

# **The IVSS Project- “Reducing work accidents of young workers and new labour market entrants”**

## **Starting point**

The risk of incurring an accident at work is extremely high for young workers. As demonstrated by surveys conducted in the metal-working sector in Germany in 2006, workers in the up to 25 year-old bracket had 4-times higher a risk of falling victim to an accident at the workplace than workers in the age group 35 to 45 years of age.

Statistical evaluations across all industries in Austria have shown that the risk of incurring an accident at work is twice as high for young workers.

The same trend is reported by experts from other European countries.

A comparison of the risk of suffering an accident at work as a function of age over an extended period (i.e. from 2002 to 2006) reveals no significant change in this pattern

One remarkable fact (diagnosed in the evaluations of the metal working industry in Germany) was that the risk of accidents was twice as high in small enterprises employing a maximum of 20 individuals than in large companies with a staff of more than 500.

Individual campaigns raising awareness of young people of certain health hazards are important but fail to achieve the desired results over a prolonged period of time.

The IVSS sections “Metal”, “Machinery and Systems Safety”, “Electricity” and “Training and Education” intend to launch a joint project designed to lower accidents at work for young workers.

## **Current status**

The risk of suffering an accident at work can be lessened significantly only if safety and health protection issues are integrated into the different areas of occupational training.

One prerequisite is that teachers at occupational schools, trainers in vocational training centres and at the workplace (including owners of small enterprises) have a basic knowledge of safety at work and health protection issues and make use of suitable teaching aids.

It is not sufficient to merely present facts in occupational training. What matters is that teachers and trainers be properly qualified and have the necessary tools to heighten the awareness of young workers of this topic. Many young workers will soon have to assume responsibility for “their” staff. The basic knowledge acquired during their occupational training should contribute to lowering the risk of accidents in the medium term right from the beginning of their careers.

## **Contents**

In the course of this project, instruction aids (teaching materials and instruction methods) for safety and health protection are to be compiled and analysed.

On the basis of this analysis, inter-sectoral and industry-specific instruction aids for safety and health protection will be devised. The inter-sectoral instruction aids are to be general tools (with regard to contents and methodologies) for teaching safety and health protection.

The industry-specific instruction aids are related to practical teaching and learning objectives in vocational training.

On the basis of these instruction aids, a concept for the further training of teachers in vocational schools, trainers at vocational training centres and owners of enterprises

training young people (i.e. integration of the “enter-preneurial model” in Germany) is to be developed.

In the long run, safety and health protection topics are to be integrated into the basic and advanced training of vocational school teachers. Austria has played a leading role in this area. AUVA has co-operated with the Teacher Training College which is responsible for the training of vocational school teachers.

To AUVA, “Training for Accident Prevention” is a priority task which is defined in the Act Governing General Social Insurance in Austria.

In addition, in the course of this project, checklists are to be compiled and analysed, which will demonstrate whether a small company qualifies as a training enterprise from the angle of safety and health protection (i.e. low risk of accidents) or whether additional recommendations are necessary for improving safety at the workplace and for heightening health protection standards (i.e. working conditions for young persons, specific instructions).

Alongside its focus on young workers, the project also takes into account the specific situation of individuals starting work in particular occupations (irrespective of age) in various enterprises.

In the initial project phase, the members of the IVSS sections from the different IVSS countries will be asked whether they are interested in the project. The idea is that section members should also interact with their partners involved in vocational training.

### **Project phase one**

Compilation, analysis and preparation of good practices.

The European Network Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health (ENETOSH) should be involved in this work.

Alongside suitable instruction aids (teaching materials and methodologies) for safety and health protection, relevant incentive systems and procedures for reducing the risk of accidents in small enterprises are also to be applied.

At present, the aforementioned IVSS sections are working out action plans for assessing hazards at the workplace in small and medium-sized companies.

**Project phase two**

Development of intersectoral and industry-specific teaching aids for safety and health protection (teaching aids applicable in all lines of business and applicable in a specific line of business).

**Project phase three**

Testing and adjusting teaching aids.

**Project phase four**

Selection of the platform for the dissemination of teaching aids (via the internet, ENETOSH if possible).

**Project phase five**

Practical use of teaching aids.

**Project phase six**

Assessment of the long-term effect (lower risk of accidents for new labour market entrants).

IVSS Section Metal-Working

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