

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN ROMANIA IN VIEW OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY

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**Abstract:** *Health and safety at work has become one of the most substantial and important sectors in the EU social policy over the last years. In Romania, the implementation of health and safety management systems is performed by: a systematic approach to problems, training and awareness, effective and efficient tools for managing a company's specific issues as well as involvement at all its organizational levels. The article deals with the implementation of the management systems for health and safety at work, which complements the enterprises' existing organizational system and promotes enforcement of the legislation regarding health and safety at work. Creating a healthier and safer working environment is a goal that exceeds the resources and expertise of a single institution or a single country.*

**Keywords:** *management; security; health; work; best practices; prevention, awareness.*

**JEL classification:** *J28*

## 1. Introduction

Health and safety at work has become one of the most substantial and important sectors in the EU social policy over the recent years.

The European Community Strategy is based on setting up and reinforcing a culture of risk prevention, on combining a variety of tools for the implementation of the Community policies: legislation, social dialogue, technical progress and best practices, corporate social responsibility and economic incentives – and on building partnerships among all the actors on the stage of health and safety at work.

The Management systems for health and safety at work come in support of the implementation of the Community Strategy by:

- systematic approach of problems in the field;
- emphasis laid on training and awareness as important elements of culture concerning health and safety at work;
- creation of some effective and efficient management tools for managing the company's specific issues;
- involvement at all levels of an organization.

## 2. National Approach

The number of units that have already implemented the management systems for safety and health at work is still rather low, among the factors that have led to this situation we can be mention:

- the short term to enact the mandatory requirement of implementing the system and quite a long time for completion;
- a shaping internal market in terms of the interest in health and safety at work;
- a very new and complex legislation in the field which still lacks the effective enforcement tools;
- a lack of tradition in global performance analysis on various business sectors/areas which could highlight the benefits of implementing the management systems;
- a poor flow of information.

The similarities between the EU directives and the elements of the management systems safety at work are presented in Table. 1.

**Table 1** Elements of the EU Directives and elements of the management system

<b>Elements of EU Directives</b>	<b>Elements of the management system</b>
Risk prevention	Emphasis on preventive actions
Empowering leadership at the highest level	Declared commitment management
Employees' awareness and training	Training - Awareness
Risk assessment	Risk assessment
Permanently decreasing the risks cannot be eliminated	Continuous improvement

Occupational health and safety management is the missing link in the development and implementation of integrated management systems: quality, environment, labor, according to the new European and international trends

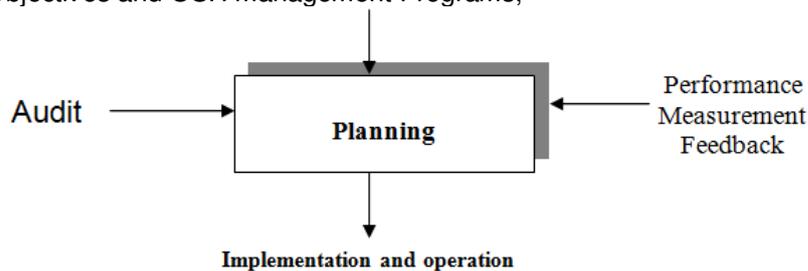
The implementation of management systems complements the existing organizational system within enterprises and promotes the regular application of health and safety at work legislation, integrating this area into the general management unit.

**Table 2** Approach of the work system elements within the management systems

<b>POLICY</b>	- observance of the permissible limits for the risk factors value = minimal objective
<b>PLANNING</b>	- objectives which are easy to quantify, pursue and verify; - direct reporting to vast, accessible secondary and tertiary legislation
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OPERATION</b>	- large number of records; - complex, specialized operational control ; - specific data (values of risk factors, calculation models and simulation) to establish measures for emergency response
<b>VERIFICATION OF CORRECTIVE ACTION</b>	- measurement possibilities according to approved methodologies; - inter-comparison of results.

The elements of the planning stage are:

- Hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control;
- Legal provisions and other requirements;
- Objectives and OSH management Programs;



**Figure 1:** Planning

### 3. Objectives and Program

The objectives must be in accordance with the policy and commitment for continuous improvement. Setting goals and objectives can be achieved within the management team.

Objectives should be:

- specific
- measurable
- **accepted**
- **feasible**
- should be within the limits
- established, maintained and documented;
- consistent with the legal requirements and with other requirements of the organization; with the risks identified in the assessment; with the organization's technology; with the organization's financial possibilities
- consistent with the commitment to continual improvement expressed in the policy.

**The OSH Management Program (PSSM)** - is a process that turns long-term general commitments in a short and medium term action plan through general and specific objectives. OSH management program contains clear, measurable objectives, set in accordance with

- OHS policy;
- identified priorities;
- risk assessment results.

### 4. Organization of prevention and protection activities within companies

Organization of prevention and protection activities is provided by the employer in the following ways:

- by the employer's assumption of the duties necessary to implement the measures stipulated by the Law no. 319/2006;
- by designating one or more workers to carry out activities of prevention and protection;
- by establishing an internal service for prevention and protection;
- by resorting to external services for prevention and protection.

The employer's assumption of conducting prevention and protection activities according to art. 16 HG 1425-2006 by designating one or more workers to carry out the prevention and protection activities and by establishing an internal service for prevention and protection or resorting to external prevention and protection services (7,8)

**Table 3** Prevention service type

No. of workers	Prevention service		Observations
	internal	external	
1-9	Employer		*)
1-49	Employer / designated worker	Risk assessment specialist	
1-49	Designated worker	Risk assessment specialist	activities from Annex no.5 of H.G.1425/2006
50-149	Designated worker	Risk assessment specialist	activities from Annex no.5 of H.G.1425/2006
50-149	Designated worker		
Over 150	Designated worker		

\*) if the following conditions are met cumulatively:

- micro or small enterprises;
- the activities carried out within the company are not referred to in Annex 5 of HG nr.1425/2006;
- the risks identified may not generate accidents or professional diseases with serious, irreversible consequences, respectively death or disability;
- the employer carries out his/her professional activity effectively and regularly within the company/unit;
- the employer meets the minimum requirements for training in the field of health and safety at work, corresponding to a basic level at least (7,8).

Prevention and protection activities carried out within the enterprise and/or unit are:

1. identify the hazards and assess the risks;
2. develop and maintain the prevention and protection plan;
3. develop their own instructions for completing and/or enforcing the health and safety at work regulations taking into account the particularities of the unit/enterprise activity as well as those of the workplaces/positions;
4. propose the tasks and responsibilities in the field of health and safety at work, incurred by workers, according to the functions performed, which shall be recorded in the job description approved by the employer;
5. verify the knowledge and application of the measures provided in the prevention and protection plan by all workers, as well as of their duties and their responsibilities in the field of health and safety at work, set in the job description;
6. draw up the technical documentation necessary for informing and training the workers in field of health and safety at work;
7. develop themes for all the stages of training, establish appropriate periodicity for each job, provide information and training for workers in the field of health and safety

at work, and check knowledge and application of information received by the workers;

8. develop training-test program for the enterprise and /or unit;

9. ensure preparation of the action plan in the event of serious and imminent danger, and make sure that all employees are trained to apply it;

10. highlight specific and high risk areas;

11. determine areas requiring occupational health and safety signals, establishing appropriate signal type and location according to legal requirements;

12. record the trades and professions, provided by specific legislation, which require authorization in order to be practiced;

13. record the workstations that require additional medical examinations (2,3).

## **5. Competence, training and awareness**

Minimum requirements for training in health and safety at work

*The levels of training in the field of health and safety at work necessary to achieve adequate capacities and skills for performing prevention and protection activities are: basic, intermediate and higher level*

The minimum training requirements in the field of occupational health and safety at work for the *basic level* are: secondary education; a course in the field of health and safety at work, lasting at least 40 hours.

- The minimum training requirements in the field of occupational health and safety at work for the *intermediate level* are: technical secondary education, a course in the field of health and safety at work, lasting at least 80 hours.
- The minimum training requirements in the field of occupational health and safety at work for the *higher level* are: technical higher education; a course in the field of health and safety at work, lasting at least 80 hours, a postgraduate course in risk assessment, lasting at least 180 hours. (9,10)

## **6. Good prevention practices**

DuPont Principles - Good health and safety practices at work

- All injuries can be prevented;
- The management, from top level up to the frontline supervisors, is responsible in terms of injury prevention;
- Combined energy of all organizations is necessary to ensure continuous improvement and achieving excellence in the field of safety;
- All occupational exposures that could result in injury or occupational diseases can be controlled;
- Security is a condition related to the workplace;
- Recognition of the necessity to train employees in order to work safely;
- The management must audit the performance at the workplace in order to assess the success of the security program
- All deficiencies must be promptly addressed
- Security is a constituent part of each activity but security is, at the same time, a part of everyone's life.
- Security is a good deal
- Security should be integrated as an essential approach and personal value (2,5,11)

## 7. Conclusions

Occupational health and safety is at the forefront in the national social agenda, from both economic and humanitarian reasons.

Intellectual resources of an organization include all intangible values, knowledge-based that can be: described, measured, turned into value and developed in accordance with current business and future prospects. Human capital consists of elements such as knowledge, skills, abilities and work capacity including aspects of physical and psychological health.

The role of health and safety at work is essential to enhance the companies' competitiveness and productivity through the positive effects it produces: reduces the cost of accidents, incidents and occupational diseases and increases motivation. Accidents and professional diseases are an enormous burden on public and private welfare systems and require an integrated, coordinated and strategic answer, as well as cooperation of the key stakeholders in national policy making.

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