Lessons learned from good examples on how to improve occupational health and safety in micro and small enterprises

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Background – the Sesame project

- Commissioned assignment for EU-OSHA (not funded research but with considerable elements of research)
- Budget 1 332 304 Euro, three year project
- Nine partners/countries, representing different parts of Europe
- Core group
  - Monique Ramioul, KU Leuven, project leader, Belgium
  - Peter Hasle, Aalborg University, Denmark
  - David Walters, Cardiff University, UK
  - Lothar Lissner / Carsten Brück, Koop, Germany
  - Ann-Beth Antonsson, IVL, Sweden
Four work packages

1. OSH in Micro and Small Enterprises, MSE – the state of play *(report EU-OSHA 2016)*

2. The view from the workplace: interviews to understand OSH attitudes and behaviours in MSE *(to be published 2018)*

3. From policy to practice: to what extent has the design and implementation of OSH policies, strategies, programmes, actions and support for MSE succeeded? *(to be published 2017)*
   - *Survey and description of good examples*
   - Workshops with stakeholders and MSE
   - An analytical report

4. Final analysis and support to wrap-up seminar

*Realistic evaluation, What works, for whom, under what circumstances* *(Pawson & Tilley 1997)*
Selection criteria – good examples

- **Current good example**. Still running or terminated the last 5 years.
- **Evidence of impact**, e.g. through evaluations, statistics on use and uptake or subjective evaluations by stakeholders.
- **Coverage**, reaching out to many companies, e.g. a high number or a considerable share of the target group.
- **Sustainable**, e.g. running for some time, a lasting result, affordable cost or sustainable financing.

The selection of examples should reflect *different typologies of MSE and different types of good examples.*

=> most research projects are pilot studies and do not fulfil these criteria
A variety of good examples: 44 from 12 countries

- Orchestrated examples built on multi-dimensional strategies (6)
- Get MSEs aware of, interested in and working with OSH (5)
- Strengthening OSH infrastructure through structures for providing personal OSH support to MSEs (4)
- Non-OSH intermediaries engaging in OSH (2 + 2)
- Using requirements from the value chain as a lever for OSH (3)
- OSH training for MSEs and their employees (7 + 2)
- Economic support for OSH improvement (1 + 1)
- Provision of tools and methods suited for support of OSH and OSH management in MSEs (12)
- Methods for authorities’ supervision adapted to MSEs (2)
The examples reflect the complexity of improving OSH in MSE

- One size do not fit all MSE
- Drivers
  - Increase awareness
  - Award OSH improvements and management
  - Internal, knowledge about risks
  - External, business interest
  - External, regulatory requirements
  - Economic support to OSH improvements
- Support
  - Tools
  - OSH training
  - Personal support
  - Supporting infrastructure
- Dissemination, reaching out to MSE
  - Inspections
  - Non-OSH intermediaries
  - Stakeholders
Some general conclusions

- A variety of approaches, which was strived for in the selection of examples
- Most examples build on MSE’s voluntary participation
  - What about the majority of MSE that do not volunteer?
- Most examples are directed towards and adapted to sectors
  - What about small sectors (few MSE)?
- High risk sectors commonly selected as target group, e.g. construction industry and agriculture
  - What support is available for other sectors?
- Impact is often evaluated through counting downloads etc.
- There is a lack of evaluation of impact of the good examples
- Scarce knowledge about impact in terms of reduced risks and reduced injury rates
  - What do we really know about the impact?
- There is usually a lack of explicitly described programme theory, describing in what way the programmes, tools etc. will give effect
  - No systematic approach taking into account the complexity of improving OSH In MSE
Based on Eurenius C. Verktyg för småföretagens arbetsmiljö - Behov, Marknadsföring och Utformning (Tools for OSH in MSE) IVL report B 1173
The national context

- Different stakeholders take responsibility for OSH
  - Mainly authorities (e.g. Estonia, Poland, Romania)
  - Insurance companies (e.g. Germany, Italy)
  - Social partners (e.g. Sweden, Denmark)

- Resources for OSH support and advice as well as personal support to MSE varies immensely

- MSE needs vary between countries

- Each country can find methods that works for them
Factors to consider in the design of an intervention – the road to success

- The problem to be solved and drivers in MSE to solve it
- The target group, context and culture
  - National context
  - Vulnerability
  - Decision latitude of company (who has the power to decide about OSH and measures needed)
  - Position in the value chain and impact from value chain
  - Used to reading and writing? Usually good practice measures is more effective than starting identifying and assessing risks
- Legitimacy and dissemination
  - Same message from different stakeholder, cooperation between stakeholders
- Sustainability
  - Who will take the ‘long term responsibility?’
Development of new strategies and more effective strategies

- Necessary to develop strategies that reach not only the interested but all MSE
- Orchestrated programmes, a good way to reach MSE with varying OSH ambitions – offers something for all
  - Orchestrated action – combines support with carrot and sticks
- The main strategy of MSE is reactive – adapt to that and identify actions that will make MSE react and take action
- Support is best offered as advice on good practice = solutions to common OSH problems, complemented by other tools
- Identify the impact of the value chain – can strategic alliances be formed with actors in the value chain including non-OSH intermediaries?