

Public consultation on EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work

The **aim** of this open public consultation is to take stock of the quality and implementation of the Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 and to receive input for the future Strategic Framework 2021-2027. This open public consultation will be available for 12 weeks from **7 December to 1 March 2021**.

SECTION 1: GENERAL VIEWS ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

The EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 supports the promotion of high standards for occupational safety and health both within the EU and internationally. It aims to address the major health and safety at work challenges facing the EU through the implementation of a range of different actions at national and EU level.

In this section, we are interested to understand your level of engagement with the existing EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 and hear your views on how the situation within your country and/or the EU has changed since 2014.

Question 1: Are you involved in or do you contribute to the design and/or implementation of occupational safety and health (OSH) policy, legislation and/or other measures? Please select what best applies to you.

- Yes, at EU level
- Yes, at national or sub-national (regional, municipal) level
- Yes, I/my organisation are involved in OSH policy and/or legislation implementation in the workplace
- Yes, in another capacity
- No, not at any level

Please answer the survey from your own perspective – for example based on the situation in your company, your country or, if you deal with occupational safety and health (OSH) issues at EU level, based on the situation in the EU as a whole.

Question 2: Thinking about the situation in your country / the EU, has workplace safety and health in your opinion become better since 2014?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Do not know

Please specify why: 500-character(s) maximum

While since 2014 the workplace safety and health situation, in particular managing occupational safety and health has steadily improved, HOSPEEM believes that the ongoing public health pandemic halted improvements. In certain sectors, such as the health sector, some national employers' even experience a reverse.

COVID-19 revealed shortcomings in the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 that need to strengthen to be better prepared for any future public health crisis.

Question 3: Do you agree or disagree that sufficient action has been taken since 2014 to ensure high level of protection of workers' health and safety by...?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do not know
European Parliament and the Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
European Commission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
national or regional authorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
employers	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
employers' organisations at EU level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
employers' organisations at national level	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
workers' organisations at EU level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
workers' organisations at national level	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Question 4: How familiar are you with the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at work 2014-2020?

- Very familiar (I know it in detail)
- Somewhat familiar (I know certain aspects)

Not familiar (or only to a very limited degree)

Question 5: In your opinion, how important are the following priorities of the EU OSH Strategic Framework 2014-2020 in relation to the key occupational safety and health (OSH) issues faced in your country / the EU since 2014:

	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Do not know
Simplify existing OSH legislation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better coordinate EU and international efforts to address OSH and engage with international organisations	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitate compliance with OSH legislation, particularly by micro and small enterprises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Further consolidate national OSH strategies, aligning them with the EU OSH Strategic Framework	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve statistical data collection and develop the information base on work related diseases and health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Address health and safety issues, such as the ageing of the workforce, emerging new risks, prevention of work-related and occupational diseases	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better enforcement of OSH legislation by EU Member States	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 2: OVERALL OPINIONS AND VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OSH STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In this section, we are keen to understand your views on what should be included in a **new** EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work. This includes questions around **key challenges** and **objectives** that should be addressed, the **type of actions** which should be included and what the **main priorities** of such a policy initiative should be.

Question 6: In your view, did the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 contribute to improved health and safety at work at ...

	To a great extent	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Do not know
EU level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
national level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
regional level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

the workplace?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
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Question 7: Please briefly explain why you believe the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 contributed – or not – to improved health and safety at work.

500-character(s) maximum

The Framework might have contributed to improved OSH across the EU by providing a level playing field for the national and European stakeholders, allowing Member States and social partners to implement measures by national and sectoral specificities. While no statistical evidence is available, we believe that the improvements were due to a combination of the Framework and the importance of OSH given by the social partners on EU and national level as part of their work programmes.

Question 8: Thinking ahead to the next 7 years (2021-2027), how important do you think the following will be in terms of OSH policy and action at EU level to be included in a Strategic Framework?

	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Do not know
International cooperation and coordination of OSH policy	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promoting cooperation and coordination of OSH policies across policy areas, such as health, education, environment, chemicals etc.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effective application of OSH legislation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promoting social dialogue	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Development and dissemination of OSH guidance, good practices and other awareness raising activities	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting enforcement activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Updating and adapting OSH related legislation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 9: In your view, has the Covid-19 pandemic increased or decreased the importance of any of the following OSH-related issues ...?

	Significantly Increased	Slightly Increased	Neither Increased not Decreased	Slightly Decreased	Significantly Decreased	Do not know
infectious disease prevention measures in the workplace, including where risk of infection is higher or in essential services	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
increase of teleworking / remote working	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
work-related psycho-social risks	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
access to OSH related information	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
coordination among Member States in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic at the workplace	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
effective OSH measures for vulnerable groups of workers, such as migrant, temporary, or self-employed workers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
enforcement issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Question 10: Thinking about the future (the next seven years), do you think a new EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work and its priorities should ...

- be discarded – there is no need for an EU-level OSH Framework
- remain broadly the same

- be fundamentally changed/adapted
- be updated/adapted
- other

Question 11: Thinking ahead to the next 7 years (2021-2027): What are the key challenges that are common across the EU and require further OSH policy action? Please select up to four answers. (at most 4 choice(s))

- Promotion of international OSH policy collaboration dimension
- Psychosocial risks (increased work intensity, blurring of work-private life, etc.)
- Preparedness for future threats to workers' health and safety (e.g., infectious diseases)
- OSH risks emerging from nanotechnology/nanomaterials
- OSH risks emerging from ICT/digitalisation (increased digitalisation, AI, workers' surveillance, right to disconnect)
- Other
- OSH risks to specific socio-demographic groups (women, migrants, etc.)
- Risks from dangerous substances (e.g., chemicals / carcinogens)
- Increased working from home / teleworking
- OSH risks emerging from the rise of platform economy (gig-work, increased precarious and atypical work)
- OSH risks emerging from robotics/automation/new technologies
- Ergonomic risks and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)
- OSH risks emerging from climate and environmental change (such as infectious diseases)

Question 12: What practical solutions do you suggest to address all or some of these key challenges? (2500-character(s) maximum)

One of the main practical solutions to address all these challenges is the involvement of national and EU level cross-sectoral and sectoral social partners in the decision-making process of national governments and that of the European institutions. By strengthening and respecting the role and autonomy of social partners, in particular sector specific occupational safety and health challenges, will be addressed and solved more effectively. Within the framework of the European (sectoral) social dialogue practical solutions or approaches can be shared easily and potentially implemented in other countries.

A practical solution, not only to address psycho-social stress and risk at work, increased work intensity, blurring of work-private life, but also risk emerging from robotics, is to implement the European cross-sectoral social partners agreement on digitalisation. The implementation will enable employers and unions to introduce digital transformation strategies in partnership in a human oriented approach at national, sectoral, company and workplace levels, including on the modalities of connecting and disconnecting and respect of working time rules and appropriate measures to ensure compliance.

Regarding risk from dangerous substances, in particular hazardous medicinal products including cytotoxic substances, the elaboration of EU guidance for the safe handling of these products is essential by also engaging in consultation with social partners.

Question 13: How important do you think it is that a new EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work covering the next seven years contributes to ...

	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Do not know
anticipating and managing change for better and longer working lives	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
preventing work-related diseases and accidents	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
promoting higher occupational safety and health standards in the world	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ensuring evidence-based policy	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
improving OSH strategies at national level?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
improving the application of EU rules	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 14: You may share any additional remarks or statement(s) regarding the topic of this public consultation here. 500-character(s) maximum

The Framework needs to grasp opportunities and anticipate challenges for a working life in constant development, for the common good of employees, employers, citizens, and the operations, for long-term sustainable workplaces and society. It is to consider the role of digitalisation: While it could enhance productivity and create safer work processes', its associated risks need to be assessed. Risks range from mental health due to adaptation to new working methods and increase in work-related diseases due to a shift to sedentary work.