



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Health and safety at work: Commission opens public consultation on future EU policy framework**

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to gather insights and contributions from the public further to results of the evaluation of the European Strategy on Safety and Health at Work 2007-2012. This should help identify current and future challenges in the occupational safety and health area, and identify solutions to address these challenges. All citizens and organisations are welcome to contribute to this consultation, which will be open from 31 May 2013 to 26 August 2013. Contributions are particularly sought from representatives of Member States' public authorities, organisations representing employees and employers, and stakeholders and experts with an interest in the area of occupational safety and health.

László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, said: *"Accidents at work are at a historically low level, and the European Union's occupational safety and health standards are a reference for the rest of the world. Investing in occupational safety pays off in terms of improved productivity and staff well-being, reduced absenteeism and staff turnover and greater job satisfaction, especially during the crisis. However, this policy area also faces challenges and together we need to find solutions to address these challenges"*.

As a basis for the consultation, the European Commission published today the results of the evaluation of the European Strategy on Safety and Health at Work 2007-2012.

The conclusions of this evaluation confirm the importance of the European dimension of occupational safety and health policy, in particular as regards the positive trend in work accident reduction and the role of the EU strategy in coordinating efforts and providing a common framework for action.

For the future, more still needs to be done, in particular to improve the implementation of occupational safety and health provisions in SMEs and micro-enterprises, to develop more accurate monitoring and evidence gathering tools, to better focus on emerging risks and occupational illness and to effectively tackle the occupational safety and health problems linked to the ageing of the working population.

## Background

Since 2002 the EU has fulfilled its political role in the area of Occupational Safety and Health by means of multi-annual Strategies formally endorsed by the Commission after consultations, and voluntarily implemented by Member States and stakeholders.

Two strategies on health and safety at work have been adopted so far, the first in 2002, covering the period until 2006, the second in 2007 for the period until 2012.

The 2007-2012 Strategy set an ambitious goal for all Member States: to reduce accidents at work by 25 %. In addition, a number of specific objectives were identified, such as:

- improving and a better implementing the EU regulatory framework on occupational safety and health
- adapting the framework to changes in the workplace
- developing coherent national strategies adjusted to the specific context of each Member State and
- encouraging changes in behaviour and promotion of a preventive culture addressing all parts of society.

In April 2011, the Commission published a [mid-term review of the 2007-2012 strategy](#). The final evaluation is now available online, based on a broad consultation process carried out among all the main interested parties in the area: occupational safety and health public authorities in the Member States, organisations representing employees and employers at EU and national levels, experts and other stakeholders in the field.

## More information

[Public consultation on the new EU occupational safety and health policy framework](#)

[Evaluation of the European strategy on Safety and Health at Work 2007-2012](#)

[Health and Safety at work](#)

László Andor's [website](#)

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