

Prevention strategies and current challenges in occupational safety and health (OSH) in Denmark



Conflict of interest statement

I have no conflict of interest to disclose



Agenda

1. European trends
2. The Danish OSH system
3. Current challenges and policy measures in Denmark



European trends 2004-2019 (EU OSHA)

OSH Risks

- Shift from safety to health risks. Towards psychosocial risk factors and emotional challenges
- Large reduction on non fatal accidents and fatal accidents
- Ergonomical risk factors still present (also from inactivity) (40 – 75%)
- Constant physical risks (15 – 30%)
- Average working time about 40 hrs/week
- Significant geographic differences within Europe
- Costs of OSH related accident and diseases: 2-3 % of GDP
- OSH issues - Estimated 4.4 - 6.8 mio. lost life years for EU27

Workforce development

- Shifts in in work tasks and workforce between sectors and higher skills levels. Less manual occupations
- Demand for higher skills jobs
- Increase in female work force
- Older work force (55 – 64 yrs old) increased 18%
- Extra EU migrant work force (4.4%)
- Extra and intra EU migrant work force (12%)
- Increase in non-standard contractual relations (only 14%)

The Danish OSH System

- Extensive work environment legislation - Ministry of Employment
- Significant enforcement through different policy measures: regulation, inspection, sanctions and dissemination
- Strong role of social partners (tripartite agreements)
- Institutional Actors
 - Danish Working Environment Authority – inspections, regulation, dissemination
 - Work Environment Council (social partners)
 - National Research Centre for the Working Environment
 - Industry Partnerships on Working Environment (social partners (dissemination))
 - Compensation and Insurance Board
 - Standardisation body – ISO certification for OSH

Facts about Denmark

Nordic country

Population: 5.9 mio.

High Income country: Ranked 9th GDP/capita

Workforce: High share of women (76%)

Women better educated than men

Current challenges

Political

Tri partite agreement on four high level national OSH goals. Ten year ambition

- Less work-related accidents
- Reduce exposure to hazardous chemicals
- Reduce exposure to significant physical strains
- Reduce exposure to significant psycho-social strains



Economic

- EU OSH estimate 2-3 percent of GDP
- No overall Danish estimate
- Stand alone cost of illness studies (work related stress (0.6% (only businesses' costs), accidents (1%), lowerback pain (1%))
- Lack of standardized methodologies in OSH economics



Public Health

In Denmark emergence of different studies

- National public health monitor
- OSH biannual monitoring
- National registries
- Burden of disease studies