

## **New findings highlight benefits of good safety and health at work**

Written by Christa Sedlatschek on 6 October 2017 in Thought Leader  
Thought Leader

New findings highlight the benefits to be gained from good safety and health at work, writes Christa Sedlatschek.



**Christa Sedlatschek** | *Photo credit: EU-OSHA*

---

The human costs of poor or non-existent occupational safety and health (OSH) are often self-evident. When we hear of someone whose quality of life has changed for the worse because of an injury sustained while doing their job, or when we meet someone whose parent has died from occupational cancer, we feel a strong sense of the wasted opportunity to prevent suffering.

However, some costs are less easy to understand, and these are the costs to society at a macroeconomic level.

At the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) we believe that more and better information on this issue will help policymakers to take more targeted and effective action on risks to workers.

---

## RELATED CONTENT

- [Work without fear: EU should do more to protect workers' health and safety](#) [1]
  - [Thomas Mann: Sunday work is a danger to our health and safety](#) [2]
  - [Occupational Skin Cancer: Outdoor Workers' number one enemy](#) [3]
  - [Denis Pennel: Reconciling diverse forms of work with stability and social rights](#) [4]
- 

However, this information needs to be accurate, accessible and country-relevant.

This was the thinking behind our major new project on estimating the costs and benefits associated with OSH, which we are working on in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation and the governments of Finland and Singapore, among other partners. We wanted to answer the question 'What impact does a lack of good OSH have on the economy?'

We presented the first results of the project at the XXI World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Singapore recently, and they can be explored using a data visualisation tool on the Agency's [website](#) [5].

The findings highlight the importance of OSH for Europe's societies and economies and illustrates the advantages that can be gained by reducing workers' exposure to hazardous conditions.

Work-related ill-health and injury is costing the European Union 3.3 per cent of its GDP. This is equivalent to an annual cost of around €476bn.

Worldwide, the figure is 3.9 per cent, or €2,680bn. In the EU alone, more than seven million disability-adjusted life years (DALY) are lost annually because of work-related diseases, injuries and fatalities. DALYs are used to measure the burden of disease; taking into account years lost because of ill health, disability and death.

Work-related illness accounts for 98 per cent of all deaths related to work in the EU, and in most member states, the majority of the costs of work-related illness (€119.5bn) are due to work-related cancer.

As a result of these findings, the economic case for good OSH is stronger than ever, and work on the project will continue with the development of a sophisticated economic costing model, to be published in 2019.

Policymakers are in a position to encourage better management of OSH risks and to move the EU towards 'zero harm at work'.

The benefits are clear: reduced healthcare costs, more efficient working methods using innovative technology, and a lesser burden on society from caring for people with work-related disabilities or chronic illnesses.

Every effort invested in OSH, by public or private organisations, generates a significant economic

return, as our project demonstrates.

## About the author

Christa Sedlatschek is European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) Executive Director

## Tags

[Employment and Social Affairs](#) [6]

[Health](#) [7]

## Categories

[Employment](#) [8]

[Health and social care](#) [9]

[Society and welfare](#) [10]

## Twitter Link

---

Read more on:

[Facebook](#) [11]

[Twitter](#) [12]

[Website](#) [13]



## Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [EU Elections 2019](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

## **Services**

[Dods PeopleDods](#)  
[MonitoringDods](#)  
[ResearchDods](#)  
[EventsDods](#)  
[Training](#)

## **Media & publishing titles**

[Politics HomeThe](#)  
[HouseThe](#)  
[Parliament](#)  
[MagazineHolyrood](#)  
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)  
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)  
[Service](#)  
[World](#)  
[PublicTechnology](#)  
[Training](#)  
[JournalDods](#)  
[Parliamentary](#)  
[CompanionVacher's](#)  
[Quarterly The](#)  
[European Union and](#)  
[Public Affairs](#)  
[Directory](#)

## **Dods events**

[Westminster](#)  
[BriefingDigital](#)  
[Health & Care](#)  
[ScotlandMEP](#)  
[AwardsThe Skills](#)  
[SummitScottish](#)  
[Public Service](#)  
[AwardsPublic Sector](#)  
[Procurement](#)  
[SummitPublic](#)  
[Sector ICT](#)  
[SummitCyber](#)  
[Security](#)  
[SummitCyber](#)  
[Security](#)  
[2017Training](#)  
[Journal Awards](#)

## **Partnership events**

[The Health and  
Care Innovation  
ExpoCivil Service  
LiveCivil Service  
AwardsChief  
Nursing Officer for  
England's  
SummitWomen into  
LeadershipThe  
Youth Justice  
ConventionSocitm  
Spring  
ConferenceNHSCC  
Annual Members'  
EventDods at Party  
Conference](#)

---

[Privacy PolicyTerms & ConditionsAdvertisingSponsorship Subscriptions](#)

---

**Source URL:** [https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner\\_article/osha/new-findings-highlight-benefits-good-safety-and-health-work](https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner_article/osha/new-findings-highlight-benefits-good-safety-and-health-work)

#### **Links**

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/work-without-fear-eu-should-do-more-protect-workers-health-and-safety>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/sunday-work-danger-our-health-and-safety>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/occupational-skin-cancer-outdoor-workers%E2%8%99-number-one-enemy>
- [4] [https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner\\_article/world-employment-confederati-n-europe/reconciling-diverse-forms-work](https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner_article/world-employment-confederati-n-europe/reconciling-diverse-forms-work)
- [5] <https://osha.europa.eu/en/economics-occupational-safety-and-health-value-osh-society>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/employment-and-social-affairs>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/health>
- [8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/employment>
- [9] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/health-and-social-care>
- [10] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/society-and-welfare>
- [11] <https://www.facebook.com/TheParliamentMagazine/>
- [12] <https://twitter.com/parlimag>
- [13] <http://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/>