often linked to actions by other stakeholders (e.g. the European Commission, SLIC, and the EU social partners). These activities bring information to different beneficiaries and, in particular, intermediaries, and the Agency will continue to explore all possible means to engage with these audiences, including the increased use of social media.

4.4.1. Healthy Workplaces Campaigns

The Agency's Founding Regulation article 3 (1) lays considerable emphasis on EU-OSHA's role in disseminating information, both about risks and about good practices to prevent them. Successive EU OSH Strategies have also requested the Agency to carry out awareness-raising actions, and in particular to target these at small and medium-sized enterprises.

The anticipated outcomes of the Agency's campaigning activities are principally increased awareness of risks and how to prevent them in European workplaces. To achieve this, a number of other outcomes need to be achieved, such as the engagement of networks and intermediaries.

Activities related to this area are likely to produce quicker results than activities under some of the other areas. The activity relates directly to the aims in the Agency's mission statement of raising awareness and helping to exchange information and good practice regarding OSH. Increased awareness is also one of the means of achieving EU-OSHA's vision of a culture where OSH risks are prevented.

All Healthy Workplaces Campaigns pursue the following specific objectives:

- Engaging stakeholders at all levels
- Raising awareness
- Providing information
- Developing and providing access to resources
- Encouraging activities which impact on the workplace
- Identifying and recognising good practice
- Sharing and implementing good practice

The Agency's awareness-raising activities give a European dimension to OSH-related work at the national level. It also can help push an issue which would not have been pushed if it was dealt-with at the national level alone. The fact that campaign activities take place all across Europe on the same topic helps to create a European identity in OSH.

Healthy Workplaces Campaigns are decentralised campaigns co-ordinated by the Agency, but they can be tailored by our focal points in the Member States, partner organisations and individual workplaces to fit their particular needs and priorities, allowing them to organise their own activities and produce their own materials.

The Agency will also further develop and strengthen the Campaigns' network-based approach, drawing on the support of several important networks of partners, including:

- the Agency's network of national focal points, which is responsible for coordinating the Campaigns at the national level;
- the European social partners, representing the interests of workers and employers at the European level;
- the Agency's network of official Campaign partners, consisting of pan-European or international organisations;
- the European institutions and their networks, in particular the incumbent Presidencies of the European Council, and
- the **Enterprise Europe Network**, which reinforces the Agency's link with Europe's micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Each campaign runs for two years and involves two years of preparatory work. The 2014-2015 campaign will be on psychosocial risks. The themes of the following campaigns are decided by the Governing Board two-three years in advance of the start of the campaign to allow time for preparations.

4.4.2. Awareness raising

Alongside its Healthy Workplaces campaigns, EU-OSHA carries out additional awareness raising activities in cooperation with its network of national focal points as well as more focused promotion and communication activities dealing with specific topics. The latter are often linked to actions by

other stakeholders (e.g. the European Commission, SLIC, and the EU social partners). Together, these activities aim to bring information to different beneficiaries and, in particular, intermediaries, and the Agency will continue to explore all possible means to engage with these audiences, including the increased use of social media.

Activities in this area will also include the participation of the Agency in the consortium of organisations responsible for the development and production of a series of short films featuring the popular animated character Napo. The Agency will maintain and further develop the Napo website and carry out promotion actions, such as the teachers' toolkit, that exploit Napo films to take the OSH message to new audiences.

Other activities will include promotional seminars; participation in events and exhibitions; the organisation of competitions and award schemes, such as the Healthy Workplaces Film Award and associated screenings and debates of winning films; as well as further development of visual communication tools.

4.5. Priority area 5: Networking knowledge

A key role for EU-OSHA is to “*collect, analyse and disseminate technical, scientific and economic information*” on risks, good practices and research aspects of occupational safety and health (see strategic objectives, chapter 3). The aim of this priority area is to position the Agency as the creator of tools and networking opportunities to generate such a reliable and up-to-date body of OSH knowledge. The key activity for this theme will be the development of the **OSHWiki**, which may be supported, for example, by promotional campaigns and seminars to promote the generation of knowledge on key topics (e.g. those related to future Healthy Workplaces campaigns). In addition, the Agency will continue to foster knowledge development and networking, and to support key stakeholders by contributing to the evidence base necessary for their decision-making, strategy development and policy work.

4.5.1. OSHwiki

The OSHwiki aims to complement the Agency's existing links with the OSH community. It also complements the EU-OSHA website through its social nature as a collaborative platform. This allows the Agency to make more efficient use of its resources: further editing and development of content (including translation into other languages) can be carried out by users. The debate among different authors when changes to a page are suggested can, in itself, be of additional interest when reading about controversial issues. The creation of an active online OSH community is also a positive "side effect" of developing and maintaining a wiki.

Over the period of this MSP, part of the OSHwiki content will continue to be developed by the Agency's contractors. Tasks will mainly include promotion to attract authors and train them in the use of the OSHwiki platform. The articles' authors will be made known to all users, which should be an incentive to produce high quality content. Their work will also be "peer reviewed" by other approved authors. Further activities will comprise the promotion of the OSHwiki to end-users, maintenance and improvement of the OSHwiki platform, and further development and up-dating of content.

The specific objective of this activity is to produce a wiki providing authoritative, in-depth and easily updated information in the field of OSH. It will provide those in the OSH community with a space in which they can read about and find knowledge on various subjects, as well as providing them with a platform for collaboration and exchange. The OSHwiki will therefore contribute to the general objective of collecting and disseminating information intended to improve health and promote awareness, as well as fostering joint participation and the exchange of results among OSH research institutes.

4.5.2. Other networking knowledge activities

In addition the Agency will undertake activities to support the generation, exchange and dissemination of knowledge to support the key stakeholders, in particular the EU institutions, in their decision-making, and strategy and policy development and implementation by providing relevant evidence.

Activities will reflect and contribute to the agendas of the key stakeholders and it is therefore difficult to predict the specific activities that will be undertaken.

One of the ongoing activities over the strategy period will be up-dated information on EU-OSH legislation and non-binding instruments as well as social dialogue initiatives.

Another ongoing activity will be the provision of information on Member States' strategies on OSH. In close collaboration with the focal points, a mapping of main points in the strategies will be provided.

4.6. Priority area 6: Networking and Corporate Communications

From the time that EU-OSHA was established, networking and communication have been key activities. The Agency is an information agency and it is therefore essential that it has networks in place that can provide, disseminate and exchange information, as recognised in articles 3 and 4 of EU-OSHA's founding regulation. It is equally important to have in place adequate communication tools to meet the needs of the Agency's various intermediaries and beneficiaries.

The activities in this area mainly meet four needs:

- 1) OSH resources, including both financial and information resources, are scattered across Europe. As resources are limited, greater efficiency can be achieved by pooling resources and bringing about the effective exchange of information and experience. This is clearly recognised in the preamble to the Agency's founding regulation.
- 2) In addition, the Agency is relatively small, with just under 70 staff members in 2012. On its own the Agency cannot achieve much. However, by engaging networks and ensuring that its work is relevant to intermediaries, the Agency has shown throughout its existence that it can achieve much more. In particular it is important to build on and support existing tripartite networks.
- 3) A wide range of different types of information has to be communicated, and so the communication channels that the Agency uses need to be adaptable. The content of the communication can range from complicated statistical analysis to simple good practice guidance.
- 4) The Agency's intermediaries and beneficiaries vary, and its communication activities have to take account of this. The requirements of communicating on future risks to policy-makers are different from those of communicating simple steps to prevent accidents to intermediaries.

To meet these needs the following activities will be undertaken:

4.6.1. Strategic networking

The Agency's strategic networking actions will include the development and support of its governance networks and European networks. The actions will aim at reflecting the needs and priorities of the key stakeholders in the Agency's activities, and will cover both input to EU-OSHA's planning and the Agency's need to account for its actions.

These strategic network actions are particularly targeted at those groups with a significant influence over the Agency: this means the groups represented on the Board, and EU-OSHA's other key European stakeholders. The governance networks include the Agency's Board, Bureau and Advisory Groups. All these networks involve governments, unions and employers' associations, in addition to the European Commission. The European stakeholders include the EU Institutions and the European level social partners: special emphasis is given to maintaining close cooperation with DG Employment. The strategic networks represent a unique opportunity to engage key players across Europe in the work of the Agency.

The Agency will continue to cooperate closely with other European agencies, to create synergies. Agreements are already established with Eurofound, EIGE and ECHA.

The specific objective for the strategic networking activity is to ensure key stakeholder support for, and interest in, the Agency's activities.

4.6.2. Operational networking

EU-OSHA's operational networking activity will include the development and support of the Agency's focal point network, its expert networks, and its international networks. The main aim is to engage the different networks in the delivery of the Agency's objectives. This is of key importance for the Agency to be able to implement the MSP, as the Agency's own resources alone do not allow this. It is also an aim to share best practice and avoid duplication of effort.

The focal points set up national, tripartite networks which allow the Agency to involve a broad range of OSH players in its work. The focal points and their national networks also provide a good vehicle for

the Agency to ensure that its activities reflect priorities in the Member States. A particular focus over the strategy period will be the further develop and involvement of these national networks. The national networks can be a key factor - due to their tripartite character - in delivering this MSP. The Agency will explore innovative ways in strengthening tripartism in the national networks in close collaboration with its Governing Board.

The Agency will also continue collaborating with international network partners, such as the ILO, WHO and other international organisations as well as specific countries. The Agency's international activities will be carried in the framework of its paper on international relations. The paper covers issues such as the different types of actors, reasons for engagement, limitations of engagement and the definition of priorities for international actions.

Finally, the continued development of cooperation with established communication networks such as the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) will be a priority. The EEN provides a good vehicle for reaching the enterprise level.

The specific objective for the operational networking activity is to motivate the operational networks to take an active part in the delivery of the Agency's objectives.

4.6.3. Corporate communications

Effective communication has a key role to play in the delivery of the Agency's mission, and as such is very much a part of EU-OSHA's core business. As in other areas of the Agency's activities, networking and partnership are at the heart of our communications approach.

Over the period of the MSP, the focus of the Agency's communication activities will be to reach appropriate intermediaries and message multipliers, who can take our information and messages into relevant professional, policy-making and research communities, and ultimately into Europe's more than 25 million workplaces.

These intermediaries are many and diverse, and the target audiences for a particular Agency activity or project will depend on the objectives that are set. Our information offer must be designed to have the greatest impact on levels of occupational safety and health, and must be targeted at those areas where the Agency's efforts can provide European added value, over and above the activities of our partners at national level.

EU-OSHA's information is communicated to its key audiences through its own activities at European level, through its information and communication network, in which national focal points play a clear role and via its partners. This is done using a variety of information and communication channels and vehicles..

One key objective of the new Agency MSP is to do less but to do it better, and the communication strategy needs to reflect that objective. An important function of the Strategy will be to make it clear which activities the Agency undertakes (i.e. those based around the themes described above) and which fall under the remit of the Member States and other organisations.

The Agency is committed to supporting multilingualism, and will continue to explore and develop innovative approaches to meeting the challenge of communicating in a multilingual Europe. One example is the diffusion strategy for the OiRA tool, through which the Agency provides support and core translations to enable national partners to develop tools in their own languages, and adapted to their own national contexts. The OSHwiki activity is another example of how the Agency can leverage its resources in support of multilingualism in a cost-effective and sustainable way.

Over the period of the MSP, the Agency will also maintain and further develop its other corporate communication channels and vehicles. These include the press office including media monitoring; customer relations management and distribution; corporate literature and promotion. The annual report will remain the main vehicle for corporate reporting.

The effectiveness of this communications' approach will be evaluated both ex ante and ex post. Ex ante assessments will be carried out ahead of major planned developments. The Agency's online strategy will ensure that usability and user testing are integrated into the development process. Web metrics – such as Google Analytics – will be used to monitor the use of the website and to inform future developments. User satisfaction surveys will also be carried out periodically. This may take the form of surveys of website or OSHmail users, or user panels recruited for this purpose.

The specific objective for this activity is to make sure that the Agency's intermediaries and – in some cases – beneficiaries are aware of the Agency, its activities and products.

4.6.4. Specific programmes for countries outside the EU

EU-OSHA has implemented several programmes for Candidate and potential Candidate Countries prior to the enlargements from 2004 onwards allowing new Member States to participate actively from the date of accession – or even before. These programmes are financed via earmarked funds. Currently the Agency implements the IPA programme for the Western Balkans and Turkey. IPA will come to an end in 2014. Over the period of the MSP the Agency may implement other similar programmes.

5. Governance and Management

This MSP is mainly about producing OSH outcomes and improving the state of OSH in the EU. EU-OSHA is, however, also part of the EU institutional landscape and a public body. This creates requirements and expectations not only regarding what the Agency delivers, but also how it delivers it.

There is a set of common principles for European public administrations and a number of more specific expectations in relation to the EU agencies expressed by the European Parliament, the Council, and the European Commission. These have been grouped together in a number of themes below which add up to good governance in the case of EU-OSHA. After that are outlined some of the specific actions which the Agency will undertake.

The Inter-institutional Working Group on decentralised agencies¹⁶ has stressed the importance of ensuring **effectiveness** and **efficiency** in agencies' work. The Agency must ensure that it meets its objectives and produces outcomes and impacts (effectiveness) and it must do this without using more resources than needed (efficiency). Recognising the importance of efficiency in the current situation, this MSP recognises the fact that efficiency is one of the values of the Agency.

Transparency is one of the key ingredients in good governance, as recognised both in the values of the Agency and by the OECD.¹⁷ It basically means that the Agency's decisions, processes and actions are open to scrutiny by others. Transparency is essential for creating trust in the Agency.

Closely linked to transparency is **accountability**, as is also expressed in the values of the Agency and recognised by the OECD. Accountability for the Agency means a willingness to show the extent to which its activities and results are consistent with clearly defined and agreed objectives.

User-orientation is a further theme. It means that EU-OSHA's start and end-point are the needs of the Agency's users. It also means that the Agency is willing to change direction if needs change and to (re)examine its own role in meeting user needs.

Compliance is a priority for the Agency: it means that the Agency carries out its operations in a legal and regular way.

A final theme is **social and environmental responsibility**. The Agency will aim to carry out its work in a socially and environmentally responsible way, i.e. with the least possible impact on the environment and promoting recognised social objectives.

To integrate the themes outlined above into the work of the Agency a number of specific actions will be carried out. These actions will be fully developed in the Agency's Annual Management Plans, but some of the main ones are:

Programming, monitoring and evaluation actions: The Agency will continue its programming, monitoring and evaluation actions to provide the necessary evidence for learning, management and accountability. The actions will range from the provision of the necessary basis for the formulation of clear objectives to the assessment of whether objectives have been met.

Quality management: A quality management system will be developed over the MSP period to provide for transparency and user-orientation. This will include documentation and review of key processes to ensure that there is a focus on users, as well as efficiency and effectiveness.

Internal control: The Agency has a well-established internal control system. It will continue to be a priority to ensure that the Internal Control Standards are applied in a way that ensures both compliance and efficiency.

Management of resources: Sound management of the Agency's financial and human resources becomes more and more important in order to increase efficiency. The key objective is to ensure that the resources are available for achieving the objectives defined in the EU-OSHA MSP and the subsequent Management Plans.

The Agency remains committed to social dialogue and will give a high priority to close involvement of staff.

¹⁶ The Joint Statement and Common Approach of the Inter-institutional Working Group is available here:

http://europa.eu/agencies/documents/joint_statement_and_common_approach_2012_en.pdf

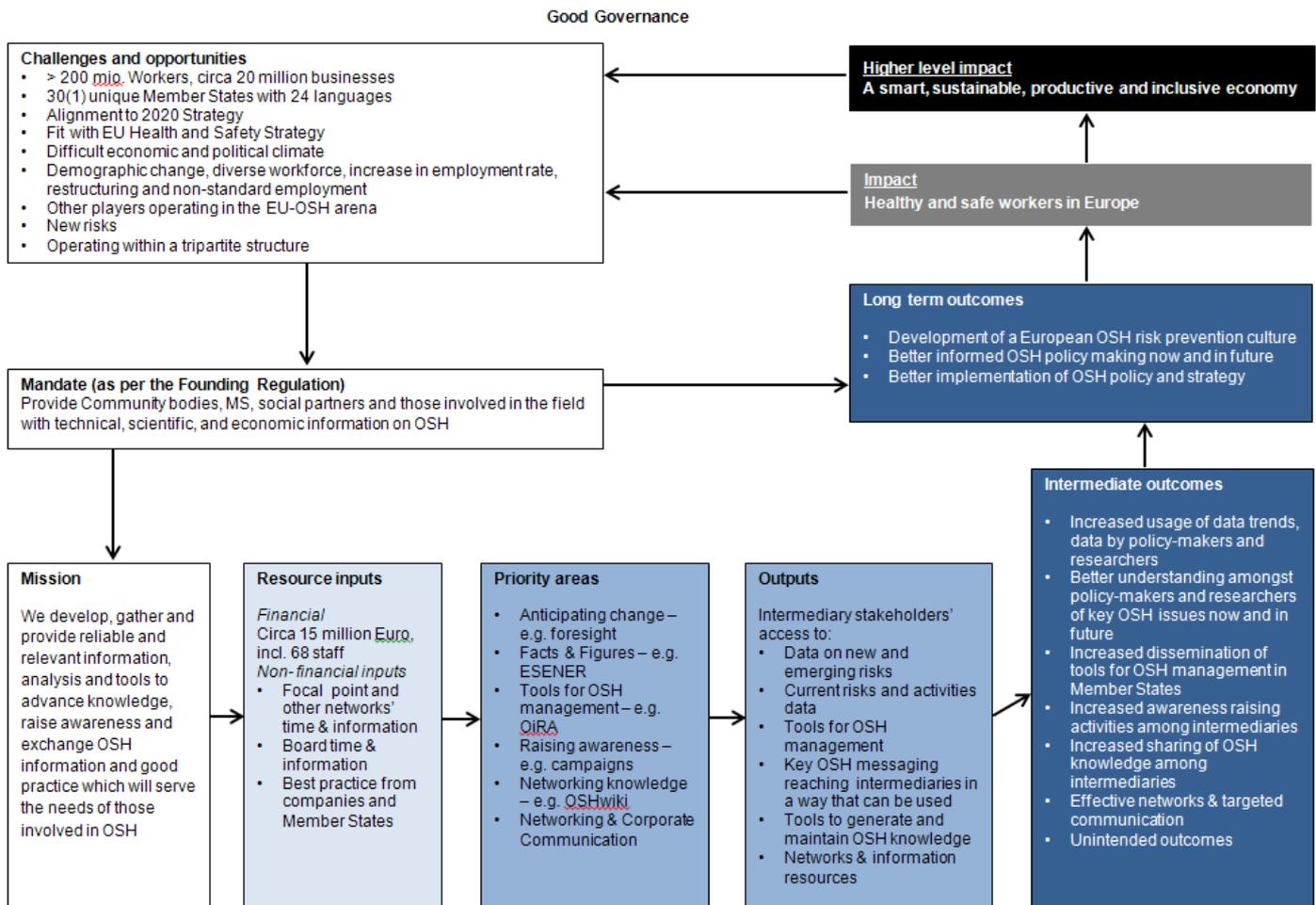
¹⁷ OECD, Principal elements of good governance. www.oecd.org/gov/principalelementsofgoodgovernance.htm

6. Monitoring and Evaluating the Multi-annual Strategic Programme (MSP)

A monitoring and evaluation system will be put in place to measure progress in implementing this MSP. The monitoring and evaluation system will provide the necessary information to learn from ongoing or finalised activities, to manage the implementation of the MSP, and to provide accountability. Building on the Agency’s legal requirements and Internal Control Standards, and on the conclusions of the Inter-Institutional Working Group on decentralised agencies, the monitoring and evaluation system will measure the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of EU-OSHA’s work. The tools to provide the necessary information will be a mixture of indicators and evaluations, as well as narrative reporting.

The monitoring and evaluation framework follows the logic model underlying the MSP, which describes how resources are converted into outputs via activities in the different priority areas. This part of the process is under the Agency’s immediate control. Intermediate and long-term outcomes are much less under the control of the Agency, but are necessary if EU-OSHA is to achieve its desired impact. The logic model underlying the MSP is illustrated below.

Figure: Logic model underlying the MSP



The monitoring and evaluation framework follows this logic model and describes what is measured (success criteria) at each step – see figure below. While indicators are an adequate tool for resources, products and actions, and outputs and outcomes, this is much less the case for long-term outcomes. For long-term outcomes, an evaluative approach will be used. It is important, however, not to see the indicators and the evaluations as mutually exclusive.

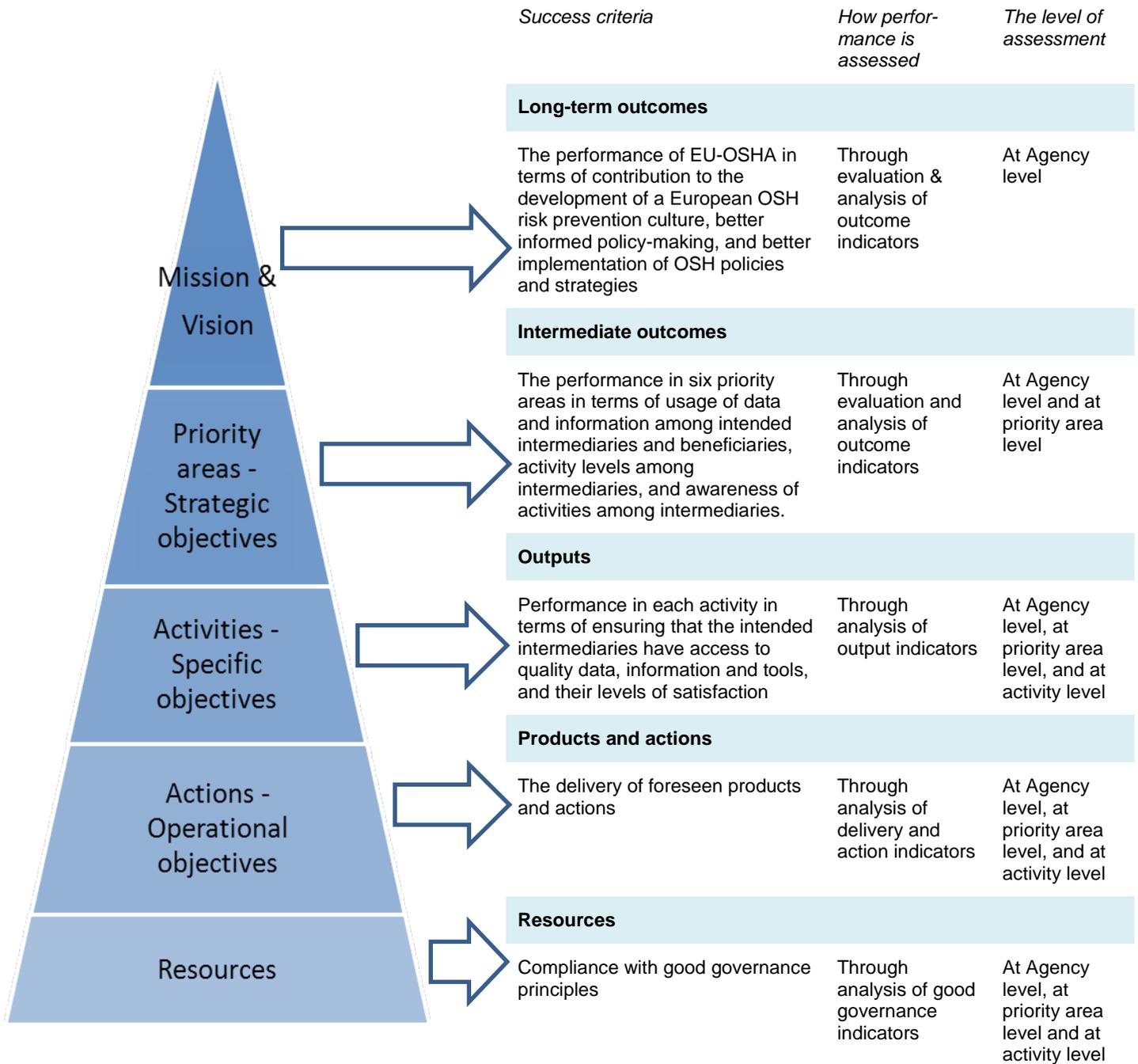
Indicators and targets for the individual activities are defined in the management plans. Indicators and targets for the MSP and the priority areas are annexed to this document.

As regards evaluations, an overall, general evaluation will be carried out in 2016/17 to feed into the update of the current MSP. The overall, general evaluation will look at issues such as whether the

objectives that the Agency has set are being achieved, whether the Agency achieves its objectives in an efficient way, and whether needs among users are being met. The evaluation may also test specific assumptions in the logical model. The overall, general evaluation will have the Bureau as its Steering Group.

In addition to the overall, general evaluation, targeted evaluations aimed at priority areas or activities will be carried out. These evaluations will be programmed in evaluation plans. The targeted evaluations are the responsibility of the Agency's Director.

Figure: Monitoring and evaluation framework



Annex: The preparation of the MSP

The involvement of stakeholders and evidence-based decision-making have been guiding principles in the preparation of this MSP. The Agency is convinced that this has led to a MSP which takes the needs of its intermediaries and beneficiaries as its starting point, and that the activities foreseen are those where most added value is produced. In the table below the main stages in the development of the MSP are summarised:

When	Who	What
November 2011	Governing Board	Conclusions and recommendations from evaluation of EU-OSHA Strategy 2009-2013
February 2012	Agency staff	Activities for the new MSP
March 2012	Governing Board	Seminar dedicated to mission, vision, values and intervention model
July 2012	Bureau	Agreement on list of activities to undergo ex-ante assessment
October 2012	Bureau	Ex-ante assessments of activities, monitoring and evaluation framework and risks
December 2012	Governing Board	First draft of MSP. Access to ex-ante assessments of activities provided
March 2013	Governing Board	Second draft of MSP. Access to ex-ante assessments of activities provided. Draft of AMP 2014 agreed.
April – October 2013	European Commission Advisory Committee Other agencies	Consultation on draft MSP agreed by Board in March
September 2013	Bureau	Discussions on reporting framework
November 2013	Governing Board	Discussion and adoption of final draft of the MSP