

Methods: A purposive sample of participants was recruited from SMEs in the area of Thessaloniki, Greece. Three sectors were chosen to be included in the study: transportation, private education and tourism. In addition, representatives of working units, consultants and health and safety inspectors related to SMEs in the same professional categories were included. All discussions were conducted using a protocol template consisting of questions generated from a literature review on psychosocial risks. Data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis involved detailed readings of interview transcripts and initial coding was produced.

Results: Sixteen individual interviews and one focus group were conducted. In the individual interviews 8 women and 8 men participated. Three people participated in the focus group. The age of participants ranged from 25 to 73 years. The most frequently reported psychosocial risks included: job insecurity, employability, changes in contract agreements, excessive job demands, long working hours, excessive workload, and work-family conflicts. Other psychosocial risks mentioned included effort reward imbalance, high competitiveness between employees or between SMEs of the same sector that results in excessive pressure in employees for higher performance and a negative working environment.

Discussion: The findings of the present study are in agreement with previous studies on the topic of psychosocial risks. The focus by many employers on profit and not creating a healthy working environment, as well as the limited number of inspections by the responsible bodies were mentioned as important obstacles in recognizing and addressing psychosocial risks in SMEs. Suggested solution included the increase of information and awareness of stakeholders regarding psychosocial risks, changes in legislation and highlighting the link between prevention of psychosocial risks and the financial and performance related benefits for the company. The study stressed the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration on preventing and managing psychosocial risks in SMEs and the importance of adjusting any intervention strategy to the specific characteristic of the SME.

S135: Psychosocial Risks Prevention – Perspectives from Portuguese SMEs

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Introduction: This paper presents the Portuguese results from the first phase of the PPPSER project, which has a qualitative nature. Micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) represent 99.9% of the Portuguese business setting. According to national sources, there are 1,167,811 SMEs in Portugal, with a combined turnover of 220 billion euros. Therefore, the main goal of this phase was to gather data from relevant SMEs stakeholders about what they perceived as psychosocial risks, their main causes and consequences, the general level of awareness about the issue, the main obstacles to prevention and intervention and specific actions developed considering those risks.

Methodology: After developing the interview protocol and defining common guidelines for all countries, the Portuguese team conducted 12 semi structures individual interviews and 3 focus group. Data was analyzed through content analysis

Results: Although almost interviewees recognized the relevance of this topic for individuals, companies and society, the assessment, management and prevention of psychosocial risks is still unusual, particularly in SMEs. Participants also stressed the importance of disseminating concrete examples of good practices.

Discussion: While health and safety is already an integral part of the management philosophy in most SME's, the introduction of preventive actions beyond legal requirements still need improvement. The project revealed a low level of awareness about psychosocial risks, the

almost inexistence of risk assessment practices and a lack of resources for investing in its prevention. To facilitate the change in the prevention practices it is critical to develop resources that organizations could easily use at a low cost.

S136: Exploring Emergent Psychosocial Risks in Spain: A Qualitative Approach

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Introduction: Work conditions are an important source of potential health risks. In fact, occupational hazards have become one of the most serious problems now faced by workers and society in general. This is due to the fact that work conditions are now in a state of constant flux as a consequence of the technological, economic, and social transformations and innovations required to competitively adapt to new work situations and scenarios. But current technological and organizational changes and, overall, economic crisis bring to the fore new and emergent psychosocial risks which need to be explored and characterized.

Methods: For this purpose, we performed a qualitative study that focused on company owners, managers, union representatives, and workers in small and medium-sized companies. We opted for a qualitative method because we wished to gain a more in-depth knowledge of the nature of psychosocial risks.

Results: Result shows that work intensification, technostress, job uncertainty, competitiveness, job instability are some of them. Despite all of these measures business and companies are still reticent about implementing intervention programs to prevent psychosocial risks.

Discussion: Employers as well as employees should know them and be informed of the nature of psychosocial risks, their consequences, and the different forms of intervention available. This would be an important stimulus for occupational risk prevention in organizations, which goes far beyond merely complying with regulations.

S137: SME's Perspective on Psychosocial Risks – From Identifying to Intervening in Four Countries

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Introduction: Certain aspects of the work design or the organization as well as the social context of work may lead to negative physical, psychological and social outcomes. These aspects are considered psychosocial risks. Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece are facing the biggest consequences of the economic crisis with psychosocial risks being exacerbated. In these countries, small and medium enterprises play an important role in the economy. This paper presents the quantitative data from the project, collected in those four countries. The main goal of the survey was to determine the SMEs' perspective about emergent psychosocial risks, difficulties and concerns related to its prevention as well as to assess their knowledge and existing practices regarding psychosocial risks prevention.

Methodology: The survey was developed based on existing surveys for assessing psychosocial risks, as well as on data gathered in the qualitative phase of the project (consisting in interviews with key stakeholders). It was accessible either in an online format or as a paper copy. In total, 154 SME safety and health technicians and workers representatives participated in the study.