

## EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL POLICY ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

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**Abstract:** *The main and basic resource of each organization is the people, who work in it. That is why greatest attention should be paid to studying issues connected with management of their behaviour during work and motivation for their activity. The employees are the ones that create the production of the organization and although machines and appliances have become “rulers” of many technological processes, the human’s role in the organization not only hasn’t decreased but is constantly increasing. People working in the companies in the modern dynamic development of economy are very important but also costly resource. That is why people working in the organization are main object of management by the governing body. The problems for ensuring the health and safety at work of the company’s employees should constantly beat the attention of the higher management and of the specialized department for health and safety at work in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act and the company’s policy in this field.*

**Keywords:** work, organization, safety and health, policy

### 1. Introduction

The work on its own can have a positive or negative effect upon the employees’ health. In a long run when it is related to unhealthy working conditions, it can lead to problems with health and safety of the people doing the work. Millions of workers around the world are exposed to the effects of hazardous factors at their workplaces. The lack of control of the risk related to them can impair their health in many and various ways. At the same time the organizations can suffer losses from the reduction of productivity and increase of the number of cases in which the workers bring legal proceedings and compensation claims.

On the other hand, when the workplace is safe and the people understand that cares

are taken for their health, it is very probably their motivation for work to become stronger. This fact gets wider popularity in which the health and work satisfaction lead to increase of labour efficiency and quality.

### 2. European and government policy on provision of occupational safety and health

By the EU expansion, border opening and the implementation of free movement of goods principle, following unified production and quality standards become more and more important. Every EU member state should make conditions for production of goods, which should meet the EU safety requirements. This affects

also other countries not members of the EU but exporting to member states. Besides that, every country should guarantee any merchandise on its own market meets the established requirements. The European legislation objective is by using proper means and activities among the member states of the European community to make a single market mechanism by gradual removal of the restrictions before the free movement of goods, capital, people and services. The

harmonization of our national laws with the European law and practice in the field of occupational safety and health (OSH) required new approaches for organization of labour and making of a modern management system that provides safety and health implemented as an element at all levels of economy management as a whole and any type of labour (sample organizational – management structure is displayed in Table 1).

*Table 1 Organizational – management structure*

| <b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>                                              |                  |                                   |                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Executive Director                                                     |                  |                                   |                      |
| Working Conditions Committee (WCC) /<br>Working Conditions Group (WCG) |                  | Occupational Health Service (OHS) |                      |
| Production Director                                                    |                  | Finance and Marketing Director    |                      |
| Industrial units                                                       | Repair units     | Accounting                        | Marketing Department |
| <b>employees</b>                                                       | <b>employees</b> | <b>employees</b>                  | <b>employees</b>     |

The main priorities of our government policy on occupational health and safety are:

Harmonization of the national legislation with the EU requirements, documents of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the strategies of the World Health Organization (WHO) and creating conditions for their implementation. Or put in other words, making of modern rules and regulations based on the EU rules and practice with gradual introduction of contemporary organization of the activity providing health and safety, including any levels of labour management [1].

The International Labour Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations that works for social equity and recognition of human and labour rights. It was founded in 1919 and is the only organization, which outlived the League of Nations, and after the Second World War it became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946. Bulgaria has been a member state of the ILO since 1920.

ILO ratifies international labour standards in the form of conventions and recommendations setting the minimum standards of the basic workers' rights: the freedom to unite, the right to organize and collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour, equal opportunities and attitude, as well as other standards, regulating the employment conditions, working conditions and social security.

IOL provides technical assistance mainly in the field of:

- Professional training and rehabilitation;
- Employment policy;
- Labour administration;
- Labour law and industrial relations;
- Employment conditions;
- Development of management;
- Cooperatives;
- Social security;
- Statistics of labour and healthy and safe working conditions.

ILO encourages the development of independent organizations of employers and employees and provides training and consultation at these organizations.

In the UN system ILO is the only organization with unique tripartite structure, in which the representatives of employees and employers participate as equal partners of governments in the work of the organization and its main bodies [2-3].

### **2.1 ILO strategic objectives**

Encouragement and implementation of the standards and main principles and rights at work;

Creation of better opportunities for the workers at the provision of decent employment and income;

Broadening of the scope and efficiency of the social protection for everyone;

Strengthening of tripartism and social dialogue.

### **2.2. ILO activity in Bulgaria**

Lately, ILO has been using as a planning instrument the so-called decent work programs /DWP/. They encourage decent work as the main component of the development policy of a given country. Their use should lead to the perception of decent work as a national objective of the policy of government and social partners. Decent work programs provide the opportunity the knowledge and deeds of ILO to serve the tripartite partners to make the decent work within the organization competence. DWP open opportunities for priority fields of collaboration with the participation of the social partners. These priorities also set the results, for which is worked through the program activities, financed by the regular budget and out-of-budget funds of the ILO.

### **2.3. DWP priorities in Bulgaria:**

- Employment and labour market policy, which meet the national needs and European standards;
- Improved policy in the field of social protection, including improved working environment for all disadvantaged groups;

- Strengthening of the social partners' influence through development of presentation and services that are offered to their members;

- Improved social dialogue and new court mechanisms to settle employment claims.

Practically, the beginning of the development and implementation of a modern occupational safety and health management system in Bulgaria was related to the ratification of Healthy and Safe Working Conditions act (HSWCA) that introduced Framework Directive of EU 89/391/EEC in the national legislation and it governs the rights and obligations of the state, employers and employees for the provision of health and safety. Conditions were made for thorough update of the national regulations and practice in doing the activity related to occupational safety and health by this act. Important acts were ratified that created preconditions for the real implementation of the achievements of the European law and making of a modern system for management of occupational safety and health activities at national level and business and company's level. The conditions for harmonization of our regulations with those of the EU were met by doing so. The more important of them are: Social Security code, Standardization act, Consumers' Protection act and trade regulations, Technical Requirements to Products act, Protection from Harmful Impact of the Chemical Substances and Mixtures act.

The legislation on the provision of OSH is organized at seven levels of regulations: Constitution, codes, acts, decrees of the Council of Ministers, rules, regulations, company rules and instructions.

Over 100 are the specific industrial sector rules from almost any sphere of business activity that are updated. A particular attention is paid to the importance of the principle of prevention [4].

### **3. Legal regulations and management of the provision of occupational health and safety activities**

#### **3.1. Healthy and Safe Working Conditions act**

The rights, obligations and responsibilities of the provision of healthy and safe working conditions of the parties—members in the working process at all levels are regulated: at the highest level – the state, going through the main subject – the employer and reaching every member of work activity as the framework of requirements for the organization of this activity is defined.

The act requires making of a system of prevention, including the overall organization of work, technologies, workplaces, work equipment and the participants in the work process at every company.

The general requirements for healthy and safe working conditions demand the provision of healthy and safe working conditions in accordance with:

- The nature of work activity;
- The requirements for technical, technological and social development;
- The available occupational risks and the degree of their severity.

The activities related to healthy and safe working conditions comprise production, processes, activities, workplaces, work equipment. They are organized and implemented at all levels of work activity:

design, construction, putting into service, operation, reconstruction, modernization, maintenance, prevention, repair and the processes of putting out of service and liquidation. They cannot be implemented, if they are not elements of a unified policy and of a created flexible management organization of the relevant work [5-6].

#### **4. Conclusions**

The health and safety provision is comprehensive multidisciplinary field and requires knowledge of general scope of subjects – law, risk and safety management, occupational health, planning and forecasting, human resources management, etc. Occupational safety and health management plays a vital role in the prevention of work accidents, occupational diseases and psycho-social problems related to working environment. They contribute for the general improvement of the workers' health as well as for cutting the costs at national, industrial and company levels. The reduction of occupational risks is not only moral, but also legal obligation. There is a stable business motivation in this, because the more efficient control can lead to improved personnel's condition, increased productivity and reduction of the material costs by fewer absences from work, employee turnover, reduced consumption of raw materials, better quality of the operational process and services.

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