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Working safely in a multicultural Horeca sector

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

Why is there a need to address occupational safety and health (OSH)-related problems for a multicultural workforce in the Horeca sector?

The hotel, restaurant and catering (Horeca) sector has traditionally been the sector with the highest percentage of foreign workers. Rates range between 6 and 14 %, which accounts for roughly half a million non-national workers out of 7.8 million employees in the EU Member States (Eurostat, 2006; OECD, 2003). As well as these foreign workers, the sector's multicultural workforce is also

made up of second- or third-generation migrants with different cultural backgrounds. Rather than the country of origin, it is the cultural background of a worker that may cause difficulties in daily working life. Aside from different languages, culture manifests itself in value patterns, which are not necessarily associated with ethnic origin or religion (Lehman et al., 2004; Ringeisen et al., 2006; Vermeulen, 1997).

The Horeca sector is also marked by a combination of often-unfavourable job features, demanding work requirements and a lack of alternative national workforces. Because of low vocational qualifications and often-inadequate language skills, many migrant workers do not have the qualifications for jobs with higher skill requirements and are therefore forced to accept demanding jobs in the Horeca sector (Eurostat, 2006; Statistisches Bundesamt, 2005; OECD, 2005).

Risk factors in the sector are linked to physical characteristics such as noise, high temperature and contact with dangerous substances, as well as badly equipped or dangerous workplaces such as kitchens and bars. The resulting OSH problems include:

- musculoskeletal disorders due to slips, trips and falls on wet floors;
- dermatological problems due to cutting, harmful substances like oil and cleaning products;
- respiratory problems due to exposure to harmful substances;
- psychosocial risks due to elevated stress levels resulting from a combination of high demands and lack of control over work, as well as impaired work-life balance due to a poor fit between work, family life and social commitments.



Work in a kitchen.



Related OSH problems include physical problems, such as cardiovascular morbidity, premature ageing and heightened mortality, as well as psychological symptoms. The latter include headaches, absenteeism and psychological dysfunction such as psychosomatic problems, anxiety disorders and depression (Eurofound, 2005; Klein Hesselink et al., 2004). Especially for migrant workers, the combination of high work demands, job dependency and culturally varying patterns of communication or interaction may increase health risks. As well as physical and psychosocial risks, migrant workers also have to deal with harassment, lack of support (from customers, colleagues and employers) and discrimination (Vartia-Väänänen et al., 2006; Klein Hesselink et al., 2004).

The Working Environment Information Unit of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (the Agency) held a two-day workshop, 'Working safely in a multicultural Horeca sector' in February 2007. Terry Taylor (head of the Working Environment Information Unit), Dr Dietmar Elsler (Horeca project manager of the Working Environment Information Unit) and Dr Ulrike Bollmann (head of section, International Cooperation, BG Institute Work and Health, Germany) organised and facilitated the workshop. This workshop was part of the pan-European Horeca project of the Agency, which aims to address OSH-related issues in the Horeca sector at a European level. A range of experts were invited from national focal points (FOPs), social partners and governmental institutions across Europe. A number of business representatives were also present. A list is provided at the end of this report.

2. AIMS AND BACKGROUND OF THE WORKSHOP

(Dietmar Elsler, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work)

Within the context of the pan-European Horeca information project, the objectives of the workshop were to:

- identify the main OSH-related problems of the sector's multicultural workforce;
- identify good practice and develop approaches to solve the employees' problems;
- offer advice for future Agency work on meeting the needs of the multicultural workforce in the Horeca sector.

For the purpose of the workshop, a multicultural workforce is defined as 'workers in the Horeca sector who are from different cultural backgrounds'. This general definition was chosen instead of more formal ones, such as migrant workers, because it is not origin from a specific country that has an effect on daily work but the possible difficulties arising from different cultural backgrounds. This includes different languages, race, ethnic origin and religion, which may lead to different sets of shared values. These differences may also appear among workers of the same nationality if they are second- or third-generation migrants but still involved in their ethnic community.

According to the definition of Schein (1985): 'Culture is the way in which a group of people solves problems or reconciles dilemmas.' Each culture has to resolve particular problems and dilemmas, which are also mirrored at work, such as dealing with hierarchy or the uncertainty of the future. There is no 'one best way' to manage OSH management, although some cultures may think they have found it. This is in itself only a culturally defined assumption. (There is more information about cross-cultural aspects in Section 3.3 below.)

EU directives passed in 2000 establish a general framework for equal treatment in access to employment, vocational training, employment and working conditions. The directives cover direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability, age and sexual orientation. For migrant workers, employers have a legal responsibility to provide information, instruction, training and supervision in an

understandable format for all, irrespective of national origins, first language or literacy.

There is evidence that many workers in the Horeca sector are unable to communicate in the national language and therefore rely on colleagues whose own language and translation capabilities are untested (Northwest Food Alliance, 2004). These language barriers make training difficult and also hinder the communication of urgent concerns in the workplace. Accordingly, there is a need for guidance that outlines procedures and gives practical examples of actions, which employers can take to ensure they fulfil their legal and moral obligations. Some leading companies have developed diversity policies that boost the business and strengthen competitive advantage.

Employers in the Horeca sector have significant proportions of migrant workers, which will increase following EU enlargement. Adhering to national and EU anti-discrimination legislation means that employers have to provide equal working conditions for all workers. This entails addressing the diverse needs of a multicultural workforce. There is also growing evidence that economic benefits can result from such an approach (European Commission, 2003). In cooperation with policymakers, practical tools need to be developed that provide guidance on how to:

- manage a multicultural workforce;
- use risk assessment techniques to prevent harm;
- define requirements for induction and training;
- implement successful supervision.

Migrant workers are often less qualified than their national colleagues and therefore need specific training. Migrant workers also often work in more dangerous or demanding jobs. Accordingly, accident rates and occupational diseases tend to be above average (Eurostat, 2006; Vartia-Väänänen et al., 2006). Furthermore, foreign workers often do not know their rights and where to get information if they wish to complain about health and safety.

The Agency has a great interest in the topic. First the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work suggested that information on migrant workers be included in the Agency Horeca project and that the special OSH problems of migrant workers should be considered in the new OSH Community strategy 2007–12. Increasing workforce mobility is also a strategic objective of EU policy, which, for example, is expressed in the European Year of Worker Mobility 2006.

3. THE CURRENT STATE OF OSH IN THE HORECA SECTOR

To familiarise the participating experts with the current understanding of OSH-related problems in the Horeca sector, three presentations were given. These are summarised below.

3.1. Main risks and trends in the Horeca sector (Nele Roskams, Prevent)

In 2004, the Horeca sector — which includes hotels, restaurants, cafés and bars, camping grounds, canteens and catering — employed nearly 7.8 million people, which makes up 4 % of total employment in the EU-25 (Eurostat, 2006; Eurofound, 2005; OECD, 2003). More than 90 % of the companies were micro-enterprises employing 10 employees or less. Almost half the workforce in the sector are under 35 years of age. Compared with the economy in general, the proportion of young workers between 16 and 24 years is high. Less than 10 % are 55 years or older. Nevertheless, there has been an increase in the number of workers over 55 recently. Overall, women make up more than half of the labour force, and a high percentage of workers (40 %) are relatively unskilled (EU-15). With a rate of almost 30 %, part-time employment is higher than in other sectors (18 % for



the total economy). Women have a higher share of part-time jobs than men.

Staff in the Horeca sector face many dangers and hazards in the workplace (Eurostat, 2001; Houtman et al., 2002; Klein Hesselink et al., 2004). These include physically demanding work such as prolonged standing and working with static postures, carrying and lifting, and making repetitive movements. Demanding work is often combined with unfavourable working conditions such as poor design of the workplace or exposure to high noise levels. In the Eurofound survey (2005), for example, 29 % of workers in the sector reported being exposed to noise and more than 4 % considered their health to be at risk because of hearing problems. The working environments often alternate between warm and humid in the kitchen and the cold of storage rooms. This increases the risk of trips, slips and falls — on wet and slippery floors, over obstacles, or by falls from height — as well as cuts and burns. Handling dangerous substances is also a large part of the work, for example the widespread use of cleaning agents.

Aside from the physical threats and dangers, staff in the Horeca sector also face a number of psychosocial risk factors (Eurostat, 2001; Houtman et al., 2002; Klein Hesselink et al., 2004; Semmer, 2003). In terms of working hours, the sector is characterised by long shifts, and irregular and unusual working hours. A lot of the work is done when other people are not at work. Many workers also have high workloads, work under time pressure, and have low control over work structures and processes. Their work can be monotonous, lack creativity and ask for little initiative. Many workers suffer from a lack of training and education, which can raise stress levels. It is also hard to maintain a good work-life balance in jobs that require long working days and irregular working patterns. Psychosocial risks may be exacerbated by interaction with colleagues, superiors and customers. In particular, many workers suffer from a lack of support, which can also increase stress. Eurofound revealed that 70 % of the workforce felt they could ask for support from colleagues, but only 53 % from supervisors. Contact with customers may also be stressful since constant awareness and politeness is required. At worst, constant customer contact may lead to harassment or even violence.

The incidence rate of more than three days' absence from work for occupational accidents (per 100 000 workers) in the Horeca sector is comparable with the rest of the economy (Eurostat, 2003; 2006). More accidents in the sector happen in the 45 to 54 years' age category, but the incidence rate for occupational diseases and fatal accidents is lower than for the rest of the economy (one fatal accident against a rate of 3.8 for the whole economy). Most of the diseases in the Horeca sector are musculoskeletal (50 %), and levels are on the rise. Skin problems come second and account for 29 % of the diseases in the sector (Eurofound, 2005).

During the past few years, technological, economical, social and demographic changes have led to increasing numbers of migrant workers in the Horeca sector (Vartia-Väänänen et al., 2006; ILO, 2001; Klein Hesselink et al., 2004). At the same time, the OSH-related problems of migrant workers have deepened. Because of the increasing use of simpler cooking techniques and the outsourcing of food production, skilled workers have been displaced by cheaper, unskilled workers. The globalisation of the economy and the free movement of labour, especially into the EU, threatens the jobs of staff in the Horeca sector. Some employers have moved away looking for more efficient and cheaper labour elsewhere, or they have hired cheaper migrant workers. European-wide policies on food hygiene and quality, as well as the cost of smoking bans to protect the health of customers and workers, has put more financial pressures on businesses, leading to job losses.

Customers demand higher food standards, increasing the pressure on employers to provide high-quality products made in a responsible way that are traceable to their source. Regulations on food hygiene are directed to consumer protection (Regulation

(EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food) and urge the companies to apply general rules of hygiene for foodstuffs. In terms of health protection, a number of EU Member States enacted laws that ban or partially ban smoking in public places. In some countries this includes pubs and restaurants. A number of (non-binding) resolutions and recommendations have also been implemented to protect staff and customers from the effects of second-hand smoke. The overall aim of these resolutions is to launch a wide public debate on the best way to tackle passive smoking in the EU. Examples include:

- the tobacco products directive, 5 June 2001;
- recommendations on the prevention of smoking, 2 December 2002;
- the tobacco advertising directive, 26 May 2003;
- the Green Paper, 'Towards a Europe free from tobacco smoke: Policy options at EU level'.

Several provisions of these regulations can benefit workers' health and safety, but they can also conflict with OSH-related aspects such as the use of chemical disinfection for hygiene purposes. Voluntary initiatives have also been launched. In 2004, the European social partners of the sector, EFFAT (workers) and Hotrec (employers) signed a joint document entitled 'An initiative to improve corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the hospitality sector' to promote corporate social responsibility. Finally, sociological and demographical changes have led to the permanent availability of convenience food and catering. In combination with an ageing society and a decrease in the available young labour force, the need for staff being available 24 hours a day can often only be met by a growing migrant workforce.

In essence, a number of conclusions can be drawn. In terms of health risks, the Horeca sector does not show above-average accident and disease rates in comparison with others sectors, despite the demanding working conditions. The latter, however, has led to increased staff turnover and a rising skills gap. Overall, it needs to be noted that the full impact of poor working conditions may not be fully clear due to the low age of workers and a high turnover rate. The large number of small companies in the sector makes it difficult to promote the health and safety message effectively. Finally, the sector is under continuous pressure to innovate and adapt. This has a number of implications, especially for OSH among migrant workers.

3.2. Trends in OSH and migration (Maarit Vartia-Väänänen, FIOH)

This presentation summarises the first draft results of the Agency literature review on OSH and migrant workers. The current 25 EU countries have very different migrant histories, which have influenced their integration policies and attitudes towards migrants both generally and in workplaces. The number of (im)migrants varies considerably between EU countries, ranging between 5 and 10 % of the population (Eurostat, 2006; OECD, 2005). Of these groups, between 25 and 30 % are younger and represent second- or third-generation migrants younger than 25 years. Cultural composition of the respective national populations and the migrants' countries of origin, however, vary greatly. For example, in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, the biggest migrant group is from Turkey, whilst the majority of immigrants in the UK are from former colonies such as India, the Caribbean countries and Africa.

This composition can be traced back to three waves of systemic migration following the Second World War: labour migration in the 1950s and 1960s, family reunification in the 1970s and 1980s and post-industrial migration from the 1980s until now (Vartia-Väänänen et al., 2006; Wren and Boyle, 2001). Depending on the start of the migration wave and its magnitude, action in the Member States on the integration of non-EU nationals and the implementation of integration policies varies widely. To date, no EU-unifying policy exists.



Migrant workers seem to have a higher unemployment rate than the natives in most EU countries. In terms of business sectors there exists a clear market segmentation. Migrants primarily work in certain fields (OECD, 2003). On one hand, migrants occupy high-skilled information technology and professional jobs, on the other hand they work in agriculture and horticulture, construction, healthcare, households, transport and the Horeca sector. These sectors are considered to have a significant number of 'three D-jobs', featuring dirty, dangerous and demanding tasks. In combination with an illegal status in many cases, these job characteristics constitute an occupational risk factor for many migrants. Unemployment and poor working conditions lead to below-average social, financial and vocational situations. In particular, illegal status results in limited or denied access to healthcare services, which fosters greater health risks. Additional risk factors refer to often-poor language skills, low education levels, and poor knowledge of the national labour market, leading to them adopting less efficient strategies for finding a job than native workers (cf. Vermeulen, 1997).

In terms of working conditions, migrant workers have a greater risk of being exposed to unhealthy, physically demanding and psychologically draining work environments (Vartia-Väänänen et al., 2006). In particular, migrants often work in jobs that are below their qualifications' level, partly due to problems in validating their degrees. They also work more shift- and part-time work, and engage in more weekend and overtime working. Their work is characterised by more monotonous and dangerous activities than natives, such as assembly line or piecework. Examples include a greater exposure to noise, high physical load or chemical products. In terms of occupational accidents, research findings are contradictory. Some studies report higher rates of occupational accidents among immigrants, which result from an increased rate of migrant workers in occupations containing higher risks of occupational accidents. However, some studies have not detected differences in accident rates when migrants and natives work in the same jobs or organisations.

Migrants may also be more affected by social interaction patterns and workplace bullying than native workers (for an overview see Vartia-Väänänen et al., 2006). A Belgium study by Gevers et al. (2003) showed that interaction patterns between migrants and locals depend on the nature of the professional relationship. Inclusion and integration are more likely to occur when workers are dependent on each other to do their job or work under direct control of the nearest supervisor. Separation, on the other hand, will occur when migrants are engaged for specific jobs that involve separate tasks and/or less frequent contact with locals. Workplace bullying and racial abuse is more common among migrants and non-white employees. Attitudes towards migrant workers have been found to vary in different work units and towards different migrant groups. In Finland, Vietnamese employees experienced appreciation at work more often than employees from Russia.

Health of migrants is often an own specific theme in studies without any link to work and working conditions; the combination of work-related health and migration is rarely encountered in research. A Swedish study suggests, however, that migrants are less affected by impaired working conditions than natives, while some studies have found hearing problems and musculoskeletal problems to be more common among migrant workers than among native workers. Also, migrants have been found to report burnout and stress more often than the natives.

A number of good practice examples from across Europe can be used to address the OSH-related needs and problems of migrant workers. In Belgium, for instance, an organisation for undeclared workers (ORCA) has published a guide that informs them about their rights. In France, a number of websites have been launched that are dedicated to diversity in employment and offer information on the rights and duties of employers. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Labour has published a guide for supervisors who have foreign workers as subordinates in the

construction sector. The aim of the guide is to make sure that foreign workers receive all instructions and are aware of how to work in a safe way.

In Finland, a two-year project was conducted in 16 workplaces to identify action models to help workplaces develop a multicultural work culture. The Ministry of Labour provides information and guidelines on its web page for migrant workers in many languages. In terms of leaflets, a number of national bodies offer translations of relevant information. The Spanish government supports the implementation and distribution of information campaigns, posters and leaflets in several languages that cover rights and obligations, handling loads and chemical safety labels. Similarly, the Health and Safety Executive and the Trades Union Congress in the UK offer safety information leaflets translated into 19 languages to improve safety awareness among migrant workers.

3.3. Interaction problems in intercultural work environments: antecedents and consequences (Tobias Ringeisen, University of Wuppertal)

Multicultural work environments have become a common part of the landscape in many European countries. Dealing with cultural diversity represents a challenge for managers, supervisors and staff alike, which may lead to impaired communication and interaction problems at work. Culture can be conceptualised as a constellation of norms and values that are known transculturally but vary in relevance between societies (for example, Lehman et al., 2004; Triandis, 1989). These norms and values influence basically all psychological and social processes of human functioning, such as interpretation of perceived events, communication or interaction. Culture thus serves as a lens we look through, not only affecting perception, appraisal and thus social interaction, but also regulating in which situations specific modes of behaviours are acceptable and which are not (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005; Lehman et al., 2004; Ringeisen et al., 2007). Successful interaction in multicultural work settings thus requires the ability to understand the specific concepts people from foreign cultures may have about perception, thinking, feeling and acting, the ability to successfully communicate with people from other cultures, and to behave adequately in cultural overlapping situations (Grosch et al., 2000). All of these skills are closely interrelated and form the concept of intercultural competence. On condition of interest and motivation, they may mutually be developed through continuous intercultural experience (Bennett, 1993; Bennett et al., 2003). From a conceptual perspective, the following three components of intercultural competence can thus be differentiated (Thomas and Wagner, 1999; Ringeisen et al., 2006):

- recognition and adequate analysis of cultural differences (knowledge component);
- empathetic perspective taking of persons with a different cultural background (socio-emotional component);
- adoption of adequate behavioural options to deal with ethnic diversity and intercultural conflicts (behavioural component).

Especially in the workplace, the influence of culture can be conceptualised by means of Hofstede's (1980; 1986; 2005) four-dimensional model that differentiates the dimensions of uncertainty avoidance, power distance, masculinity-femininity and individualism-collectivism. Uncertainty avoidance (UA) describes the extent to which a worker feels threatened by unclear and open situations. Uncertainty avoidant persons prefer working environments that are highly structured with clear task assignment and fixation of precise goals. Also, responsibilities and duties for all positions within a business are defined by precise rules to avoid ambiguity in work processes. Workers usually show an above-average tendency to detailed planning/scheduling ahead of deadlines, which may include a weigh-up of pros and cons. Employees with low UA are likely to prefer flexible task assignment that may vary among the members of a



working team depending on individual workload. Related to this, a variable use of methods is likely with open discussions as an effective method to find solutions that fit the situation. Overall, the approach would be more process-oriented, with a continuous adaptation of goals, job roles and tools.

In contrast to UA, power distance (PD) does not manifest itself in formal composition and structuring of the work conditions, but rather in the interaction patterns between superiors and staff. PD characterises the degree of acceptance that power is irregularly divided within organisations. In the case of high PD, superiors are considered authorities, who have the right to allocate work to staff and may not openly be criticised. Employees who have high PD show a tendency to follow rules without questioning and engage in greater avoidance or passive coping during confrontational incidents (for example, Seipp and Schwarzer, 1996). Under the opposite circumstances, superiors and employees interact at an equal level, and taking responsibility by the staff is valued. Employees are encouraged to unburden their superiors by taking over tasks, disclose their own needs and make contributions for improvement.

Masculinity-femininity (MF) characterises the degree to which gender stereotypes are prevalent in a work environment, which has implications for the allocation of tasks and jobs among women and men. In general, masculine work settings enhance traditional gender roles with men pursuing careers and women taking low-status jobs. Environments are thus characterised by competition, achievement orientation and aggressiveness, with salaries and promotion being dependent on high performance. A negative side-effect is a greater risk of sexual harassment (Luthar and Luthar, 2002). Low masculinity and thus high femininity go along with team-oriented organisation of work units that encourage employees to be self-assertive and cooperative (Couch Melano, 2003). Lifelong learning and training is welcome for the entire staff to balance out weaknesses and thus ensure a high functional work level of all employees. Selection of superiors is based not only on expertise but also on social competence, empathy and integrative skills (Alexander, 2003).

Individualism-collectivism (IK), finally, characterises the extent to which organisations are considered to be an open social frame with personal autonomy or, rather, a narrowly defined social web with allocation of roles for all members. The importance of IK becomes evident during interaction patterns among employees, exchange of social support and bonding (Hobfoll, 1998; Triandis, 1989). Superiors high on individualism value self-directed learning and problem solving among the staff, for example to find the best fitting solution for a problem. Employees choose a work environment mainly for reasons of interest and self-development and to realise individual goals. Under the reversed pattern, superiors encourage employees to follow traditional solutions to problems that do not question existing hierarchies and structures. Instead of self-actualisation, work and education serve the purpose of societal advancement, which defines one's status and increases status and family pride. Within bigger corporations, a blend-in of workers is required to avoid standing out and envy (Alexander, 2003; Bochner and Hesketh, 1994).

Across the four dimensions, an intensity pattern can be determined, which constitutes cultural profiles of persons or organisations. Different profiles unconsciously affect emotions, cognitions and behaviour, which may lead to diverging expectations, impaired communication and severe interaction problems among colleagues, and between staff and supervisors in intercultural work settings,

(Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005; Ringeisen et al. 2006; 2007). Increasing stress and conflict potential is likely to occur the more profiles of colleagues differ across the four dimensions (for example, Hofstede, 1986; Ringeisen, 2007), which has important implications for OSH. On the basis of an exemplary intercultural work episode, the emergence of these problems is explained in the following. As an intercultural work setting, a Bohemian specialty restaurant in Berlin was chosen that is run by a German manager. Aside from the regular German staff, Slovakian waitresses work in the restaurant temporarily. On the basis of previous research, the following country-specific profiles were assumed for Germans and Slovaks (cf. Alexander, 2003; Couch Melano, 2003; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005).

Table 1: Standardised country scores across the four Hofstede dimensions (range: 0 to 100)

	UA	PD	MF	IK
Germany	55	26	58	72
Slovakia	77	100	100	54

NB: High scores on MF indicate masculinity; high scores on IK indicate individualism.

For the upcoming holidays, a German manager decides to employ three Slovakian waitresses temporarily (indicates moderate UA). As part of his cooperative leadership style (low PD), he leaves it up to his regular staff and the temporary Slovakian personnel to split shifts according to their needs for the holiday period (high IK). For him, it is most important to have the restaurant running smoothly (high UA). This seems to work since nobody criticises the scheduling and the work gets done smoothly. At first sight, the staff obviously accept his orders (high PD), but divide work independently (high IK) and in a fair and cooperative fashion (moderate MF). After a couple of weeks, however, the manager realises that the Slovakian employees often work more overtime and late shifts in a row, especially over the weekend. He is surprised since all three waitresses have children and family but only two of the German co-workers do. As a solution, he calls a staff meeting (moderate MF) and asks each staff member about the obvious imbalance in shifts and workload (high IK). To his surprise, the Slovakian waitresses indicate that they do not feel burdened either by the workload or the shift structure. Obviously, the Slovakian waitresses expected a clear shift assignment (high UV) and thus accepted the unfavourable working shifts without resistance (high PD), which were allocated to them by the



Participants of Horeca workshop.



regular staff (low PD and high IK). They adhered to these 'rules' as much as possible (high UA), trying to blend in without open criticism (moderate IK).

In essence, the Slovakian workers suffered physical risks and pronounced stress in an individualistic and cooperative work environment since they accepted unfavourable shift allocations due to their cultural profile of high UA, high PD and high MF. An interculturally competent solution thus requires the manager to be aware of culturally varying profiles and related differences in cognition and behaviour (knowledge component) to understand the lack of complaints regarding the working conditions (socio-emotional component) and thus take over the allocation of shifts temporarily (behavioural component).

4. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OSH-RELATED PROBLEMS OF A MULTICULTURAL WORKFORCE IN THE HORECA SECTOR?

For the task of identifying the major OSH-related problems of a multicultural workforce in the Horeca sector, the workshop attendees were divided into four groups. The composition of each group was a balance of stakeholder and country representatives to give a multi-perspective analysis of the topic. Ulrike Bollmann, Tobias Ringeisen, Dietmar Elsler and Terry Taylor acted as facilitators. Each group was provided with three guiding questions:

- what are the characteristics of a multicultural workforce?
- which of these characteristics are related to OSH?
- what are the specific working conditions and work-related hazards of a multicultural workforce in the Horeca sector?

After working on presentations to the plenum group, each group selected the most pressing issues to work on for the remainder of the workshop. Selections were prioritised by a vote. While discussing the results of the vote in the plenum, the experts decided to cluster overlapping entries into thematic categories. Next, good practice and new approaches were to be identified for these categories. Four groups were formed, comprising (1) working conditions, (2) supervision, (3) cultural aspects and (4) information on OSH-related and legal issues. Table 2 contains the four identified categories and the assigned entries with their vote counts.

The first content category was labelled 'working conditions'. It brought together the problems a multicultural workforce in the Horeca sector faces, together with the steps taken by stakeholders to address them. The problems were the undeclared work of migrants, unfavourable and precarious working conditions, the problem of compartmentalised or isolated tasks and schedules, lack of social support and integration in the workplace, as well as problems resulting from business restructuring such as outsourcing or social dumping. Two examples highlighted the need to take ownership of these problems, which involves defining and sharing responsibilities among stakeholders such as governments, trade unions and employers.

The second category contained issues that require supervision from stakeholders. These included the neglect of OSH aspects among migrant workers to maximise their financial benefits, discrimination and training, as well as the general methods and regulations needed to supervise a multicultural workforce. The third category grouped OSH-related problems, which are related to or shaped by cultural difference. These included language, gender inequality, as well as varying hygiene standards and work ethics.

Table 2: List of identified problems, sorted by categories

Topic	Votes	Group
Group 1: Working conditions		
Undeclared work	14	D
Take ownership	11	D
Responsibilities: governments, unions, employers	7	D
Working conditions (incl. SMEs)	6	D
Outsourcing	4	D
Social dumping spiral	3	D
Precarious work	2	D
Compartmentalisation/segregation	1	D
Group 2: Supervision		
Financial aspects (individual/family) over OSH aspects	6	C
Discrimination	5	C
(Specific) training — migrants — employers	3	C
Supervision of multicultural workforce	2	C
Group 3: Cultural aspects		
Language	10	B
Culture	5	B
Gender (in)equalities in different cultures	5	B
Different hygiene standards	2	B
Different work ethics	1	B
Group 4: Information about OSH/legal issues		
Information about rights/standards	9	A
Right way to contact/inform migrants	6	A

Finally, the fourth content category subsumed two entries on OSH-related information issues among a multicultural workforce. Migrant workers need to be informed about their rights and OSH-related standards met at the workplace. It was felt that information and responsibilities needed to be clarified by legal regulations.

5. OSH IN A MULTICULTURAL WORKFORCE: GOOD PRACTICE AND NEW APPROACHES

After the experts had identified and sorted the main OSH-related problems into four categories, four new working groups were formed to collect existing good practice and suggest (European as well as national) approaches that could solve the problems. Experts could select a working group according to their interest and expertise in the topic. All groups were encouraged to take into account the perspectives of employers, employees, policymakers and labour inspectorates. Following each group's presentation, a discussion in the plenum raised more important points and suggestions.

5.1. Working conditions

This group placed great emphasis on the problems of illegal work in combination with the inadequate language skills of many migrant workers. Good practice and recommended solutions varied greatly among participants. To emphasise the



different approaches, the group decided to split their presentation into two parts. Henrik Hansen (United Federation of Danish Workers) presented the first and Melissa Barlow (Hotrec) the second.

According to Mr Hansen, illegal work is the most important problem a multicultural workforce faces in the Horeca sector. He believed that illegal work arose partly from a growing tendency to outsource and subcontract among the sector's businesses. In order to maximise profit, employers subcontract tasks such as cleaning, cooking and catering. Migrant workers make up a significant proportion of the subcontracted staff since they are cheaper due to their low qualification levels and often illegal status. As a consequence, there may be unfair competition among national and migrant workers, further lowering salaries and worsening working conditions. For migrant workers, however, these salaries may still be higher than in their home countries, which is their primary motivation to hold on to their job.

Severine Restout of the supervision group provided an alternative. She believed that outsourcing and subcontracting may in part be attributed to the fact that national employees generally refuse to take jobs such as housekeeping, stewarding and cleaning. Over the years, the status of these jobs has deteriorated to such an extent that they are now considered to be low status. Hiring more migrants is therefore the consequence of an increasing national staff shortage. In terms of their motivation, migrant workers may not decide to work in the EU for financial reasons, but may also come for political reasons. The resulting status of asylum-seekers then requires them to work illegally.

Ms Barlow proposed a number of good practice examples and recommendations to solve the problem. At the governmental level, employers should be stopped from subcontracting work to illegal workers, but also offered legal and realistic alternatives to outsourcing and subcontracting. A number of European countries have adopted ideas such as these. In France, for example, the employment of illegal workers is prosecuted with high fines by the labour inspectorates. Spain, on the other hand, grants an 'amnesty' for illegal workers to become legal, if they can prove to have stayed for a certain time period in the country. In Denmark, a number of good practice guidelines have been developed and implemented for outsourcing and subcontracting work.

Awareness of the problem of illegal work needs to be raised among all stakeholders, and migrants need to be better informed about their rights and duties relating to OSH. They also need to be encouraged to report on illegal practices and given better protection when doing so. Ms Restout considered the latter to be unrealistic since illegal workers are forced into low-status jobs because of a lack of alternatives. She highlighted the need for employers to take responsibility for better working conditions of their staff in general.

In accordance with the views of the group considering 'information about OSH/legal issues', there was agreement on the notion that migrants should be better informed about their rights and duties. In Spain and Denmark, for example, language courses for migrants are used to teach national OSH legislation. In Denmark these courses are obligatory, but attendance is voluntary in Spain. However, language courses may suffer from the problem that improvements in OSH only become apparent after migrants have attained basic literacy. One solution may be the use of non-verbal training materials such as video to explain OSH matters.

In order to bring together the varying national efforts to address the problem of illegal work, it was proposed to set up a forum in which examples of good practice could be shared.

5.2. Supervision

The results of this group were presented by Ms Restout. Good practice examples were collected and recommendations for solutions proposed. With regard to training, employers were recommended to broaden their courses to include web-based and distance-learning approaches. At the management level, intercultural competence training should be offered to help supervisors work with a multicultural workforce. For both migrant workers and management, language courses should be offered to improve mutual understanding. If necessary, bilingual coaching could be implemented as an extra tool. It was felt that employees also needed to take the initiative to attend courses, seek information and develop their skills before migrating. In France, for example, newcomers are welcomed if they are plumbers or if they are going to work in the Horeca sector, but it would be better if they could receive some training before migrating.

At the governmental level, policies need to be implemented that encourage both employers and employees to establish systemic training for staff. Training should be seen as a means of long-term investment in human resources and not a needless expense. European-wide regulations need to be enacted that encourage integration in the workplace. Parallel to these legal steps, trade unions and labour inspectorates need to be informed about the usefulness of training, so they can help with its implementation.

It was felt by the group that employers should implement diversity policies to encourage employees to share their experience and knowledge. Legal bodies should run campaigns on the subject of migrant workers. Unions need to be prepared to take up a new mediating role involving the counselling of employees and harmonisation of labour inspectorate activities.

The discrimination that many migrant workers face needs to be addressed with greater fervour. National governments should be required to enact anti-discrimination policies with regard to employment, recruitment and handling of multicultural workforces. These also need to be harmonised at the EU level. Subsequently, the information flow between, and cooperation among, employers, employees and the labour inspectorates should be enhanced. Employers and staff have to be informed about the objectives of such policies and staff need to report any violations. All these processes should be guided, controlled and supported by the labour inspectorates.

Aside from these three approaches — development of training efforts, systematic awareness raising of all stakeholders about multiculturalism and enactment of anti-



Group work to identify the problems.

discrimination policies — migrant workers need to develop a greater awareness of the importance of OSH-related issues. At the governmental level, legislation to enforce a minimum wage is required.

5.3. Cultural aspects

The results of the group on cultural aspects were presented by John Nevitt. The group considered three points: (1) gender (in)equalities in different cultures, (2) different hygiene standards, and (3) different work ethics resulting from cultural differences. For the two topics of language and culture, an action plan was then drafted, incorporating the views of all stakeholders.

Drawing on examples from the UK (for example, Tulip (UK) Ltd), a set of recommendations was suggested to tackle poor language skills. It was felt that migrants should take a test of the host nation's language to assess their ability to communicate. The result should not affect their application process. If migrants are unable to speak the language to a required standard, they should receive basic training to improve their communication skills. In line with the recommendations provided by the two previous working groups, it was emphasised that employees and managers should receive training in a language that is widely spoken among the migrant workforce. For managers, there should even be financial incentives to attend such training. Translations of all important documents, including safety instructions, should be provided for workers by the company or the labour inspectorate. National governments should make the translation of technical information and standards of OSH management mandatory, provide important translations themselves and offer financial incentives to encourage participation in language training.

The group offered a recommendation for dealing with a multicultural workforce (cf., for example, Luchtenberg, 1997; 2003). For the employer, social responsibility needs to be developed to address better the needs of migrant workers. This may refer to the characteristics of different nationalities in terms of cultural habits, traditions or religious holidays. At government level, legislation against discrimination and bullying should be developed and enforced by labour inspectorates. More information on, for example, social benefits, housing and medical services should be provided to both migrant workers and employers. Migrant workers could receive a welcome package.

In the workplace itself, businesses and employees should address the issues of multiculturalism daily through training or mentoring programmes. This could be supplemented by social activities such as sport.

5.4. Information about OSH/legal issues

Kerstin Howald presented the results of the final working group. It felt that information should be directed at the entire working staff, but that the quality and quantity of the information should be tailored to smaller groups. Important distinctions should be made between high- and low-skilled workers (including high and low language proficiency), legal and illegal workers, and migrant workers with different cultural backgrounds. Low-skilled workers with language deficits and low contact with national colleagues need more information.

The working group suggested that the four categories of employers, employees, policymakers and labour inspectorates should be broadened by adding social partners such as labour unions or temporary work agencies. Noting the variety of workplace characteristics, the group further suggested differentiating between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the big chains, and to specify the nature of the Horeca sector with greater precision. In terms of legal regulations, it should be noted that defined responsibilities for stakeholders vary for OSH among the EU Member States.

The group did not suggest new long-term solutions but recommended that existing good practice from EU Member States should be adapted to national requirements. It was considered to be important that policymakers, social partners, employers and the labour inspectorates work together more effectively to identify and target migrant communities. Successful examples include agreements between social partners and companies on the mobility of migrant workers. A good opportunity to pass on relevant information would be the health and hygiene test that all workers have to pass before they can work with food. Target workers should not only be made familiar with OSH-related regulations but also receive information on labour law, social security and any legislation on minimum wages. Brochures and leaflets should be translated so all migrant workers can be reached. Labour inspectorates should become familiar with the specific circumstances that many SMEs and their migrant staff face.



Within companies, a number of actions were suggested that have already been implemented by exemplary businesses across Europe. In terms of self-imposed regulations, companies may implement multiculturalism charters, run campaigns or use sectoral funds to invest in training. Aside from that, mentoring programmes for personal integration or 'toolbox meetings' with individual instruction can easily be implemented at the workplace. Complementary to these tools for improvement of daily interaction and integration, businesses may use different media to share relevant information, for example by means of verbal and non-verbal channels. Examples include the intranet or Internet in bigger companies or e-learning in SMEs.

Group work to identify good practice examples.



6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Major issues at a glance

On reviewing the OSH-related problems of a multicultural workforce identified at the workshop, it soon became evident that they may be broken down into a few major points. As a basis for problem identification and the development of addressing strategies, however, the nature of the issue needs to be clarified with greater precision.

One major issue is that of illegal work contracts. For some employers, a lack of available alternatives concerning staff or job options may be the driving force, while others may only be interested in maximising their profits. From that perspective, other problems like unfavourable working conditions due to segregation or compartmentalisation, falling salaries or growing competition among national and non-national workers are secondary problems that occur as a side-effect of illegal work. Aside from illegal work, however, other major problem areas can be identified that contribute to a violation of OSH standards among a multicultural workforce. These problems are the insufficient language skills of many migrant workers, a lack of awareness and thus responsibility, confusion among stakeholders and a lack of information on OSH-related aspects among migrant workers in general.

6.2. What should be done to address the issue?

The experts provided a number of short- and long-term solutions to improve the lot of the migrant workers in the Horeca sector. It was proposed that the expert group would continue to exchange good practice about managing the multicultural workforce. Tools and brochures developed by the Agency should be considered, and a regular expert group meeting should be established.

To address the problem of illegal work, the experts agreed that policymakers needed to enact legal regulations to minimise the economic advantages of hiring illegal staff, foster effective employment alternatives and exert better control over employers using the labour inspectorates. Concrete examples included establishing a minimum wage, anti-discrimination policies, limiting subcontracting, offering financial benefits for hiring legal multinational staff and introducing aggravated fines for violation. Also, staff reporting on violations needed better protection from victimisation and the risk of losing their job. Government campaigns need to be launched to raise awareness of the problem of illegal work, foster business willingness to invest in multicultural development programmes and enhance multicultural staff development at work.

To achieve these aims, relevant information needs to be transmitted effectively to both employers and staff. In particular,

Table 3: Problem solutions, by problem category and stakeholder

Problem	Employers	Employees	Policymakers	Labour inspectorates
Illegal work	■ Apply good practices for subcontracting and outsourcing ■ Refrain from illegal work contracts	■ Seek information about labour regulations in host country ■ Refrain from working under illegal and dangerous conditions	■ Enact legal regulations to decrease incentives for illegal work, e.g. minimum wages, anti-discrimination ■ Inform migrant workers about their legal rights and duties, e.g. during language training	■ Ensure that no illegal workers are employed
Language and cultural aspects	■ Offer language and intercultural competence training to workers ■ Encourage language training of management, maybe through performance appraisal or even financial incentives ■ Organise integrative social activities, such as mixed sports clubs or cultural events to learn more about migrant workers' habits	■ Migrants are required to engage in active vocational integration, e.g. attend training, develop skills ■ National workers should take social responsibility e.g. by means of a mentor system, engage in intercultural activities	■ Prepare information about host country (welcome package) with information about social benefits, housing, medical services ■ Prepare migrants before departure in country of origin	■ Ensure that all information material is available in different languages ■ Develop diversity sensitive risk assessment
OSH training and information	■ Implement self-imposed diversity policies to encourage sharing of knowledge among national and migrant staff, inform staff about usefulness of (vocational) integration ■ Make use of non-verbal OSH instruction ■ Provide employees with information in different languages	■ Migrants: before they start working, they should seek relevant information on: • legal issues • OSH-related issues • labour laws • social security regulations	■ Provide incentives for companies that implement training for staff ■ Use preparatory tests (health/hygiene/ language) to provide OSH information to migrants	■ Ensure training is made available to the staff as required



migrant and non-national workers should be familiarised with OSH-related standards, and receive information on national labour laws, social security regulations and social welfare options. To achieve this, language versions of key brochures are required. Their production, translation and supply should be managed by governmental institutions, social partners, labour inspectorates and employers. To get the relevant information across to its audience, preparatory tests could be used, for example language assessments, health and hygiene examinations or preparatory language training. If deficient language skills are detected, participation in language training may become obligatory. Legal and OSH-related information could become a standard component of these courses. From the perspective of a European-wide harmonisation of work legislation, steps could be taken to establish bilateral agreements with non-EU countries for preparing migrants before departure in their country of origin.

Managers and labour inspectorates could take intercultural competence training and courses on languages widely spoken by staff. Realising these training programmes, however, requires

legislation by government. This could include offering financial benefits for employers to train their staff.

Companies and migrants together have to contribute to successful workplace integration. Employers have to take social responsibility by, for example, offering mentoring programmes as part of on-the-job training. To achieve success, the migrant workers themselves should work towards workplace integration. Table 3 provides an overview of good practice and the steps that should be taken by employers, employees, policymakers and labour inspectorates to address the future needs of a multicultural workforce.

6.3. Which steps should be taken by the Agency?

The recommended actions and the collection of good practice represent a good overview of what has been done and what needs to be done in the Horeca sector. However, not all of these valuable approaches are either in the control of the Agency or

Table 4: List of workshop participants

	Organisation	Country
Claire Strutt	Health and Safety Executive	United Kingdom
André Wantz	Inspection du Travail et des Mines	Luxembourg
Anna Kazenas	CIOP-PIB	Poland
Bernhard Gerstberger	Bundessparte Tourismus und Freizeitwirtschaft, Fachverband Hotellerie	Austria
Christoph-J. Kirchner	Berufsgenossenschaft Nahrungsmittel und Gaststätten (BGN)	Germany
Daniela Kubickova	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Czech Republic
Eamonn O'Sullivan	HSA	Ireland
Egle Dilkiene	Lithuanian Association of Hotels and Restaurants	Lithuania
Gloria Ramiro Montes	Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo	Spain
Henrik Hansen	United Federation of Danish Workers	Denmark
Isabel Dudzinski	ISTAS-CCOO	Spain
Jan-Peter Westein	De Unie (company)	Netherlands
John Nevitt	Tulip (UK)	United Kingdom
Kaarina Myyri-Partanen	Occupational Safety and Health District of Uusimaa	Finland
Kálmán Tóth	Vocational Training Institute	Hungary
Kerstin Howald	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism (EFFAT)	EU
Laurencia Jancurova	National Labour Inspectorate	Slovakia
Maarit Vartia-Väänänen	FIOH	Finland
Marguerite Sequaris	Hotrec (hotels, restaurants and cafés in Europe)	EU
Marianne De Troyer	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Belgium
Nele Roskams	Prevent	Belgium
Petra Vrečko	Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs	Slovenia
Roberto Pulcinelli	UF PISLL Az. USL 7 di Siena Zona Valdichiana	Italy
Santa Graikste	Association of Hotels and Restaurants of Latvia	Latvia
Styliani Stelios	Labour Inspectorate	Cyprus
Severine Restout	Hilton, London	United Kingdom
Tobias Ringeisen	University of Wuppertal	Germany
Tom Chambers	IOSH	United Kingdom
Ulrike Bollmann	BG-Institut Arbeit und Gesundheit (BGAG)	Germany
Willy Imbrechts	FOP Belgium	Belgium



the expert group. To foster a smooth and successful implementation of the suggested actions in the long run, tasks and solutions need to be defined more precisely and responsibilities need to be clarified.

The focus of the Agency's work is the collection and dissemination of good practice in the Member States. For the Horeca sector, this job is carried out by the Work Environment Topic Centre, a consortium of distinguished national OSH research institutes. To provide all participating bodies with the relevant information on good practice, the centre will compile a report that includes a comprehensive collection of Internet links and good practice information. Further, the Horeca prevention report written by the centre will inform interested parties about European and national policies, action programmes and campaigns relevant to the Horeca sector.

In order to support continuous networking among the experts, the Agency will:

- create an Internet workspace on the Agency extranet system with exclusive access rights for the expert group; this will facilitate the exchange of information and large documents; all documentation of the workshop, including photos of the group work results, will be placed in the workspace;
- invite the experts to take part in the reviewing process of the Horeca Topic Centre products;
- plan the next Horeca expert group meeting at the beginning of 2008.

Owing to limited resources, information provided by the Agency can never be complete. Therefore, the Agency appreciates greatly the valuable contributions of national experts, especially the expert group, which enable a continuous flow of relevant information. In the future, it is the intention to encourage continued networking between the Agency and expert group, as well as collaboration among the experts themselves.

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