

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

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Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2024
Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Management Board's analysis and assessment.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
The Agency in brief	Error! Bookmark not defined.
The year in brief.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Key achievements and conclusions in relation to operational activities	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Key conclusions related to management, internal control and assurance	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Management Board's analysis and assessment

The Management Board of EU-OSHA,

Having regard to:

- Regulation (EU) 2019/126 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019 establishing the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 2062/94;
- Financial Regulation of EU-OSHA of 27 September 2019, and in particular article 48 therein;
- EU-OSHA's 2024-2026 Single Programming Document adopted by the Management Board on 5 December 2023 and, in particular, the work programme for 2024; and
- EU-OSHA's Consolidated Annual Activity Report of the Authorising Officer for the year 2024:

Acknowledges the results achieved by EU-OSHA and notes the following analysis and assessment:

1. Considers that the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2024 represents a comprehensive and transparent account of the Agency's activities and results of the year; takes note that the Executive Director, in his capacity as Authorising Officer, had no reservation to report.
2. Congratulates the Agency on the adoption of a new Strategy for the period 2025-2034, which has been developed in close cooperation with the EU-OSHA Management Board, and with input from the Focal Points. This shared ownership provides a strong basis for EU-OSHA's work over the next 10 years and prepares it to contribute to EU priorities.
3. Commends the Agency on the significant contribution to the EU occupational safety and health (OSH) policy priorities as identified in the EU OSH Strategic Framework 2021-2027, through several actions carried out alone or in collaboration with others, for safer and healthier workplaces in Europe; congratulates the Agency on the good results achieved; and acknowledges in particular the Agency's contribution to:
 - anticipating and managing the impact on OSH from digitalisation through its Healthy Workplaces Campaign 'Safe and Healthy Work in the Digital Age' and the impact from the green transition through the Foresight Study on the Circular Economy;
 - providing new and comparable data via two large-scale surveys, the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER) and the Workers' Exposure Survey on cancer risk factors (WES), which enable development of evidence-based policy;
 - better and more risk assessments while reducing the administrative burden for employers by facilitating compliance with OSH legislation with a specific focus on MSEs and SMEs through the Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tool;supporting policy formulation and implementation through research work focusing on key OSH topics, including support to compliance, and OSH in the health and social care sector as well as broader EU policy priorities such as competitiveness by carrying out research on psychosocial risks and cardiovascular diseases, which are among the biggest causes of work-related morbidity and mortality and therefore have a direct link to labour force supply; and in particular:
4. Welcomes the fact that through its ongoing work on psychosocial risks and cardiovascular diseases, EU-OSHA is focusing on reducing two of the biggest causes of work-related morbidity and mortality.
5. Notes with satisfaction that the results for key performance indicators are very positive across all activities and that the ambitious targets were in almost all cases achieved.

6. Welcomes the high degree of implementation rate of the annual work programme resulting in an almost full implementation of the budget.
7. Stresses the importance of tripartism at the EU and national levels to ensure the effective functioning of the Agency and its Focal Points and encourages EU-OSHA to keep up its efforts to disseminate its activities and engage with the relevant stakeholders.
8. Acknowledges the key role played by Focal Points and their national networks that include social partners in contributing to the achievement of EU-OSHA's objectives, through the provision of high-quality information and data from the national level feeding into the planning and implementation of the Agency's work programme, and their effort in disseminating the Agency's work in the Member States.
9. Appreciates the expertise provided to the European Commission on the modernisation of the OSH *acquis*, for example, in the follow-up to the ex post evaluation of EU legislation on OSH and the contribution to important initiatives such as the Comprehensive approach to mental health and the Beating Cancer plan, as well as in other policy areas, such as in the case of the EU chemicals strategy and the EU digital strategy.
10. Likewise, appreciates the cooperation established with other EU agencies aimed at expertise and methodology exchange as well as joint delivery; welcomes the positive findings of the 2024 evaluation of EU-OSHA, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the European Training Foundation and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and looks forward to the implementation of the action plan to follow up on the recommendations.
11. Considers that the internal control systems put in place by the Agency are adequate as confirmed by various audits.
12. Observes that the Executive Director's declaration of assurance is based on a robust control system built around the Internal Control Framework. The robustness of the control system is confirmed by the absence of significant findings from the Internal Audit Service and the European Court of Auditors.
13. Considers that the information provided in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report gives the Management Board reasonable assurance that the resources available to EU-OSHA in 2024 were used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management. Furthermore, the control procedures in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

Considering the above, the Management Board requests the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2024 be forwarded, together with this analysis and assessment, to the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors.

19 June 2025

(signed)

Michael Gillen
Chairperson of the Management Board

Executive Summary

The Agency in brief

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) is an agency of the European Union (EU). Established in 1994, the Agency works on the basis of a founding regulation, which entered into force in early 2019.¹ The regulation defines EU-OSHA's mandate and governance arrangements.

EU-OSHA works to protect European workers' safety and health. To do this, the Agency carries out research to support policy and research, facilitates tools and resources for strengthening the prevention of occupational safety and health (OSH) risks, and promotes a positive culture of risk prevention to improve working conditions in Europe. Through its diverse networks, EU-OSHA collects, analyses and disseminates technical, scientific and economic information on OSH to the various stakeholders. The range of stakeholders is wide – covering policymakers, social partners, OSH professionals, authorities and others. EU-OSHA's mission and vision until 2024 were defined in the EU-OSHA Strategy 2022-2027 adopted by the Management Board in June 2022. After an extensive consultation and dialogue with key stakeholders, the Management Board adopted a new 10-year Strategy at the end of 2024. The new Strategy builds on the experience accumulated and an analysis of future challenges and defines the strategic priorities for the years 2025-2034. The Strategy provides an excellent basis for EU-OSHA continued contribution to the realisation of EU priorities.

The Agency is based on a tripartite structure as is the standard in the employment and social affairs field. Key actors in OSH in Europe are represented in the Agency's Management Board: representatives of governments, employers and workers of the EU-27 Member States, and the European Commission. An expert appointed by the European Parliament Employment and Social Affairs Committee also participates in the work of the Management Board, and, together with European Economic Area and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries' representatives and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and European Labour Authority (ELA) representatives, they have observer status in the Management Board. Whereas the Management Board takes the key strategic decisions, the Executive Board oversees effective preparation and follow-up of the Management Board decisions.

The tripartite dialogue is an essential element, not only at the decision-making stage but also at the implementation stage of EU-OSHA's mandate – both at European level and at Member State level via the national, tripartite Focal Point (FOP) networks. The FOPs are the Agency's main operational network. Whereas they are not directly involved in the governance of the Agency, they play a key role by providing input to the Agency's implementation of the work programme at the national level. They are central actors for the development and coordination of the tripartite network in EU Member States. It is only by engaging FOPs and their networks that the Agency can achieve its objectives in the Member States and it is therefore

¹ Regulation (EU) 2019/126 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019 establishing the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 2062/94, cf. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32019R0126>

decide that the network partners perceive the Agency's work as adding value to their work. Thanks to their input, EU-OSHA can rely on high-quality information and data from the national level that feeds into the implementation of the Agency's activities, and through their networking and dissemination actions involving social partners, the work of EU-OSHA reaches the intended target audiences in the Member States.

While preparing decisions for the Management Board, the Agency regularly consults its three Advisory Groups, the 'Tools and Awareness Raising Advisory Group' (TARAG), the 'OSH Knowledge Advisory Group' (OKAG), and the 'Workers' Exposure Survey Advisory Group' (WESAG),² and has regular coordination meetings with Directorate C, Unit 2 of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL), which serves as the Agency's primary partner at the Commission.

Internally, the Agency is organised in four units, three of which are operational (Prevention and Research Unit, Communication and Promotion Unit, and Network Secretariat) and one administrative (Resource and Service Centre). The Executive Director also serves as the Head of Unit of one of the operational units (Network Secretariat). The Executive Director has been delegated appointing authority powers by the Management Board whereas all Heads of Unit as well as one Temporary Agent/Administrator staff member in the Network Secretariat have delegated Authorising Officer powers.

The Executive Director is supported in management responsibilities by the Heads of Unit. There are regular meetings at the management level to monitor the Agency's performance, the implementation of the annual work programme and the budget, follow-up to audit recommendations, the internal control and risk register action plans, and human resource matters as well as any other issue that is relevant for the smooth running of the Agency.

The Agency's activities are implemented under direct decentralised management.

The year in brief

Key conclusions in relation to operational activities

Until 2024, the Agency's long-term strategic objectives were established in the EU-OSHA Strategy 2022-2027, which was replaced by a new Strategy adopted at the end of 2024. The previous Strategy proved to be an effective framework to address the main challenges in OSH in the EU as identified in the main EU policy documents, particularly the EU OSH Strategic Framework 2021-2027. Organised across six priority areas, during 2024, EU-OSHA continued to make progress towards its strategic objectives.

This conclusion is supported by evaluations commissioned by the Agency in 2024, in the European Commission's evaluation of EU-OSHA and three other Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) agencies (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and European Training Foundation (ETF)) from 2024, by stakeholders' feedback collected through a comprehensive survey in 2024 and key performance indicator (KPI) results.

In particular, findings and feedback collected confirmed that EU-OSHA has been contributing to policy priorities by providing evidence and knowledge on current, new and emerging workplace risks. The Commission's evaluation confirms EU-OSHA's strong support to EU policy priorities and the stronger role of the Agency after the COVID-19 pandemic – also outside the occupational safety and health (OSH)

² The mandate of the WESAG came to an end in November 2024 as a result of the completion of the Workers' Exposure Survey activity.

community. EU-OSHA works closely with other agencies and the Commission to contribute to better preparedness for any future crises as relevant to the Agency's mandate. Further, the Agency is conducting an overview on OSH in the health and social care sector that provides important insights on the sector and supports policy in this area, such as the EU strategy on long-term care. EU-OSHA continues collaboration with EU bodies to mainstream OSH into other policy areas, notably climate change, through its work with the European Environment Agency (EEA) on workplace heat exposure and mitigation.

Stakeholder surveys from 2024 show strong support, with 88% agreeing that EU-OSHA addresses key OSH priorities, 89% recognising its research contributions and over 80% acknowledging its role in identifying future challenges. These are strong indications of good cost-effectiveness, in terms of both impact and costs. This finding is also confirmed through a detailed study in the Commission evaluation. The Commission's evaluation also highlights EU-OSHA's adaptability to changing needs and its role in shaping EU OSH strategies. Its foresight work has raised awareness among policymakers on emerging risks. The ex-post evaluation of the foresight study on circular economy points to the fact that EU-OSHA's work in this area clearly filled a knowledge gap.

In 2024, the Agency met or exceeded almost all of its performance indicator targets, reflecting among other aspects effective delivery and continued relevance. Budget implementation, staffing levels and work programme execution all scored above target. Notably, indicators such as 'perceived performance' (98%) and 'impact on policy' (89%) reflect a high level of stakeholder trust and policy support.

Some other key data in 2024 are related to budget implementation (99% whereas the target is 95%) and work programme implementation (93% while the target is 90%).

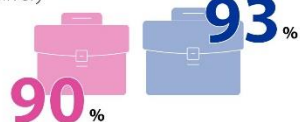
In 2024, EU-OSHA started an OSH overview on cardiovascular diseases, a topic that was highlighted a priority in the EU Strategic Framework being the second leading work-related illness in Europe. Research work is ongoing in the area of OSH in health and social care, a sector that was essential during the pandemic and for the future in the light of demographic developments. Further research on supporting compliance was published during the year and a successful seminar on labour inspection was conducted with the participation of all Member States and social partners. Based on a comprehensive body of research work on the implications of digitalisation for OSH, since 2023 the Agency has been running a major Healthy Workplaces Campaign 'Safe and healthy work in the digital age', a timely contribution to the EU Year of Skills as the campaign aims to upskill EU workplaces to thrive in the digital age. Work on a major OSH overview on psychosocial risks is also ongoing, which will provide the knowledge base for the next Healthy Workplaces Campaign 'Together for Mental Health at Work' starting in 2026.

Other important achievements in 2024 include the finalisation of the fieldwork of the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks 2024, the publication of the first findings of the Workers' Exposure Survey to cancer risks factors, significant improvements on the OSH Barometer, and the results of the foresight activity on circular economy and OSH.

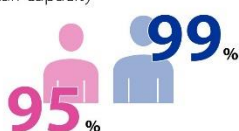
● GOOD GOVERNANCE

TARGET ACTUAL

Work programme
delivery



Staff capacity



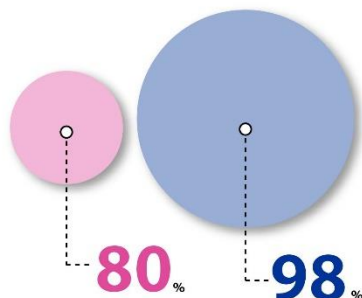
Fulfilment
of payment
appropriations



Implementation
of commitment
appropriations

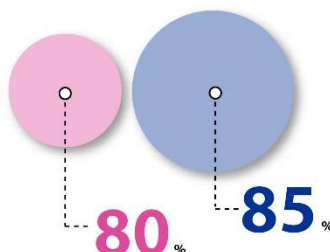


● PERCEIVED PERFORMANCE

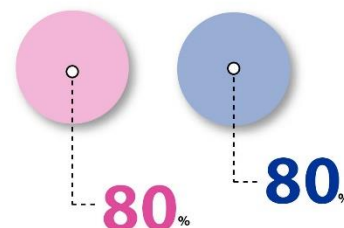


● RELEVANCE TO NEEDS

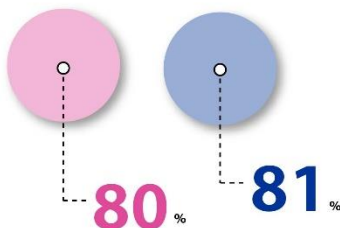
Stakeholders' assessment of relevance



● EU ADDED VALUE

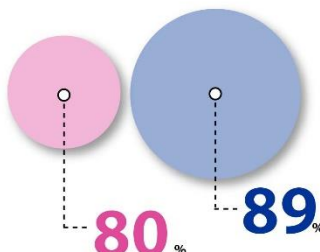


● USEFULNESS

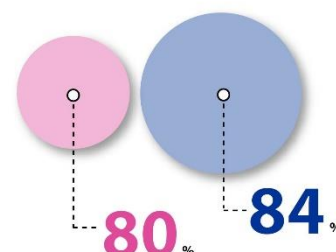


● IMPACT

Policy-making



Workplace practice



Source: EU-OSHA's stakeholders' survey and other surveys carried out in 2024

Key conclusions related to management, internal control and assurance

The Agency's internal control systems and management of resources are based on a systematic analysis of the evidence available.

Overall, the Executive Director received reasonable assurance that the Agency's internal control systems had been adequate, and that the compliance and the implementation of the Internal Control Framework are satisfactory, risks are being appropriately monitored and mitigated, and necessary improvements and reinforcements are being implemented.

EU-OSHA can rely on a variety of sources to carry out this assessment of processes and procedures to ensure completeness and reliability of the information. The Executive Director issued his judgment on the basis of: the control processes in place and the outcomes of such controls; the resources spent to raise awareness with respect to ethics and integrity and fraud prevention; the annual risk assessment and Internal Control Framework assessment exercises; the quantitative and qualitative nature of the non-conformities included in the register for 2024; the assurance received by the manager in charge of internal control; and, last but not least, the overall favourable opinions expressed in the final reports by internal and external auditors and their recommendations in the past few years.

In the light of the above, in his declaration of assurance, the Executive Director has not considered it necessary to include any reservation.