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The extra challenges of addressing work-related psychosocial risks The case of micro enterprises in the EU.

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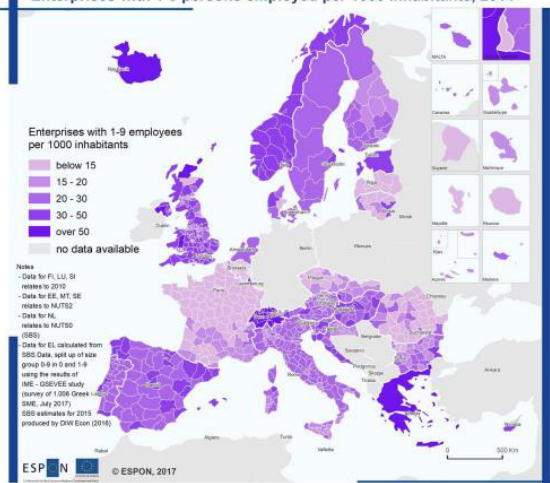
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Micro- enterprises & OSH

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) constitute **99% of companies in the EU**. They provide two-thirds of private sector jobs and contribute to more than half of the total added value created by businesses in the EU. ([European Parliament](#))

Map 3.2: Number of microenterprises per 1,000 inhabitants
(1-9 persons employed) 2014.

Enterprises with 1-9 persons employed per 1000 inhabitants, 2014



Occupational safety and health (OSH) is often poorly managed in MSEs, with workers at greater risk of workplace accidents and work-related ill health. ([EU-OSHA](#))

EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021-2027, the EU Commission set as priorities to:

- Provide sector-specific information to SMEs in cooperation with the EU-OSHA
- Provide improved guidance and training for the risk-assessment and prevention measures, in particular to micro enterprises and SMEs.
- Launch an “EU-OSHA healthy workplace campaign” 2023-2025 on creating a safe and healthy digital future covering psychosocial and ergonomic risks in particular.
- Develop the analytical basis, e-tools and guidance for risk assessments related to green and digital jobs and processes, including in particular psychosocial and ergonomic risks.

Source: ESPON (2018) SME in European Regions and Cities





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What are the work-related psychosocial risks?



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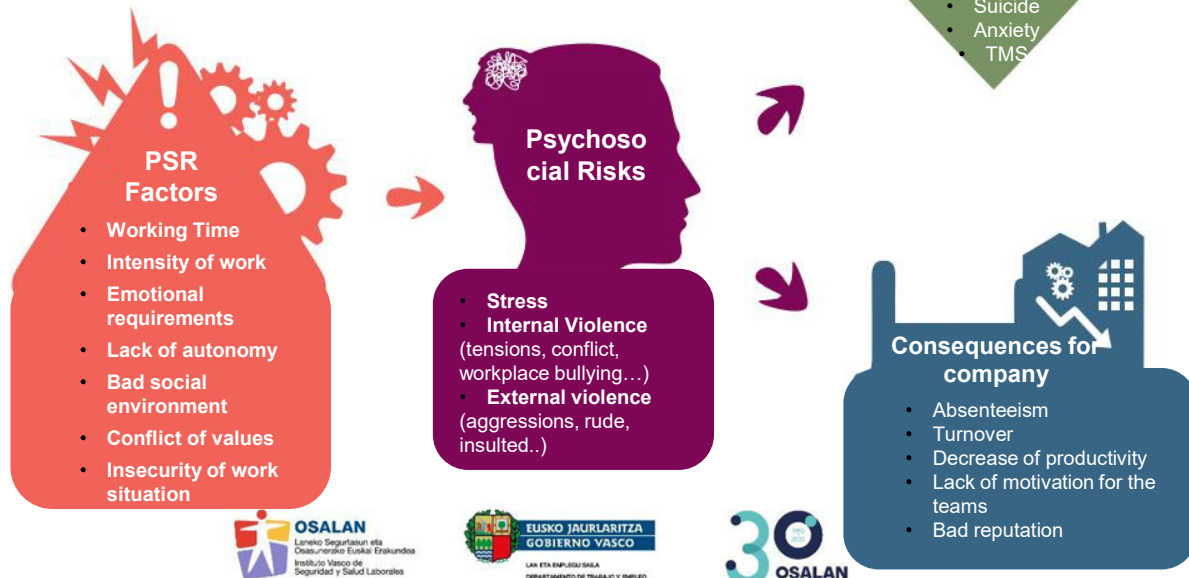
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Psychosocial risk factors concern aspects of the design and management of work, and its social and organizational contexts that have the potential for causing psychological or physical harm.





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What is the situation in the micro-enterprises?

All the data and graphs have been produced by ESENER-3 Survey (EU-OSHA)

<https://visualisation.osha.europa.eu/esener/en/survey/datavisualisation/2019>



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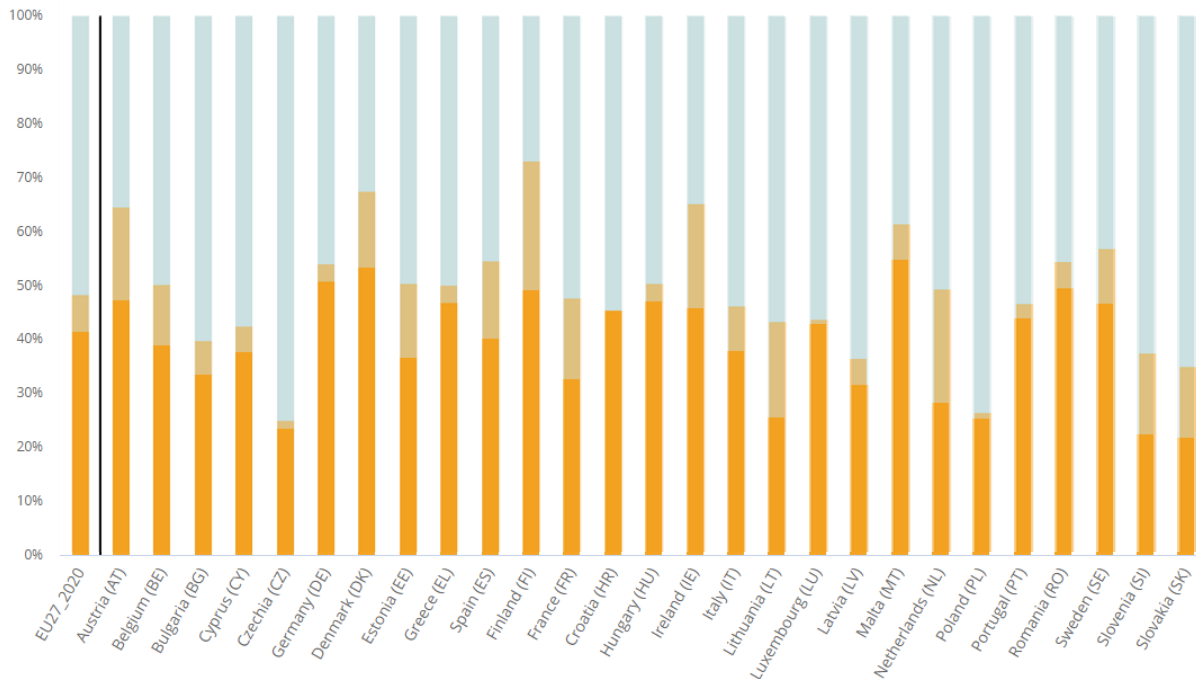
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Measures to prevent PSR

*Reorganisation of
work in order to
reduce job
demands and
work pressure*





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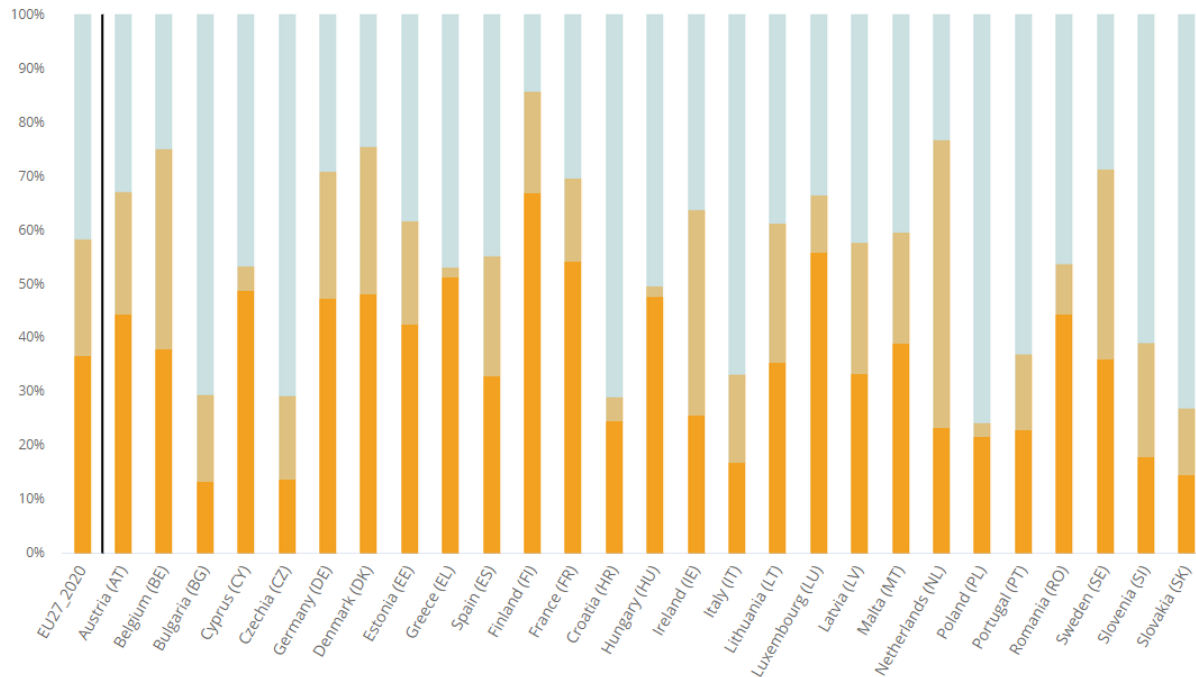
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Measures to prevent PSR

*Confidential
counselling for
employees*





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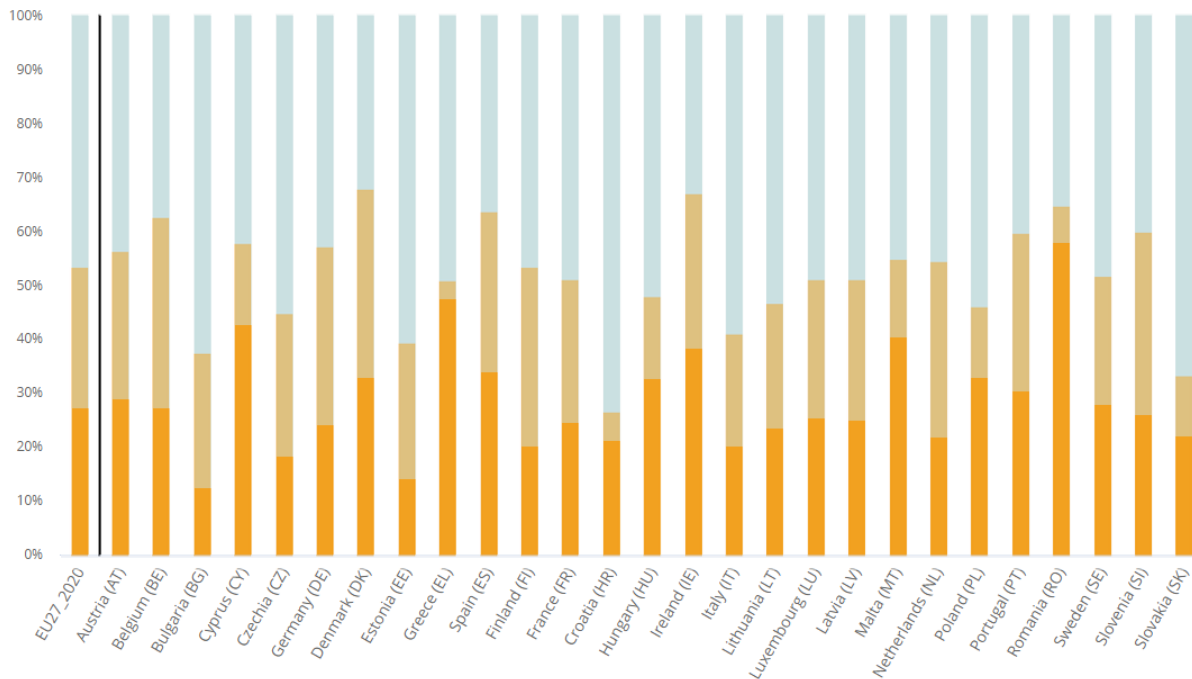
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Measures to prevent PSR

*Training on
conflict
resolution*





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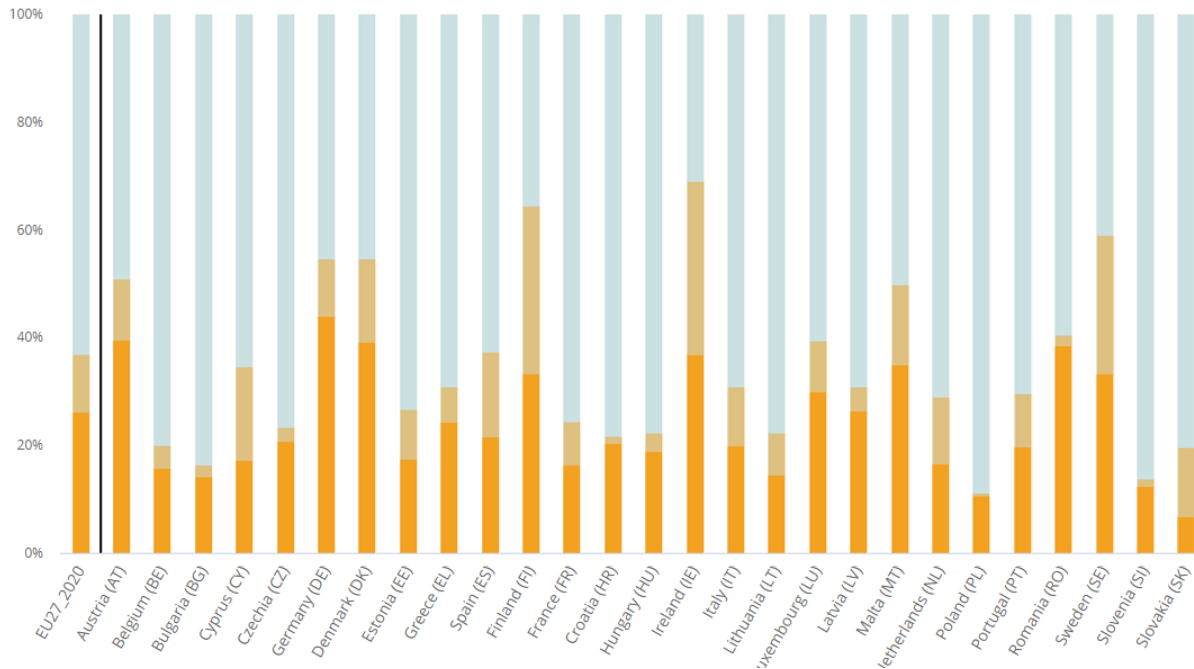
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Measures to prevent PSR

*Intervention if an
employee works
excessively long
or irregular hours*





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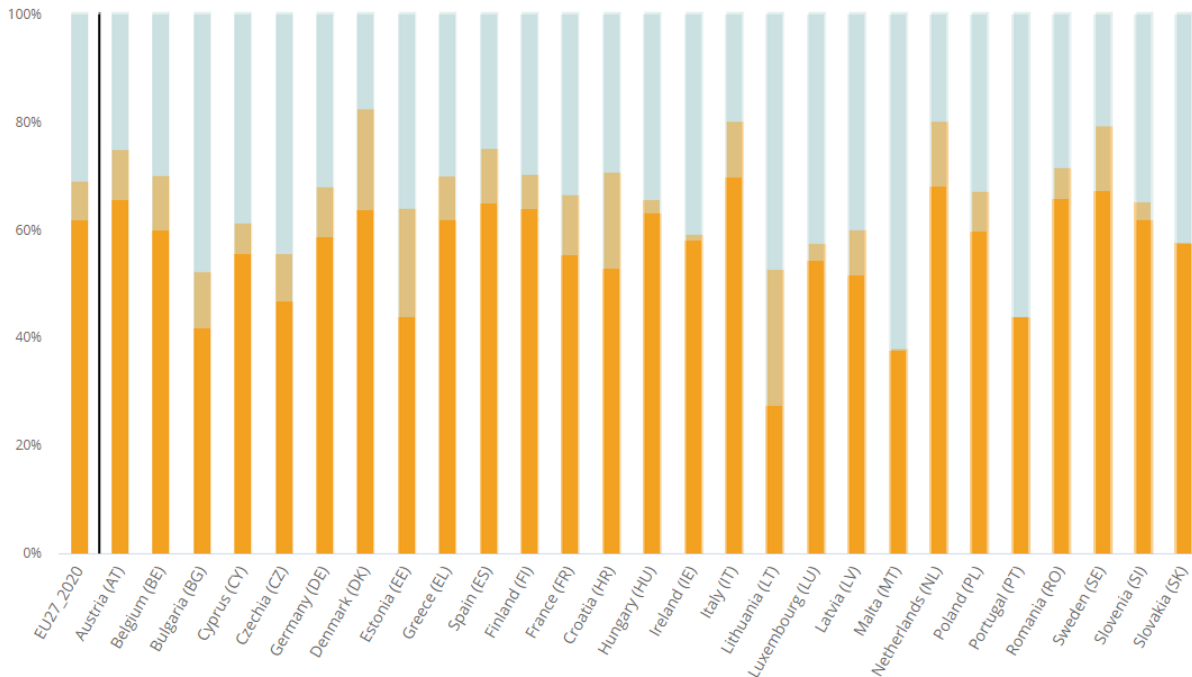
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Information on PSR

*Do you have
sufficient
information on
how to include
psychosocial risks
in risk
assessments?*





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What is the legal situation regarding work-related psychosocial risks in the European Union?

All the graphs have been collected for an ETUI mapping – publication available soon

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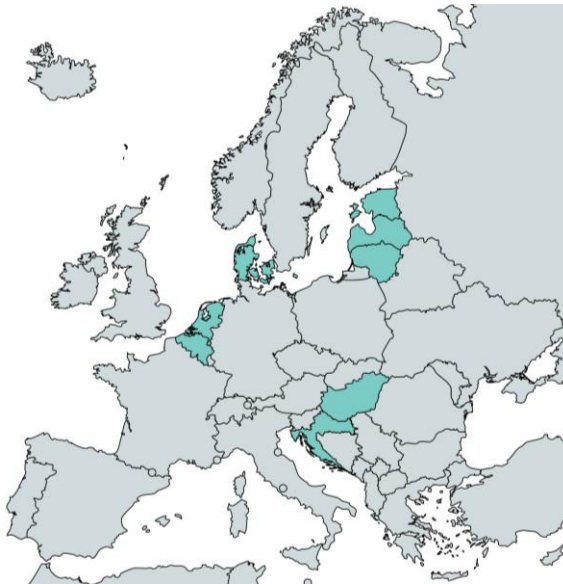
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Legislations: Psychosocial Risks Factors (19 Member States)



Mention: 14 Countries

Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Estonia,
Greece, **Spain**, Croatia, Hungary, **Italy**,
Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal,
Poland



Definition: 8 Countries

Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Croatia,
Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands.



Specific obligations: 16 Countries

Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia,
Greece, Finland, France, Croatia, Hungary,
Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands,
Portugal, Slovenia, **Sweden**.



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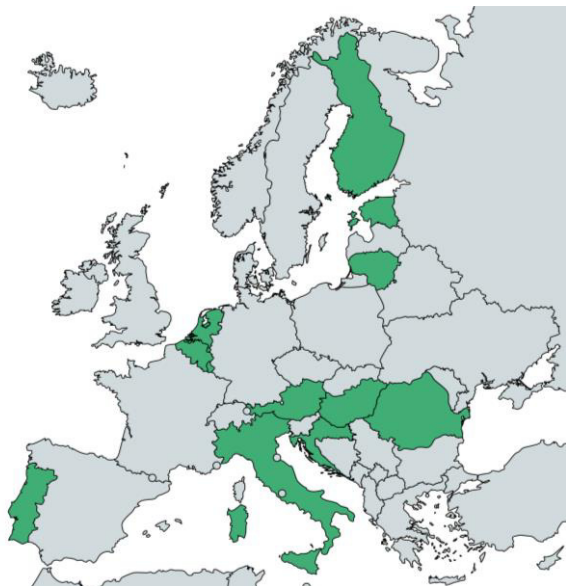
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Legislations: Work related stress (14 Member States)

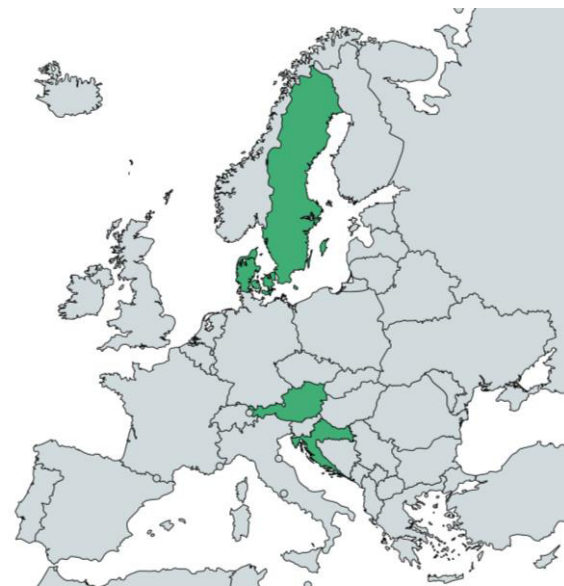


Mention: 12 Countries

Austria, **Belgium**, Estonia, Finland, Croatia,
Hungary, **Italy**, Luxembourg, the
Netherlands, Portugal, Romania.



Definition: 0 Countries



Specific Obligations: 4 Countries

Austria, Denmark, Croatia, **Sweden**.



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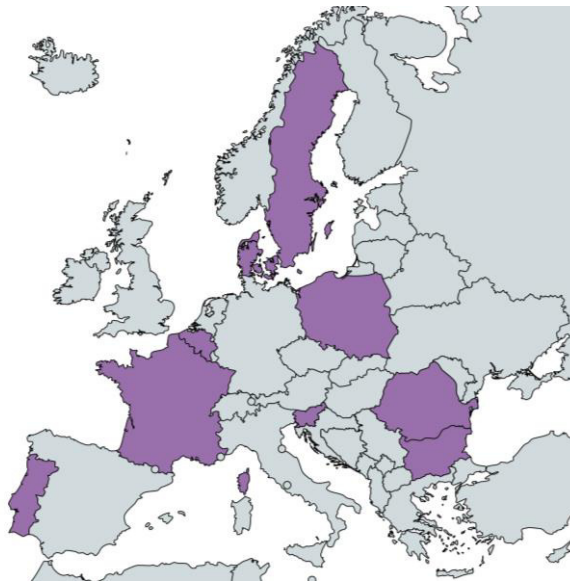
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Legislations: Workplace Bullying (17 Member States)



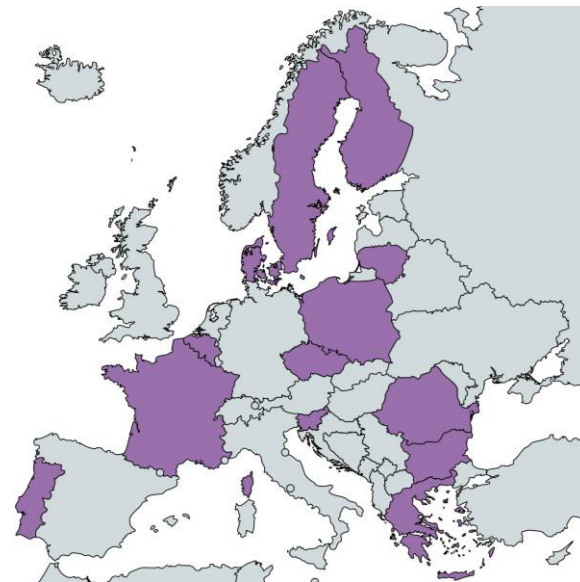
Mention: 15 Countries

Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, **Greece**, Finland, France, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Poland, Slovenia, Romania.



Definition: 9 Countries

Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Portugal, Poland, Slovenia, **Sweden**, Romania.



Specific Obligations: 13 Countries

Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia République, Denmark, **Greece**, Finland, France, Lithuania, Portugal, Poland, Slovenia, **Sweden**, Romania.



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Examples of good practices – SMEs & PSR

Safety and health in micro and small enterprises in the EU: from policy to practice – description of good examples ([2017, EU-OSHA](#))

1. Good practice designed for SMEs
(Ireland)

[BeSmart.ie](#)

Free online tool that generate a workplace risk assessments and safety statement for each workplace. It uses **simple language** and **easy-to-follow instructions**.

Made for SMEs because free and can be done in an autonomous manner.

But does not include any PSR risk assessment. However, at the **output stage**, users are prompted to put in place, a bullying and harassment policy and stress monitoring measures – with details on how it should be done.

Reasons for not including PSR before it to ensure that users are **not overwhelmed**.

2. Good practice designed for PSR
(Italy)

INAIL developed a methodology for the assessment of work-related stress in two-stages: (1) preliminary assessment with a checklist, (2) in-depth assessment (discussion with a validated questionnaire as a basis, focusing on work related stress factors).

Before starting the assessment, establish a steering committee and provide information to all the employees (easier in SMEs)

Methodology (e.g., focus group) recognize the limits for SMEs.



3. Good practice designed for SMEs & PSR
(Belgium)

[Knipperlichten](#)

State initiative, aim to raise (small) companies' awareness of the presence and seriousness of psychosocial risks, and a first step in the prevention of these risks.

This tool is especially adapted to (and was tested with) small enterprises.

Free, composed of two modules that must be completed by a task group composed of a selection of managers and operating employees.

Good feedback from SMEs; way to track risks that have never been discussed before.

Limits: some manager micro companies feel not confident to lead the discussion without external support



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Conclusion

Why work-related psychosocial risks in micro-enterprises are so important and difficult at the same time? What can we do about it?

Prevention of work-related PSR risks requires:

- Primary prevention about organizational factors (workload, responsibilities/autonomy, tensions at work etc).
- Secondary prevention with adapted procedures to reduce risks or take action if work-related stress or workplace bullying.
- Strong industrial relations/social dialogue between managers and workers (in bigger companies structured with the health and safety representatives)
- Training of all the parties involved (workers and management)

Situation in micro enterprises:

- Limited resources to address Occupational Health and Safety, and more so Psychosocial Risks
- Small size (0 to 9 workers) can facilitate prevention (easy to reach everyone and “hard to hide”), but it can also make communication more difficult (understanding that individual suffering might be due to structural organisation). Without workers’ representatives, there are no mediation within the company.

How to improve PSR prevention in micro-companies:

- Clear legal framework on work-related psychosocial risks (knowing what is expected) (help micro companies, and inspection services)
- Free and accessible tools allowing the companies to identify and assess psychosocial risks in an autonomous manner.
- Free support and guidance to help them building prevention procedures to fulfil legal requirement, tailored to their workplaces – support of prevention services or regional representatives (e.g., Sweden).





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Thank you - Gracias

ETUI Policy
Brief

European Economic,
Employment and
Social Policy
2021/16

Psychosocial risks in Europe

National examples as inspiration
for a future directive

Aude Cefaliello

Aude Cefaliello
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the European Trade
Union Institute (ETUI),
Brussels.

Key points

- Psychosocial risks (PSR) are increasingly impacting all industries in every Member States. The effects of psychosocial risks can be long-lasting and have both physical and psychological impacts on workers' lives (such as depression, musculoskeletal disorders or burnout).
- Employers are under an obligation to protect workers' safety and health in all aspects of work. Member States do not, however, share legally binding common standards and principles regarding psychosocial risks. This results in unequal legal protection for workers.
- National examples of regulation of psychosocial risks show that effective legislation is possible. These examples can be a source of inspiration to (re)start the discussion to adopt a specific directive on psychosocial risks, which would establish common rules aimed at improving workers' safety and health and encouraging organisational prevention of these growing risks.

etui.



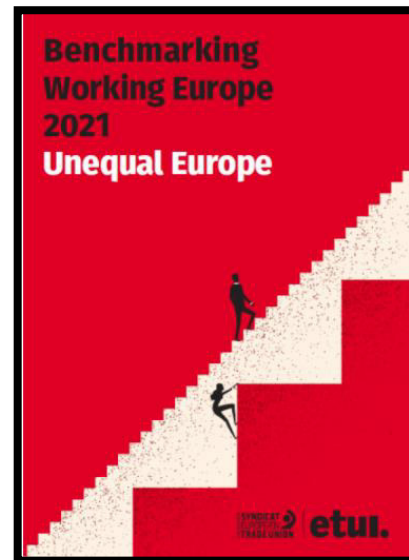
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