PARIS - NOVEMBER 14, 2024

FORESIGHT

FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

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inrs
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FOSH Workshop wrap-up

Mutualising national approaches

Workshop process and objectives

- Workshop held 13th of November at the INRS (Paris) from 11 AM to 17.30 PM

- **Participants**: Angelika Hauke and Eva Flaspöler (IFA), Annick Starren (EU-OSHA), Jessica Streit (NIOSH), Sarah Felknor (UTHealth), Franz Eiffe (Eurofound), Arif Jetha (IWH), Jan-Michiel Meeuwsen (PEROSH), Fabio Boccuni (INAIL), Kim Tae-won and Lee Kyu-duk (KOSHA), Raphaël Ramirez (Oxford Scenarios Programme), François de Jouvenel (Futuribles), Jennifer Clerté and Marc Malenfer (INRS),

- **Main goal**:

  - Discuss current practices
  - Identify strategies to ensure stakeholders take ownership of our work
  - Define potential collaborations

- **Objectives of the workshop**:
  - Analyse methodologies and procedures: similarities and differences of our foresight approaches
  - Identify common and specific practices
  - Explore main trends and messages
  - Establish common objectives for our network (how to work together)

Historical background

Similarities

- Common observation
  - Over the last two decades, there has been a fundamental shift in OSH and worker well-being

- Common goal
  - Anticipate the transformation of work related to: (1) digitalisation and technologies, (2) demographic evolution, (3) climate change and green transitions

- Common objectives
  - Analyse where research is needed to answer questions revealed by horizon scanning / foresight studies
  - Provide decision makers and researchers with data and information on main future trends
  - Identify key strategic issues for OSH to consider and proposes a series of strategic options
  - Help OSH professionals and prevention managers build effective actions for today and tomorrow

Specificities

- INRS, EU-OSHA, and NIOSH: Foresight units
- IWH: «changing nature and future of work» is one of six research priorities; peer-reviewed grant funding from the federal government
- IFA: Risk observatory (horizon scanning and trend analyses)
- Eurofound: specific futures-oriented publications (e.g. future of telework)

Project management

- 1 to 3 years scenario-building Foresight studies (EU-OSHA, INRS, NIOSH)

- Small team or 1 main researcher

- Multidisciplinarity is always required
  - Upstream or downstream of projects: multidisciplinary teams or publications review by researchers from different disciplines

- Main activities
  - Production of foresight studies (EU-OSHA, INRS, NIOSH)
  - Trend monitoring, top-trend identification, and analysis of OSH impacts (IFA, INRS, NIOSH)
  - Communication on foresight production (EU-OSHA, INRS, NIOSH)
  - Multidisciplinary network animation (EU-OSHA, NIOSH)

Methodological approach

- Scenario planning is the main method globally used
  - Literature and expert reviews to scope the topic
  - Mapping of the main drivers
  - Building scenarios by crossing the drivers or hypotheses of their alternative developments

- Other methods have been also used by itself or as a complement
  - Horizon scanning: combination of trend monitoring, expert assessment, and research
  - Delphi methods: experts interviews with a foresight approach
  - Design fiction: embodiment of foresight hypotheses in fictional objects or stories
  - Qualitative research methods
  - Labour force data analysis

Productions, communications & promotions

- Research articles and reports

- Discussion articles

- Policy or regulatory briefs

- Trend descriptions

- Foresight webinars and symposia

- Feedback conference

- Seminars for social partners, companies, occupational health and prevention services

Key common topics

Main study themes

- Advanced technology
- Data use and security
- Climate change and green transitions
- New modes and methods of production: Circular economy, platformisation
- Work arrangements, work status, virtual work
- Workforce demography, polarization, and physical / mental health

Other topics

- Knowledge generation (funding and collaboration strategies)
- Lack of trust in government information
- Social credit

Main strategic issues

- Constant world of work changes due to major transitions (e.g., digitalisation, climate change, decarbonisation…) increase the complexity of prevention needs and practices

- New OSH competencies are needed to address significant worker mental health burden

- Researchers face new challenges to access workers and OSH data or disseminate their findings

- Polarisation of the workforce and new work arrangements and status increase complexity of tasks assigned to prevention experts

- Data and data security are essential elements of worker protection practices and policies

Shared recommendations

- Integrate OSH knowledge and regulation into all relevant policy areas of concern, especially those related to new changes (e.g., green and digital transitions)

- Integrate OSH expertise in the earliest stages of innovation and product developments (prevention by design)

- Train OSH experts on main work transformations and integrate OSH into training for managers and technology engineers

- Always put workers at the center of work organisation (respect for general prevention principles)

- Promote social dialogue to improve working conditions

- Continue to develop horizon scanning and research activities

Priority actions for OSH foresight players

- Stimulate or create a more structural OSH Foresight infrastructure
  - Foresight capacity building
  - Perform continuous and co-creative horizon scanning

- Establish a firm link between foresight activities, research programs, and strategic plans

- Disseminate foresight results to other strategic players
  - Authorities, enterprises, social partners, organised labor, etc.

Main opportunities for foresight for OSH

- Supports the expanding on and building of new skills
- Improves multidisciplinary collaboration
- Fosters **anticipation and preparedness :**
  - emerging industries, jobs, activities
  - likely/unlikely phenomena
  - risk exposures, population groups at risk

- Identifies new fields of research, opens up new ways of engaging with stakeholders and facilitates lobbying for OSH on new fields of research
- Helps to identify strategic research priorities and to connect OSH research to strategic planning & policy making
- Fosters new collaborations and partnerships
- Promotes the image of the organization as forward thinking

Main challenges for foresight in OSH

- Engaging researchers and practitioners in foresight practice
  - Requires new skills and new ways of thinking
  - Making the link between macro trends and OSH can be challenging

- Resource limitations
  - Can be resource intensive
  - Internal competition for limited resources (funding, personnel, time)
  - Continued support required; possibility for no follow-on work or action; one-off exercise

- Keeping pace with contextual changes to factors impacting work and workers

- Blind spots in OSH foresight
  - Scenarios may not sufficiently include weak or early signals
  - Overemphasis elements that may not be important

- Need to enhance the acceptance of foresight among stakeholders
  - Credibility can be questioned by those unfamiliar with methodology
  - Limited published evidence of foresight impact

- Evaluating foresight requires a specific methodology

- Disseminating findings requires unique communication strategies

Future topics to address

Topic	Links to OSH
Green transition	-New sustainable economic models that foster well-being within ecological boundaries -OSH can be integrated into evolution of organizations and organizational processes -Trajectory is highly dependent on political and economic contexts
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	-Competition or complementarity of human worker? -Worker surveillance and monitoring -Worker management (e.g., algorithm management) -Linked to changing forms of employment (below)
Changing forms of employment	-Fractured world of work; eroding standards and regulations -Institutional adaptability to new ways of working varies -Evolution of OSH responsibility -Complexities of OSH research and practice (e.g., data collection, dissemination) -Influenced by political, legal, and economic contexts

Future topics to address

Topic	Link to OSH

Concentration of power	- Tensions between sources of government and economic power
	
	- Link between economic and political power
	
	- Evolving centers of social power
	
	- "Truth" defined by the loudest voices:
	   o individual influencers
	   o lobbying organizations
	
	- Must determine how OSH will be taken into acount by government;
	
	- Power differentials may decrease in OSH standards

Value of human in work	- Largely driven by technology, particularly AI and work-related surveillance
	
	- Associated concepts:
	   o Corporate social responsibility (CSR)
	   o Polarisation of the labor market
	   o Worker rentability
	   o Future of democracy
	   o New age of slavery

Aim of continued FOSH global collaboration

Enhance knowledge generation in OSH

- Locate and interpret early and weak signals of change for OSH
- Raise awareness about the impact of future trends on OSH
- Expand implementation of insights from OSH foresight (what, who, how)

Learn from one another

- Discuss challenges, opportunities, solutions
- Exchange best practices: (1) Methods and approaches for research and dissemination; (2) Strategies for reaching and influencing policymakers
- Identify potential resources for foresight support in OSH

Integrate international efforts to promote the role of foresight in OSH

- Mapping and cross-walking: projects, findings, end users
- Strategically coordinate exploration of futures-oriented topics between organizations

Future course of actions and collaborations

Discrete projects
- Work and Health 2040 (Organizer: IWH)
- Future 2 (Organizer: PEROSH)
- Other joint efforts to address health and safety inequities (e.g., disadvantaged populations in developing countries)

Ongoing activities
- Regular exchange: Yearly scanning event
- Think tank to discuss emerging issues for future of OSH
- Collaboration with the Joint Research Centre (JRC)

Products
- Global report on common results and consensus conclusions
- International workshops to share foresight projects and findings
- Topics for future seminars and learning events (e.g., PEROSH Summer School)

Methods and approach
- Evaluation framework for OSH foresight
- Funding strategies

18/11/2024