



Alcohol and the workplace in the European Union

An exploration

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Foreword

Alcohol is usually associated with leisure time, entertainment and recreation. It helps to create a pleasant atmosphere, to make contacts and socialise. But unfortunately, it also may create problems: at home, in traffic or at work. Those who drink alcohol irresponsibly may have higher rates of work absenteeism and a bigger chance of being involved in work-related accidents. To combat such negative effects, policies and interventions have been developed to reduce alcohol related harm at the workplace. This is often a concerted effort, where governments, employers, trade Unions and employees each play their own role. Experiences of companies which have an alcohol policy show that it is possible to reduce alcohol related harm through a combination of clear rules and regulation about consumption of alcohol during (or before) work, enforcements of such rules, education for employees, involvement of Unions, strengthening employees own responsibilities and paying special attention to employees who are at risk. Such alcohol policies are cost effective and beneficial in many ways: companies lose less money due to alcohol related absenteeism, productivity increases and a safer work place is created.

Although the positive effects of creating an internal alcohol policy are evident, still many companies and organisations do not have such a policy. Why this is the case, is still a question. We hope that this document will assist those who wish to develop an alcohol policy for their organisation and will spur on others, who are still hesitant, to do so.

I would like to express my special thanks to Kamila Lenarczyk, who was responsible for doing most of the work for this project and to Helmut Wagner, director of TAG, for the support he has given us to do this work and for his efforts to find a solution to give this project a chance in a period when TAG was facing some serious challenges.

Amsterdam, December 2005

Ernst Buning, director Quest for Quality

1. Introduction

Early 2005, Quest for Quality (Q4Q) and The Amsterdam Group (TAG) discussed the possibilities of a substantial project regarding *Alcohol and the workplace*. It was considered to create a Toolkit on how to create effective interventions in the workplace to reduce alcohol related harm. Such a Toolkit should have been based on existing expertise and put together in collaboration with those who have extensive experience with developing such policies and interventions. Finally, we had the idea that such a Toolkit would be placed on the internet and thus be accessible for all those who wish to develop an alcohol policy within their company.

However, because of different matters, we had to decide to carry out a much more modest project, which entailed a **basic exploration** regarding *alcohol and the workplace* in the 25 countries of the European Union. Having said that, the 'intelligence' work done, still provided a good picture of what is happening in the field of alcohol and the workplace in the European Union.

In their report '*Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004*' (Geneva, 2004) the World Health Organisation (WHO) provides information about the impact of alcohol abuse on the work situation. Some examples:

- Alcohol is the cause of 10% to 20% of work accidents in France.
- In Britain, a 1994 survey found that 90% of personnel directors from British organisations mentioned alcohol consumption as a problem within their workplace. Their major concerns included loss of productivity, absenteeism, safety, employee relations, poor behaviour and impacts on the company's image. It was estimated that between 8 and 14 million working days are lost annually due to alcohol-related problems. With regard to safety, up to 25% of workplace accidents and around 60% of fatal accidents at work may be associated with alcohol. It is estimated that the annual alcohol-related costs to workplaces in the United Kingdom is £6.4 billion.
- In Latvia it has been reported that alcoholism has a bad impact on productivity in the workplace and that it increased absenteeism. It is estimated that drinking and alcoholism have reduced labour productivity by 10% in this country.

A Dutch study published in *Alcohol problems at work. Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors*. Alcohol Consultancy Nederland (1995) concludes: In the Netherlands, there are between 3 and 6 percent of workers who have problems related to alcohol use.

The statistics are worrying: loss of productivity, high alcohol-related absenteeism and major risks for accidents due to alcohol abuse in the workplace. But what does actually happen in the field of alcohol and the workplace in the European Union? What do organisations, institutions and governments do to reduce alcohol related harm and costs?

To address these questions, Quest for Quality carried out an investigation which entailed the following elements:

- A **literature search** on alcohol and the workplace. This search was conducted in several libraries, including the virtual European Library. We found publications on scientific research and interventions, evaluations of existing alcohol policies in the workplace as well

as guidelines on making a complete internal alcohol policy at the workplace. In order to see the most recent developments in the sphere of alcohol and the workplace in the EU, Quest for Quality focused on information available after 1995. Remarkable is the fact that most of the publications and information on the subject were published in the 1970s and the 1980s; after 1990s, there is quite little information found. It looks as if after twenty years of focusing on alcohol problems at the workplace, the interest of scientists and politicians turned to other problems. Nevertheless, we found sufficient interesting scientific publications, policy papers as well as outcomes of various research published after 1995. The collected publications in this report are briefly described in Chapter 2.

- Furthermore, the investigation work engaged an extensive search on the **Internet** (Chapter 3). We tried to get a clear picture about relevant websites on the subject matter, find out which organisations are specialised and actively involved in the alcohol and/or workplace issues. We made numerous contacts with specialists in the field via organisations that we found during the Internet search and via our own network. An obstacle during our investigation was the fact that some information on the Internet was only available in an original language of a country. This made it for us difficult or even impossible to analyse particular data. Nevertheless, we found many useful websites where information on alcohol and the workplace is described in English and where valuable information is included. It is why most of our investigation presented in this document is in English and mostly from English-speaking countries.
- An extensive **e-mailing** with organisations and specialists provided us with useful information for the project, among others names of key persons in this field in the European Union. All information about the e-mailing, one may find described in Chapter 4 of this paper.

Although Chapters 2, 3 and 4 already give an insight into what is happening in the field, we tried to give some more insights into policy and practice by providing a number of **concrete examples** in Chapter 5.

In the last Chapter, **conclusion and recommendations** for future actions are given.

2. Literature search

In order to find literature about alcohol and the workplace, various libraries in the Netherlands were visited: the Documentation and Information Centre (DIC) of the Municipal Health Service of Amsterdam, the Public Library of The Hague and the Royal Library of the Netherlands. The most useful library for the investigation was the Royal Library of the Netherlands. It is the national library of the Netherlands where all books, magazines, newspapers etc. ever published in the country are available for the public to read. We have looked into all the publications available in the library on the subject of alcohol and the workplace, and we came up with a few titles on the subject matter in the Netherlands. This library also holds a connection with the virtual European Library. The European Library web service is a portal that offers access to the combined resources (books, magazines, journals etc. both digital and non-digital) of numerous national libraries of Europe. It offers free searching and delivers digital items - some free and some paid. We had a digital access to the following libraries: the Austrian National Library, the National Library of Finland, the National Library of France, the German Library, the Central Italian Library, the National Library of Portugal and the British Library. As a result, the European Library database provided us with titles on specialist literature on the workplace and alcohol theme in the EU countries. As mentioned before, most of the publications were printed in the 1970s and the 1980s; after 1990 there were few publications written on the subject matter. It appears that the topic of alcohol in the workplace lost interest of researchers and politicians after so many years of being in the focus of attention. Nonetheless, we found quite a few titles of policy papers, research, etc. that were written on the alcohol and the workplace theme. We decided to select only titles that were published after 1995, in order to gather the most recent publications. Below, one may find, in alphabetical order, an overview of those titles with keywords and a brief summary.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROBLEMS AT WORK: THE SHIFT TO PREVENTION. PREPARED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL AND CRIME PREVENTION. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE, GENEVA (2003). ISBN: 9221133737

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / POLICY / OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

This publication has been developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This book shows the lessons learned from the wide range of projects implemented in all regions of the world (thus also in the EU countries), which promote the paradigm shift to prevention in the drug and alcohol field in the workplace. It provides a systematic guide for policy-makers and programme planners in large and medium-sized enterprises. It also gives advice for further expansion of the prevention approach by focusing on action aimed at addressing also other psychosocial problems that have an impact on health and safety at work.

ALCOHOL AND THE WORKPLACE. M. HENDERSON, G. HUTCHESON. WHO REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS, EUROPEAN SERIES, NO 67 (1996). ISBN: 92-890-1331-1

KEYWORDS: HEALTH / WORK / ALCOHOL

This publication investigates the effects of alcohol consumption on workers and workers' performance, and assesses the different ways that companies deal with alcohol-related problems. The book makes an effort to establish accurate estimates of both the cost to industry of alcohol consumption and the costs associated with dismissing an employee, with keeping problem-drinking employees at work, and with rehabilitating and returning employees to work.

ALCOHOL & THE WORKPLACE. A EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PREVENTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE MEASURES FOR PROBLEM DRINKERS IN THEIR WORKING ENVIRONMENT. EUROPEAN COMMISSION, EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS DG (2003)

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORK / PREVENTION

This European comparative study on alcohol related problems in the workplace was conducted in order to identify issues related to alcohol and the workplace in the EU. The report provides guidelines and tools for the adoption of preventive and supportive measures by companies for employees with alcohol problems and for those who risk social exclusion as a consequence. Furthermore, the study identifies methodologies that encourage the dialogue and exchange of experiences between European companies. The best given examples and description of companies in the EU with internal alcohol policies in this report are: Heineken Holland in the Netherlands, Huntsman Holland in the Netherlands, My Travel in Sweden, Atomic Weapons Establishment in the UK, Centredel Latte di Firenze in Italy, and Generali Insurance Wien in Austria.

ALCOHOL DRINKING, ILLICIT DRUG USE, AND STRESS IN JUNIOR HOUSE OFFICERS IN NORTH-EAST ENGLAND. D. BIRCH; H. ASHTON; F. KAMALI. THE LANCET, SEP. 5, 1998, PP. 785-786. LONDON (1998). ISSN: 01406736

KEYWORDS: WORK PRESSURE / OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH / DRINKING / STUDY

The study, described in this paper, looks at the lifestyles of medical residents in 18 National Health Service Trust Hospitals in the UK. The results show that most of the employees drink excessive amounts of alcohol and use illicit drugs. Alcohol drinking has increased in both men and women in comparison with a previous study. However, high scores for bad health were related to work pressures and were unrelated to the use of alcohol or illicit drugs use.

ALCOHOL EN WERK. RED. J.A. WALBURG, A.A. VAN DIJK. HOUTEN: BOHN STAFLEU VAN LOGHUM, CURE & CARE DEVELOPMENT (2000). ISBN: 90-313-3201-1

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / POLICY / EMPLOYEE / MANAGEMENT / HARM

This book is written in order to help companies, organisations and their employees to work on an appropriate alcohol policy. The book is comprised of five logical chapters that complete each other. Chapter 1 gives general information about alcohol, how it works, what harm but also pleasure it brings as well as information about the alcohol situation in the Netherlands. Chapter 2 describes a literature study about the relation between alcohol and the workplace in the Netherlands. Chapter 3 contains advice about means of recognising alcohol related problems and first steps that should

be made in order to minimise alcohol related harm in the work field. Chapter 4 focuses on treatment as well as effective interventions that can be applied for those who need help. In chapter 5, one can read possibilities and examples of preventive alcohol policy that can be applied in the workplace.

ALCOHOL EN WERK 2000: EEN HERHALINGSONDERZOEK NAAR DE STAND VAN ZAKEN MET BETREKKING TOT HET ALCOHOLBELEID IN BEDRIJVEN IN NEDERLAND ANNO 2000. R. SPIJKERMAN, A.N. VAN DEN AMEELE. MINISTERIE VAN SOCIALE ZAKEN EN WERKGELEGENHEID, DIRECTIE VOORLICHTING, BIBLIOTHEEK EN DOCUMENTATIE, DOETINCHEM, ELSEVIER BEDRIJFSINFORMATIE. 'S-GRAVENHAGE (2000). ISBN: 90-5749-854-5

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / RESEARCH / RISKS

Alcohol en werk 2000 is a second report on the alcohol and workplace theme in the Netherlands, the first report was conducted in 1996. This report is based on research conducted among various companies in the Netherlands and shows the situation at the end of 2000. The goal of this research was to find out what percentage of Dutch companies gives attention to alcohol related risks. In addition, the researchers wanted to find out how many companies had alcohol policies at the end of 2000. This paper gives detailed information about outcomes from this research.

ALCOHOL EN WERK: EEN ONDERZOEK NAAR DE AANDACHT VAN BEDRIJVEN VOOR DE RISICO'S VAN ALCOHOLGEBRUIK. J. MASSAAR, P. WOUTERS. MINISTERIE VAN SOCIALE ZAKEN EN WERKGELEGENHEID, 'S-GRAVENHAGE (1997). ISBN: 90-5250-693-0 (VUGA)

KEYWORDS: RESEARCH / ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / POLICY

This publication focuses on different aspects of the alcohol and the workplace subject. First of all, description and background of the alcohol and the workplace theme in the Netherlands is provided. Next, the research method and questions used by the authors are explained. Afterwards, an analysis is provided of Dutch organisations and companies which give attention towards alcohol related risks and have internal alcohol policies. In this part, authors focus on the factors that had influence on the creation of internal alcohol policies. At the end of this publication, attention is given to alcohol policies in general: how organisations can notice that such a policy is needed, what important points should be included in a proper alcohol policy, etc.

ALCOHOL EN WERK: VERSLAG VAN HET SYMPOSIUM VAN DE VERENIGING VOOR VERSLAVINGSGENEESKUNDE NEDERLAND OP 2 NOVEMBER 2001. RED. RIA VAN HEERDEN ET AL. CONGRES: VERENIGING VOOR VERSLAVINGSGENEESKUNDE NEDERLAND, SYMPOSIUM. VERENIGING VOOR VERSLAVINGSGENEESKUNDE NEDERLAND, UTRECHT (2001). ISBN: 90-803668-5-4

KEYWORDS: REPORT / ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE

This publication is a report from a congress of the Association for Treatment of Addictions on the alcohol and workplace subject. It contains texts of presentations given by specialists invited to the congress. All presentations are based on personal experience of the speakers and are supported by various examples from the field of alcohol and workplace.

ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE: COSTS AND RESPONSES. GRAEME D. HUTCHESON,...ET AL, DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT, SHEFFIELD, GREAT BRITAIN, STATIONERY OFFICE BOOKS (1995). ISBN: 0863924603

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / MANAGEMENT / POLICY / TESTING

This is a short book which gives the necessary information for human resources managers, occupational health professionals or executive officers on how to decide on and implement an occupational drugs and alcohol policy in the workplace. It contains chapters on the legal implications and testing, and has some examples of case law.

ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE: RESULTS OF AN EMPIRICAL STUDY. J.B. DAVIES, L.D. WRIGHT, G.D. HUTCHESON ETC. UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE, GLASGOW (1997) ISBN: 0-7176-1445-X

KEYWORDS: RESEARCH / STUDY / ALCOHOL / EMPLOYEE

This report, from the study on alcohol and the workplace, was conducted by the University of Strathclyde for Health and Safety Executive. The study investigates alcohol consumption among workers in 45 companies in the UK. It focuses on the extent of alcohol consumption in the workplace, influence of drinking on the performed work, type of internal alcohol policies if there are any, etc.

ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AT WORK: GUIDELINES FOR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS. ALCON FOUNDATION. STICHTING ALCOHOL CONSULTANCY NEDERLAND. STICHTING ALCON, ZEIST (1995). ISBN:90-801685-3-X

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / MANAGEMENT / HARM

This brochure is written for managers and supervisors who may have contacts with employees with alcohol problems. Some of them may find it very difficult to talk about alcohol (mis)use. This brochure is designed to make this task easier. There are tips and advice about indicators that alcohol may be a problem in a company. Moreover, there is information provided about how to conduct discussions with problem drinkers and how to deal with harm related to alcohol use in the workplace.

DOES PROBLEM DRINKING AFFECT EMPLOYMENT? EVIDENCE FROM ENGLAND. Z. MACDONALD AND M. SHIELDS. HEALTH ECONOMICS, VOLUME 13, ISSUE 2. JOHN WILEY & SONS, LTD (2003).

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / DRINKING / EMPLOYMENT / ABSENTEEISM

In this paper, data from a Health Survey in England is used to show that problem drinking is associated with the probability of not being at work. Being a problem drinker leads to a substantial reduction in the probability of working up to 31%. The findings of this research identify restrictions and definitions of problem drinking. In addition, results suggest that there may be important labour market benefits from public health policies aimed at the prevention and treatment of problem drinking.

DON'T MIX IT!: A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS ON ALCOHOL AT WORK. HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE, GREAT BRITAIN (2000). ISBN: 0717612910

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / EMPLOYER / POLICY

This booklet has been developed by the Health Education Authority, the Health and Safety Executive, and the Department of Health of the UK to help the owners and managers of small and medium-sized businesses deal with alcohol-related problems at work. It encourages employers to introduce workplace alcohol policies and afterwards evaluate their impact.

DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION IN THE WORKPLACE. JELLINEK CONSULTANCY AND ALCON ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN MONITORING CENTRE FOR DRUGS AND DRUG ADDICTION. (1997)

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / HARM

Although the title of this research mentions drugs, there is a lot of attention given to alcohol harm reduction in the workplace in the EU. This report gives an overview of practice for reduction of drugs (and alcohol) related harm in the workplace. Furthermore, the report promotes the discussion on innovative approaches of drug related harm reduction in the work field.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICIES. T. JACKSON. INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL AND DEVELOPMENT, LONDON (1999). ISBN: 0-85292-811-4.

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / POLICY / OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH / WORKPLACE

This book gives the necessary information for a human resources manager or an occupational health professional, or an executive to decide on and implement an internal alcohol (and drugs) policy in the workplace. It has useful chapters on the legal implications of testing and has some good examples of case laws.

DRUNK OR DISORDERED: A TUC GUIDE TO TACKLING ALCOHOL AND DRUGS AT WORK. TRADES UNION CONGRESS (2001). ISBN: 1-85006-616-7

KEYWORDS: GUIDE / WORK / ALCOHOL

Drink and drug related problems are the most common causes of absence at work, yet a large number of organisations do not have a drug and alcohol policy. The TUC's guide says that an alcohol policy should be comprehensive and should ensure that workers feel confident to report rather than hide their problems. Irresponsible workers jeopardize their own health and can affect the safety of their colleagues. This guide shows how to deal properly with the effects of substance misuse and also shows constructive procedures for supporting victims. One may also find tips about programmes, trainings, assistance and reviews towards an internal alcohol policy.

I VÄNTAN PÅ SÄMRE TIDER? EN EXPLORATIV STUDIE AV STATSMAKTENS OCH CENTRALA AKTÖRERS INTENTIONER, ROLLER OCH FÖRVÄNTNINGAR PÅ ALKOHOLPREVENTION I ARBETSLIVET. B. SANDBERG. UNIVERSITY OF STOCKHOLM: SORAD – FORSKNINGSRAPPORT NR 17, STOCKHOLM (2004).

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / PREVENTION / WORKPLACE / ALCOHOL POLICY

The report written by researchers of the University of Stockholm analyses the roles and expectations of the alcohol prevention at the workplace at Swedish companies.

MANAGEMENT OF ALCOHOL- AND DRUG-RELATED ISSUES IN THE WORKPLACE. AN ILO CODE OF PRACTICE. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE, GENEVA (1996). ISBN: 92-2-109455-3

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH / MANAGEMENT / WORKPLACE

This report contains a code of practice of the International Labour Office with practical recommendations to provide guidance to all those who have responsibility for addressing alcohol (and drugs) related issues at the workplace. The code is not intended to replace international standards, national laws or regulations but to be used along with other standards.

MANAGER'S GUIDE TO DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN THE WORKPLACE, INCLUDING OPTIONS FOR WORKPLACE DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING. BIRMINGHAM: FORENSIC SCIENCE SERVICE, GREAT BRITAIN. (2000). ISBN: 0953910008

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / POLICY / WORKPLACE

This book presents an uncomplicated description of the key issues that need to be addressed when a company is looking for advice to introduce a drug and alcohol policy. Part 1 (Drug and Alcohol Misuse at Work) gives an overview of the facts regarding drug and alcohol misuse within the United Kingdom and the ways in which this can have impact on the workplace. Part 2 (Planning a Workplace Drug and Alcohol Policy) presents a detailed overview of the many factors, which need to be considered when drafting and implementing a drug and alcohol policy. Part 3 (Understanding Drug and Alcohol Testing) gives an account of testing procedures. Part 4 (Substance Misuse Policy Framework Document) is designed as a practical guide for drafting policy, with examples of structured headings and guidance notes.

ONDERZOEKSRAPPORTAGE ALCOHOL EN WERK. MEREL SCHUTTEN, REGINA J.J.M. VAN DEN EIJNDEN, RONALD A. KNIBBE. MINISTERIE VAN SOCIALE ZAKEN EN WERKGELEGENHEID, DIRECTIE COMMUNICATIE, DOETINCHEM: REED BUSINESS INFORMATION. 'S-GRAVENHAGE (2003). ISBN: 90-5901-238-0

KEYWORDS: RESEARCH / WORKERS / ALCOHOL

This report is the result of the research on the alcohol and the workplace subject in the Netherlands assigned by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sports and conducted by the Addiction Research Institute. In order to conduct this survey more than 4000 respondents were interviewed to obtain insight on their alcohol use as well as the picture about attitude of the Dutch working populace towards alcohol. Moreover, this research was done in order to determine to what extent social and personal factors correlate with alcohol use.

RISKY ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN THE WORKPLACE: THE FEASIBILITY OF EARLY DETECTION AND BRIEF INTERVENTION AS A PART OF ROUTINE HEALTH EXAMINATIONS. U. HERMANSSON. MEDICINSKHISTORISKA MUSEET (EUGENIAHEMMET), KAROLINSKA SJUKHUSET (2002).

ISBN: 91-7349-160-8

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / WORKPLACE / OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH / WORKERS

The main purpose of this report was to examine the feasibility and limitations of alcohol screening as part of regular health examinations in the workplace. The research was carried out in the paper, pulp and wood industry.

THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION ON OCCUPATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN ENGLAND. Z. MACDONALD, AND M. SHIELDS. DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER, ENGLAND. INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF LABOUR (2001). IZA DP NO. 166

KEYWORDS: ALCOHOL / OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH / STUDY

In this study, the scientists provide evidence on the effects of alcohol consumption on occupational success in England. They investigated the relationship between past and present alcohol consumption and labour market outcomes, by investigating the effect of drinking on occupational abilities for a large random sample of English employees. To do this they used samples of employees from the Health Survey for England between 1992 and 1996. This document contains considerable details on drinking experience of individual and socio-economic characteristics. The focus of the paper is the nature of alcohol consumption and occupational success. Using various sets of instrumental variables, they found positive and significant returns to moderate levels of drinking for male and female employees.

WORK ENVIRONMENT, ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND ILL HEALTH: THE WHITEHALL II STUDY. J. HEAD, P. MARTIKAINEN, M. KUMARI, H. KUPER AND M. MARMOT. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE, LONDON (2002). ISBN: 0-7176-2314-9

KEYWORDS: HEALTH / WORK / ALCOHOL

This report extends on previous research, which examined the influence of work on self-reported bad health and sickness absence in the UK. It examines the influence of work on self-reported bad health and sickness absence in relationship to alcohol use. High job demands are found to predict poor health functioning and psychiatric disorder. Low decision positions are associated with risk of alcohol dependence. The research shows that each level of decision, job demands and social supports is associated with one or more physical or mental health outcomes, inclusive harmful alcohol use.

3. Internet search

An extensive search on the Internet was conducted in order to get a better picture about relevant web pages of organisations and institutions which are active in the field of alcohol and the workplace. As mentioned in the introduction, we limited ourselves to web pages which provided information in English. In the end, we examined 38 websites thoroughly.

It concerned websites of international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation, EU institutions and the World Health Organisation as well as websites of national and local bodies which work in the alcohol and/or labour field. Useful information was found, such as policy papers and scientific evaluations of research and examples of good practice. Most of the websites investigated belonged to institutions which work in the health sector, NGOs that work on alcohol issues in a particular country as well as ministries of health or/and ministries of labour.

Below, we provide an overview of those websites together with links and a brief description.

➡ **ACAS** [HTTP://WWW.ACAS.ORG.UK/](http://www.acas.org.uk/)

Acas is a British organisation that aims at improving companies and working life of through better employment relations. They provide up-to-date information, advice and training on issues related to the workplace (inclusive alcohol use). Acas works with employers and employees to solve problems and improve their performance.

➡ **Alcohol Concern** www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Alcohol Concern is the UK voluntary agency on alcohol misuse. It was set to reduce the frequency and costs of alcohol related harm and to increase the range and the quality of the services available to people with alcohol-related problems. On the website of Alcohol Concern, one may find good information on alcohol and the workplace issues, e.g.:

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/servlets/wrapper/knowledgebase.jsp?topic_id=9&theme_id=52

This link opens the Alcohol Concern's site where all the articles, publications and documents on the alcohol and the workplace theme can be found.

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/files/20030818_161950_workplace.pdf

This fact sheet summarises the current issues and research regarding the effect of alcohol use on the workplace. Alcohol misuse is a major issue affecting employers and employees in the UK. Problems can arise from drinking damaging an employee's work performance, drinking before a shift, in lunch breaks or during work hours. This behaviour may lead to absenteeism, inefficiency and accidents at the workplace or damaged customer relations. This fact sheet provides more information on these issues.

➡ **Alcohol-en-Werk.nl** www.alcohol-en-werk.nl

This Dutch website is dedicated to alcohol and the workplace issues in the Netherlands. It is prepared by a consultation organisation called 'De Hoop'. There is information with tips and advice for employers about identification and intervention in case of problematic alcohol use at the

workplace. Also, employees can find useful information with advice on alcohol issues in the workplace.

➡ **Alcohol Services for the Community (ASC)** www.alcohol-services.co.uk
www.alcohol-services.co.uk/services/preview%20prevention/in%20the%20workplace.html

Alcohol Services for the Community is an independent agency specialising in alcohol use and misuse, established in 1979 in the UK. It specialises in giving training and expertise on different alcohol issues. The above given link of the ASO website points to the guidelines about how to make a good alcohol policy within companies.

➡ **Alna** www.alna.se

Alna is an organisation for alcohol and drug prevention in workplaces in Sweden. Employer's organisations, LO (Swedish Trade Union Federation) and TCO (Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees) and responsible authorities collaborate within Alna. Alna supports and coordinates the regional Alna councils to reduce alcohol and other drug abuse problems at work. Alna's focus is on the workplace and its guiding principle is that the workplace should be an alcohol and drug free zone. All workplaces are welcome to become members of an Alna council.

➡ **Amicus** www.amicustheunion.org

Amicus is the largest manufacturing union in the United Kingdom, with over one million members in the public and private sectors.

<http://www.amicustheunion.org/pdf/AlcoholandDrugsFeb04.pdf>

The above given link opens a guide that is a product of research to what other organisations and employers do when it comes to formulating a drugs and alcohol policy. It includes a summary of relevant legislation, a template policy based on the Health and Safety Executive model, a brief overview of current views and practices, information on Employee Assistance Programmes and a guide to testing.

➡ **APPA** www.appa.dk

APPA is a Danish nationwide network established in order to ensure qualified help to all companies in Denmark when wanting to establish an active alcohol policy of their own. The consulting work is taken care of by specially trained APPA-consultants. They advise and guide all activities when establishing an active alcohol policy. They are specialists in training and teaching both management and staff where alcohol might create problems at the workplace.

➡ **Bratislava Centre for Work and Family Studies (BCWFS)**
www.vupsvr.gov.sk

The priority of BCWFS activities is research. It focuses on the sociological study in the field of social and family policy, labour market and employment policy, and industrial relations in the field of occupational safety and health. Results of the studies are used in creation of laws, concepts, strategies and programmes within the competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

 **Business Engagement** www.businessengagement.com

This website focuses on alcohol and the workplace issues and is organised by the British government. This website aims at a responsible employer to help developing a strong and effective workplace policy. It gives information on substance misuse, internal workplace policies as well as screening and testing.

 **Centre for Occupational Safety Finland** www.tyoturva.fi

Centre for Occupational Safety in Finland is a joint expert organisation of the Finnish labour market organisations representing both employers and employees. The Centre organises about 200 trainings per year, some of which focus on the workplace and alcohol issues. Target groups of such trainings include health and safety personnel, members of different committees and personnel administration. The Centre also publishes books, reports, booklets etc. on occupational health and safety (inclusive alcohol). In the field of alcohol, the centre has a special alcohol work group which focuses on prevention and reduction of alcohol related harm in the workplace.

 **Department for Work and Pensions** www.dwp.gov.uk

This body was organised to promote opportunity and independence, to help individuals achieve their potential through employment and to work on poverty in all its forms.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/jad/2004/w193rep.pdf>

This report contains the findings of research commissioned to estimate the number of drug and alcohol users in private households in Britain and to identify substance users' barriers to work.

Een stappenplan voor bedrijven om alcoholmisbruik op het werk te voorkomen en te bestrijden
http://www.gbw.nl/download/Stap_alcohol2002.pdf

This link opens a Dutch document with advice for employers about a 'seven steps plan' towards a comprehensive alcohol policy at the workplace. Those steps are:

(1) creation of a basis for an alcohol policy; (2) setting up structures within a company to stimulate an alcohol policy; (3) establishing needs within a company; (4) setting up a plan of action; (5) implementation of a plan of action; (6) evaluation of an alcohol policy; (7) adjusting weaknesses of a policy and holding on to an alcohol policy.

 **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work** www.agency.osha.eu.int

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work was set up in 1996 to collect, analyse and promote OSH – occupational safety and health – related information. The Agency's mission is to make Europe's workplaces safer, healthier and more productive, and in particular to promote an effective prevention culture. Through the search option on this website, one can enter many documents on the workplace and alcohol that were published in the European Union countries as well as partner organisations. In addition, one can find the addresses of Focal Points and partner organisations in the workplace sphere.

 **Hazards** www.hazards.org

Hazards is the unions' magazine in the UK. Hazards provides information and resources to make the union job easier. Hazards gives unions answers to the workplace problems. Using a global

network of union safety correspondents, Hazards makes sure that there is the best information available. On its website, one may find several articles on alcohol and the workplace issues.

➡ **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** www.hse.gov.uk/alcoholdrugs/

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for the regulation of almost all the risks to health and safety arising from work activity in Britain. HSE conducts research and publishes leaflets as well as information papers on workplace, inclusive alcohol issues. The above given link opens the HSE information on alcohol and the workplace: free leaflets with advice for employers, provides messages and information about responsibilities in relation to health and safety law at work as well as provides useful links to other websites. Examples:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/railways/liveissues/drugs.htm>

This link provides information on the alcohol (drug) testing in the railway industry in the UK.

➡ **Health Scotland** www.healthscotland.com or www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk

Health Scotland is a national body that supports organisations, policy-makers, communities and individuals to take action to improve health and reduce health inequalities across Scotland.

http://www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk/services/pubs/pdf/SimpleGuide_Alcohol.pdf

This link of Health Scotland opens a simple guide on the alcohol policy within Scottish companies. It provides clear and simple guidelines about key steps and key elements in setting an alcohol policy within a company.

➡ **Health Service Executive (HSE) Western Area of Ireland** www.whb.ie

The HSE has responsibility for running Irish health and personal social services, and to improve, promote and protect the health and welfare of the public.

<http://www.whb.ie/OurServices/HealthPromotion/Publications/d2828.PDF>

This link contains a document that has been produced by the Health Promotion Departments of the Mid-Western Health Board and the Western Health Board. It is intended to be used by organisations, which acknowledge the importance of developing alcohol and drug policies, and procedures in the workplace.

➡ **Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS)** www.ias.org.uk

The aims of the Institute are to increase the understanding of alcohol and of public policies necessary to reduce the harm associated with its use.

www.ias.org.uk/factsheets/workplace.pdf

This fact sheet of IAS gives information on alcohol and the workplace in the UK. It focuses on costs of using alcohol in the workplace as well as on harms that alcohol creates when used by employees. It also provides examples of companies that have internal alcohol policies in the UK. Those include British Rail, Ford Motor Company, Royal Bank of Scotland, Marks and Spencers, Whitbread, Manchester City Council, Shell, Nuclear Electric. It is a useful document that sketches the situation of alcohol and the workplace, and gives overall idea about issues involved in this problem.

 **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** www.ilo.org

The International Labour Organization is the UN specialised agency, which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights. It was founded in 1919.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/drug/>

On this Internet site of the ILO, there are several documents about alcohol and the workplace prevention programmes and about the key issues in developing policies and programmes on the problem of the workplace substance abuse.

<http://www.ccsa.ca/ilo/ilotop.htm>

This link opens the ILO database on substance abuse (also alcohol) in the workplace. It is international database maintained by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, which also contains sources on the European Union countries available.

 **IZA Institute for the Study of Labour** www.iza.org

IZA is a German private, independent research institute, which conducts nationally and internationally oriented labour market research. It sees itself as an international research institute and a place for communication between academic science, politics, and economic practice. A number of economists involved in specific research projects cooperate with IZA, either internally or on a 'virtual' basis. IZA also takes an active part in international research networks. Among others, IZA conducts research on the labour and alcohol issues.

 **National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence**

www.publichealth.nice.org.uk

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is an organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of poor health. They give guidance to those working in the National Health Services, local authorities and the wider public as well as private and voluntary sectors.

<http://www.publichealth.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=502799>

This link of NICE provides information on the workplace intervention. Employers learn to know how to recognise when an employee has an alcohol problem and what actions to take and procedures to follow in order to help them. It is recommended that employers should have an alcohol policy and should know the signs to look for and procedures to follow in case of alcohol related problems at the workplace.

 **NIGZ** www.nigz.nl/index_en.cfm

The NIGZ (Dutch Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention) develops programmes in support of healthy behaviour and healthy environments. They especially assist local authorities, local health promoting institutions and companies in developing, implementing and assessing health policies. The NIGZ also gives practical support to health professionals through information, training, educational materials, counselling and coaching.

<http://www.nigz.nl/index.cfm?act=dossiers.inzien&vardossier=42>

This link opens a dossier on alcohol and the workplace in the Netherlands. One may find general information on the alcohol and the workplace issues, reports from researches conducted in the Netherlands and articles on the subject matter.

 **PARPA** (The State Agency for Prevention of Alcohol Related Problems)

www.parpa.pl

PARPA is a professional government-based institution in Poland created to construct the foundations of the state healthcare policy concerning the improvement of alcohol abuse prevention, treatment, and public education.

<http://www.parpa.pl/?subL=3&checkL=1>

This link opens information on the preventive alcohol policy in the workplace in Poland. It contains general information on identification of the drinking problems at the workplace and possible solutions.

 **South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)** www.seeda.co.uk

SEEDA is the UK government funded agency set up in 1999 responsible for the economic and social development of the South East of England. SEEDA as the Regional Development Agency for the South East is responsible for the sustainable economic development and regeneration of the South East of England.

http://www.seeda.co.uk/publications/learning_skills_&_workforce/docs/Drugs_2004.pdf

This link opens a leaflet of SEEDA on alcohol and drug policy within the workplace. It gives overall information on problems that can be created by those substances in the workplace, but also recommendations and tips about developing a successful internal alcohol policy and employees assistance programme.

 **SoRAD Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs** www.sorad.su.se

SoRAD is a department of Stockholm University and is a national centre that was founded to strengthen social research on alcohol and drugs in Sweden. This department aims to stimulate and to conduct social science research on alcohol and drugs, including improving methods, increasing theoretical understanding, and enhancing links to policy. In addition, SoRAD works to provide research training, research networks and collaborative studies in Sweden; and to serve as an interdisciplinary focal point in Sweden for collaboration on comparative and international projects.

 **The European Workplace Drug Testing Society** www.ewdts.org

The European Workplace Drug Testing Society is a forum for discussion when alcohol and drug testing is being considered or used within a workplace. The biggest part of their interest focuses on the way testing is carried out. Workplace Drug Testing involves three link stages – collecting the specimen, analysing the specimen and interpreting the results of the analysis. The EWDTS brings together the users and providers of these services as well as the equipment suppliers. The EWTDS provides a focal point for the exchange of ideas and information.

 **The Swedish Road Administration (VV)** www.vv.se

The Swedish Road Administration is the national authority assigned for the overall responsibility for the entire road transport system in Sweden. The Swedish Road Administration is also responsible for drawing up and applying road transport regulations. In addition, the VV is responsible for the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of the state roads. It is a company that is

actively involved in introducing so-called 'alcolocks' among those companies where employees drive regularly.

 **The Trades Union Congress (TUC)** www.tuc.org.uk

TUC is a British organisation with seventy affiliated unions that represent nearly seven million working people from all kinds of professional background. The TUC campaigns for fair work and for social justice in the UK and abroad. On their website, one can find several documents, press releases and researches on the alcohol and the workplace subject. Example:

www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-6286-f0.cfm

This document is a positive response of the TUC to the Harm Reduction Strategy of the UK government. It describes all the areas of the workplace sphere where alcohol policies are needed and very much welcome.

 **TISZA Volán Rt. – Public Transport Company in Hungary**

www.tiszavolan.hu

<http://www.x-cd.com/t2004/pdfs/WS2-2.pdf>

This link opens a scientific report on the workplace testing of the employees of the public transport company in the County Csongrád in Hungary. This paper gives detailed information about the research conducted about workers of this company. It provides methodology, analysis and outcomes of the whole experiment.

 **University of Oviedo** www.psico.uniovi.es

www.psico.uniovi.es/REIPS/v1n0/articulo5.html

The above given link opens an article written by one of the Oviedo University professors Mr. Esteban Agulló Tomás. He specialises in alcohol and the workplace theme and in his article he writes about the outcomes of the research on the alcohol use in the workplace in Spain. It contains facts about the present situation in Spain in the workplace as well as ideas and possible interventions for future actions.

 **University of the West of England**

http://imp.uwe.ac.uk/imp_public/listEntry.asp?URN=1007&rp=listEntry.asp&pid=4

This link opens University website where a link is placed to a safety guidance note at the University (title: Alcohol in the workplace). The note is on the safety policy and guidance towards alcohol and the workplace issues within the University. It aims at the University staff and students.

 **VAD Vereniging voor Alcohol- en andere Drugproblemen** www.vad.be

VAD is Association for Alcohol and other Drug problems which works on implementing alcohol and drug policies in the Flemish part of Belgium. VAD gives advice and support in making and implementing policies. VAD produces information materials, organises trainings, and conducts research and networks in the field of alcohol and the workplace.

 **World Health Organisation (WHO), Regional Office for Europe**

www.euro.who.int

The WHO provides a number of very interesting links:

<http://data.euro.who.int/alcohol/Default.aspx?TabID=4936>

This link opens a WHO site where data on alcohol consumption and harm is collected. One can select consumption and harm indicator on absenteeism from work due to illness in days per employee per year in all European countries.

Another option on this site is data on number of persons injured due to work-related accidents per 100000 people in Europe.

[http://nl.prevent.be/net/net01.nsf/52b2da8b666e069080256aaa002ab228/2f42bb92e02a2672c1256f69002aa959/\\$FILE/alcoholsamenv.pdf](http://nl.prevent.be/net/net01.nsf/52b2da8b666e069080256aaa002ab228/2f42bb92e02a2672c1256f69002aa959/$FILE/alcoholsamenv.pdf)

This link opens a report 'Alcohol policy in Belgian companies – state of the art – role of the prevention worker'. This article gives an overview of the alcohol use situation in Belgian companies. It also provides the outcomes of research conducted among workers of different companies and gives practical information and advice for prevention specialists who work with alcohol and the workplace issues.

<http://www.gesanet.de/19-01.html>

This link opens the database with information on alcohol and the workplace in Germany. It contains worth knowing information on the subject.

http://portal.wko.at/wk/dok_detail_file.wk?AngID=1&DocID=353625

This link opens an Austrian booklet on alcohol and the workplace with general information and solution-oriented strategies for companies.

<http://www.rz.uni-karlsruhe.de/~Ferdinand.Groeben/ALK/ALK.html>

This link opens a scientific article on alcohol and the workplace in Germany. This article contains data about a research and specific data on the subject matter.

http://tno-arbeid.adlibsoft.com/adlib/docs/NSPOH_Krajewski.pdf

This link opens a report on research conducted on the Dutch industry and companies in association to the alcohol use. It gives an overview of the alcohol use, alcohol prevention and alcohol policy within companies. Furthermore, it looks specifically at alcohol use in the chemical, meat and metal industry and compares them in relation to alcohol use, alcohol prevention and policies at the workplace.

4. E-Mailing

In order to find appropriate information on the alcohol and the workplace theme, we contacted numerous organisations, institutions and companies with a question about guidelines and information on alcohol policy in the workplace. Over 125 e-mails were sent to various organisations and persons in all the 25 European Union countries. Most of those e-mails addresses were found on the Internet while conducting intensive search on the web, others were given to us when a person contacted was not familiar with the subject. We also contacted Quest for Quality's own network with questions regarding the alcohol and the workplace theme. Each time we mailed a particular institution, organisation or person, we asked for specific examples of good practice in each country and about companies with internal alcohol policy as well as about tips on where more information on the subject matter in a particular country could be found. During this phase of our work, many e-mails stayed unanswered, some gave us useless information, but overall, many e-mails were answered and provided valuable information for the project. Below, an overview of this phase of our investigation, together with the outcomes it provided.

Focal Points

Firstly, the Focal Points of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work were approached. This organisation was set up in 1996 to collect, analyse and promote occupational safety and health (OSH) – related information. The Agency's mission is to make Europe's workplaces safer, healthier and more productive, and in particular to promote an effective prevention culture. Occupational safety and health is about preventing people from being harmed or made ill through work. It is the institution concerned with preserving and protecting human and other resources in the workplace.¹ This agency has representatives in all the EU countries, in so called Focal Points. Below, names and addresses together with reactions we received.

AUSTRIA

Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit
Sektion IX, Zentral-Arbeitsinspektorat
Favoritenstrasse 7
A-1040 Wien
Contact person: Ms. Martina Häckel-Bucher
Tel: (43-1) 711 00
Email: martina.haeckel-bucher@bmwa.gv.at
No answer received until now.

BELGIUM

Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue

¹ <http://agency.osha.eu.int/about/>

Ernest Blerotstraat 1
B-1070 Bruxelles
Contact person: Mr. Willy Imbrechts
Tel: (32-2) 233 41 11
Email: willy.imbrechts@meta.fgov.be
No answer received until now.

CYPRUS

Department of Labour Inspection
Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
12 Apellis str.
CY-1493 Nicosia
Contact person: Mr. Leandros Nicolaidis
Director
Tel: (357) 22 30 03 30
Email: director@dli.mlsi.gov.cy
Email: mkourtellis@dli.mlsi.gov.cy

The representatives of the Focal Point informed us that in general terms, Cyprus legislation places the duty on the employer to assess the risks at the workplace (including alcohol use). He or she should always take preventive and protective measures to eliminate or reduce to acceptable level those risks. Our contact person also stated that generally, there are no problems with alcohol use at the workplace because of the specific climatic conditions of the island: people drink mainly water or soft drinks at work.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Department of Occupational Safety and Labour Environment
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Na Poricnim pravu 1
128 01 Prague 2
Contact person: Ms. Daniela Kubickova
Director
Tel: (42-02) 21 92 23 44
Email: daniela.kubickova@mpsv.cz

We received an answer from Ms. Kubickova that the Czech Republic does not have any special projects on the alcohol at the workplace. The only publication that is available is *Alcohol and drug prevention in the workplace (Experiences from the Central European and Western Countries)* published in 1996 for the ILO and ICAA seminars on workplace strategies. In general, alcohol use in the workplace is officially banned according to the section 135, article 4, letter E of Act 65/1965 of the Labour Legislation. It says that it is forbidden to consume alcoholic drinks or use addictive substances at the workplace or during working time, even when working away from one's workplace. In addition, it is forbidden to enter workplace while under influence of alcoholic substance.

DENMARK

Arbejdstilsynet
Landskronagade 33
Postboks 1228
DK-0900 Copenhagen
Contact person: Mrs. Tove Loft
Tel: (45) 70 12 12 88
Email: tol@at.dk
No answer received until now.

ESTONIA

Labour Department
Ministry of Social Affairs
29, Gonsiori
EE-15027 Tallinn
Contact person: Mr. Tiit Kaadu
Tel: (37-2) 626 97 80
Email: tiit.kaadu@sm.ee
No answer received until now.

FINLAND

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Department for Occupational Safety and Health
PO Box 556
FIN - 33101 Tampere
Contact person: Dr. Erkki Yrjänheikki
Tel: (358-9) 160 01
Email: erkki.yrjanheikki@stm.fi

We received an answer from Prof. Heikki Savolainen, a colleague of Dr. Yrjänheikki (his e-mail address is heikki.savolainen@stm.fi). He said that although alcohol consumption issue is very important in the workplace theme in Finland, they do not have any ongoing activity on this subject. We also received a tip with a name of persons who is a specialist.

Dr. Raimo Salonen
Email: raimo.salonen@stm.fi
Unfortunately, the e-mail to Dr. Salonen stayed unanswered.

FRANCE

Ministère de l'emploi, du travail et de la cohésion sociale
DRT
39-43 quai André-Citroën
F-75902 Paris Cedex 15

Contact person: Mr. Robert Piccoli
Tel: (33) 144 38 26 41
Email: robert.piccoli@drt.travail.gouv.fr
No answer received until now.

GERMANY

Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit
Referat IIIb2 - Arbeitsschutz
Scharnhorststrasse 34-37
D-10115 Berlin
Contact person: Mr. Reinhard Gerber
Tel: (49) 30 2014 6766
Email: reinhard.gerber@bmwa.bund.de

We received few e-mail contacts from Mr. Gerber as well as links to German websites that are specialised in alcohol and workplace issues. (More information about those websites in the chapter on Internet search). The following are the contact persons in the topic involved:

annett.zeh@bgw-online.de

Website: www.bgw-online.de

Ministry of Health and Social Security (BMGS)

Email: michaela.schreiber@bmgs.bund.de

Email: ingo.michels@bmgs.bund.de

Mr. Gerber also forwarded our mail to some of his colleagues, unfortunately, they did not respond.

GREECE

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection
General Directorate of Working Conditions and Health
Pireos 40
GR-10182 Athens
Contact person: Mr. Ioannis Koumertas
Tel: (30) 10 321 41 05
Email: grhsa@otenet.gr
No answer received until now.

HUNGARY

OMMF-Hungarian Labour Inspectorate
Margit krt. 85
H-1024 Budapest
Contact person: Mr. János Gádor
Tel: (36-1) 346 9454
Email: gador@ommf.hu

We received an answer from Mr. Gádor that he was not an appropriate person to contact for information about alcohol and the workplace. He gave us e-mail of a person that knows amore

about this topic:

Prof. Dr. Veronika Morvai

Tel: +36 1 4762618

Email: morvai@fjokk.hu

Unfortunately, she did not respond to our e-mails.

IRELAND

Euro Info Centre

Waterford Chamber of Commerce

George's Quay

Waterford

Contact person: Ms. Siobhán Rafter

Tel: (353-51) 31 11 38

Email: siobhan.rafter@waterfordchamber.ie

No answer received until now.

ITALY

Istituto Superiore per la Prevenzione e Sicurezza del Lavoro

Via Alessandria 220 E

I-00198 Roma

Contact person: Mr. Sergio Perticaroli

Head of Documentation, Information and Education Department

Tel: (39-06) 44 25 09 78

Email: perticaroli.doc@ispe.it

No answer received until now.

LATVIA

State Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Latvia

38, Kr.Valdemara street

Riga, LV-1010

Contact person: Liene MAURITE

Tel: (371) 702 17 48

Email: liene.maurite@osha.lv

No answer received until now.

LITHUANIA

State Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of

Lithuania

Algirdo street 19

LT-2006 Vilnius

Contact person: Ms. Nerita Sot

Tel: (370) 52 60 34 72

Email: nerita@vdi.lt

No answer received until now.

LUXEMBURG

Inspection du Travail et des Mines

Boîte Postal 27

L-2510 Luxembourg

Contact person: Mr. Paul Weber

Tel: (352) 478 61 50

Email: paul.weber@itm.etat.lu

No answer received until now.

MALTA

Occupational Health and Safety Authority

17 Edgar Ferro ´ Street

Pieta ´ MSD 07

Contact person: Ms. Romina Rieck Zahra

Tel: (356) 21247677/8

Email: romina.riECKzahra@gov.mt

No answer received until now.

NETHERLANDS

Dutch OSH Platform

Postbus 718

NL-2130 AS Hoofddorp

Contact person: Mr. Henk Schrama

Tel: (31-23) 554 93 93

Email: h.schrama@arbeid.tno.nl

No answer received until now.

POLAND

Central Institute for Labour Protection-National Research Institute

ul. Czerniakowska 16

00-701 Warsaw

Contact person: Dr. Wiktor Marek Zawieska

Tel: (48-22) 623 46 01

Email: wikli@ciop.pl

No answer received until now.

PORTUGAL

Instituto para a Segurança, Higiene e Saúde no Trabalho
Avenida da República 84, 5º Andar
P-1600 - 205 Lisboa
Contact person: Ms. Maria Manuela Calado Correia
Tel: (351) 217 92 70 00
Email: osha@idict.gov.pt
No answer received until now.

SLOVAKIA

National Labour Inspectorate
Masarykova 10
P.O. Box C3
SK-041 33 Kosice
Contact person: Mr. Gabriel Hrabovský
Tel: (421-2) 57 29 13 00
Email: osha@safework.gov.sk
No answer received until now.

SLOVENIA

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
Department for Health and Safety at Work
Kotnikova 5
1000 Ljubljana
Contact person: Mrs. Vladka Komel
Tel: (386-1) 478 33 39
Email: vladka.komel@gov.si

We received an answer from Mrs. Komel with a statement that there is not so much information on the subject matter in her country, but nevertheless, she sent us some useful information.

Experts in the field of alcohol:

Dr. Janez Rugelj, MD
Zasavska 42
SI – 1231 Ljubljana Črnuče
Slovenia
Email: janez.rugelj@quest.arnes.si

Ms. Marjetka Hovnik-Keršmanc, MD
Zavod za zdravstveno varstvo Kranj
Gosposvetska ulica 12
SI – 4000 Kranj
Slovenia
Tel: +360 (0) 420 17 100

Email: marjetka.kersmanc@zzv-kr.si

Ms. Janja Šešok, MD
Institute of Public Health
Trubarjeva 2
SI – 1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia
Tel: +360 (0) 12441 512
Email: janja.sesok@ivz-rs.si

Dr. Marjan Bilban
ZVD Zavod za varstvo pri delu d.d.
Chengdujska cesta 25
SI – 1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia
Email: marjan.bilban@zvd.si

Companies with alcohol policies:
Revoz d.d.
Belokranjska 4
SI – 8000 Novo Mesto
Slovenia
Email: zdravko.slak@renaut.com
Website: www.revoz.si

Krka d.d.
Šmarješka Cesta 6
SI – 8501 Novo Mesto
Slovenia
Email: odnosi-z-javnostmi@krka.biz
Website: www.krka.si

We have contacted all experts and the two companies given by Mrs. Komel in Slovenia, unfortunately, we have not received any answers until now.

SPAIN

Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo
c/Torrelaguna 73
E-28027 MADRID
Contact person: Ms. Marta Jiménez Agueda
Tel: (34) 913 63 41 00
Email: mjimeneza@mtas.es
No answer received until now.

SWEDEN

Arbetsmiljöverket

SE-171 84 Solna

Contact person: Ms. Elisabet Delang

Tel: (46-8) 730 90 00

Email: arbetsmiljoverket@av.se

We received answer from a colleague of Ms. Delang, Mr. Rune Underskog, MD (Rune.Underskog@av.se). He stated in his e-mail that in general, the Swedish authorities do not have regulation on the subject matter. In general, it is up to companies and employees to negotiate about internal rules. Nevertheless, Mr. Underskog provided us with a name of an organisation that is specialised in the alcohol workplace subject – Alna (more in the chapter on the Internet search) and a title of a paper on the workplace *Risky alcohol consumption in the workplace* by Ulrik Hermansson, a Swedish scientist (more in the chapter on literature).

UK

Health and Safety Executive

Rose Court 9SW

2 Southwark Bridge

London SE1 9HS

Contact person: Ms. Eleanor Keech

Tel: +44 (0) 845 345 0055

Email: uk.focalpoint@hse.gsi.gov.uk

We received an e-mail from Mr. Andrew Wigley of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Infoline, because Ms. Keech forwarded our e-mail to HSE. He suggested the HSE's website (www.hse.gov.uk) for further assistance (more about this organisation is included in the chapter on the Internet search).

Other sources

Another way of gathering information was sending e-mails to contact persons of ministries of health and/or labour in all the EU countries. Furthermore, we have contacted national and local organisations and bodies that work in the field of alcohol and/or the workplace. In response, some ministries and organisations sent names and e-mail addresses of people who are specialised in the alcohol and the workplace subject. Others sent website addresses or tips with names of companies that work in the field of alcohol or that have internal alcohol policies. Unfortunately, some have not answered until now. Nonetheless, we received many e-mails with useful data for our investigation. Below, in alphabetical order of the countries that replied, one may find information that was obtained via mailing search.

(NB: E-mail addresses of those organisations and experts that we contacted, but who did not reply, are not included here. We include only information about mailings that provided us with useful information).

AUSTRIA

A specialist in this field in Austria is Mr. Alfred Uhl (akis-lbi@api.or.at). He stated that there are some vague laws on the subject matter, but that there is too little research conducted and too little attention given to this theme in Austria. There are no specific alcohol laws concerning the workplace generally. Below, examples of regulations that are present at this moment in Austria in some areas:

- "Work protection laws", prohibit intoxication while being at work. However, those laws are very vague and they do not prohibit drinking alcohol.
- "Protection of construction worker act", says that drinking alcohol while working is illegal. Workers are not allowed to drink alcohol during their breaks, if they do and get intoxicated, they are not allowed to re-enter the workplace after a break.
- "Job training law", says that if a trainer is an alcoholic he is not allowed to train his students.
- "Physicians law", says that the authorities may prohibit a MD to work – up to six weeks – if he has suffered psychiatric problems, including addiction.
- "Public transport law" prohibits drivers from starting to work in a state of intoxication and to drink while on duty.
- "Air and water traffic regulations" make it illegal for addicted or intoxicated persons to fly or be in charge of a ship. Addicts may lose rights to be pilots or captains.
- "Military law" says that soldiers may not be in a state of intoxication on duty. They may be punished for violations or lose some benefits.

BELGIUM

The organisation that works on alcohol problems in Belgium (Flemish part) is the 'Vereniging voor Alcohol en andere Drugproblemen'. The coordinator for this subject is Ms. Marie-Claire Lambrechts (marie-claire.lambrechts@vad.be). She mentions that companies that have internal alcohol policy are cautious and do not want outsiders to know about their alcohol policy. Also, she, as a specialist in this field, cannot provide third parties with the names of such companies.

ESTONIA

Institutions contacted by Q4Q (Ministries, confederations of trade unions or labour boards) replied that there are no programmes and information available on this subject in Estonia.

FINLAND

The names of the key-persons on the subject matter within the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health are:

Ms. Marjatta Montonen, project coordinator

National Alcohol Programme of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

PO Box 33

FI – 00023 Government

Finland

Tel: +358 9 160 74013

Email: marjatta.montonen@stm.fi

Ms. Auli Sarvikivi, project secretary
National Alcohol Programme of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Email: auli.sarvikivi@stm.fi

Ismo Suksi, project manager
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Tel: +358 9 160 73134
Email: ismo.suksi@stm.fi

Pirjo Wagello, project secretary
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Tel: +358 9 160 73237
Email: pirjo.harkonen@stm.fi

Other specialists that were recommended to Q4Q are:
Mikko Nyysölä of the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)
Tel: +358 9 4202 2283
Email: mikko.nyysola@ek.fi

Markku Roiha of the Local Authority of Employers in Finland
Tel: +358 9 771 2360
Email: markku.roiha@kuntaliitto.fi

Timo Koskinen of the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions
Tel: +358 9 9 7721 443
Email: timo.koskinen@sak.fi

Mr. Ari Saarto of the A-klinikka
Tel: +358 9 6220 290
Email: ari.saarto@a-klinikka.fi

Mr. Hannu Tamminen of the Centre for Occupational Safety
Tel: +358 9 6162 6215
Email: hannu.tamminen@tyoturva.fi

In general, there are many good alcohol policies in the workplace in Finland, but the problem is that they are not published on the Internet or freely available. One of the experts provided us with the names of two companies with internal alcohol policies (unfortunately, they have not replied until now).

Metso Corporation
Metal Company
Contact person: Mr. Arvi Parvianen
Email: arvi.parvinen@metso.com

SOK or S-Group

A big chain of shops, hotel etc.

Contact person: Mr. Juha Teirilä

Email: juha.teirila@sok.fi

HUNGARY

The organisation that is very active in the alcohol and the workplace subject is called HAFRAC, Hungarian Association for Responsible Alcohol Consumption and its member organisation the Union of the Hungarian Alcohol Industry. Both organisations are sponsored by the alcohol industry. The contact persons that we found were Mr. Gábor Séllyei (gsellyei@axelero.hu) and Mr. András Nagy (nandras@t-online.hu).

IRELAND

Our contact person is Jim Holmes (JIMH@hsa.ie) of the Health and Safety Authority. This organisation is the national body in Ireland with responsibility for securing health and safety at work. Information provided says that there have been The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 introduced. It requires that an employee does not attend work in state of intoxication. The Act allows for the making of regulations to allow for reasonable testing for intoxicants where people are involved in Safety Critical occupations but these regulations have not yet been prepared.

MALTA

The name of the specialist that works in this field in Malta is Ms. Josianne Azzopardi (prevention@waldonet.net.mt). She is responsible for services related to Substance Abuse and the Workplace within the National Agency against Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

POLAND

According to our contact persons, there is nothing happening in the field of alcohol and the workplace in Poland. Officially, the labour law forbids drinking of alcohol in the workplace but it is hardly ever inspected. Some official institutions e.g. police, army or guards do something in this field, but usually it is not made known publicly. The specialists who try to work in this area in Poland are:

Ewa Osiatynska

The Batory Foundation

Email: ad@batory.org.pl

Robert Lemanski

PARPA

The State Agency for Prevention of Alcohol Related Problems

Email: robert.lemanski@parpa.pl

PORTUGAL

We received information from the Ministry of Health about a company with a very good internal alcohol policy. The company's name is Brisa (www.brisa.pt) and it is the largest Portuguese motorway operator and a leading player in this sector in Europe. Brisa has currently around 3000 workers.

Our contact person at Brisa is Mr. Franco Caruso (Email: Franco.Caruso@brisa.pt). We received the following information about their internal alcohol policy:

"A broad programme to prevent the consumption of alcohol at work was launched in 2003. The purpose of this programme was to protect the workers' health as well as their safety, to which alcohol may be relevant. In accordance with internal regulations, created by Brisa and approved by the Institute for the Development and Inspection of Working Conditions (IDICT), 4655 alcohol tests were performed from March to December 2003, with a careful follow-up by Occupational Medicine. This programme for the prevention of the consumption of alcohol at work was continued in 2004, when 4129 alcohol tests were performed. Cases where alcohol levels were larger than the legally permitted were subject to follow up by Occupational Medicine. The programme was developed after a study about Brisa's workers food habits – including drinking – in coordination with the Portuguese ministry of Health. The alcohol tests are conducted by an independent Occupational Medicine agency, based on random calls, made after lunchtime. Every worker at Brisa, including members of the Board of Directors and Management, is subject to this program."

SPAIN

We had a contact with a representative of an organisation Alcohol y Sociedad, Mr Andres Bascones (a.bascones@alcoholysociedad). He stated that although alcohol is an issue in the workplace in Spain, there is not enough happening in this sphere.

The following are Spanish organisations that work in the sphere of the workplace and alcohol:

CC.OO. (Comisiones Obreras – labour commissions)

Contact person: Ms. Maria Torvisco

Email: mtorvisco@ccoo.es

Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT)

Email: info@cec.ugt.org

Unión Sindical Obrera (USO)

Email: uso@uso.es

An expert in the alcohol and the workplace in Spain is Mr. Esteban Agulló Tomás (estomas@correo.uniovi.es), but he did not reply to our mails.

SWEDEN

We contacted representatives of the Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs in Sweden (www.sorad.su.se) at the Stockholm University. It is a national centre opened to strengthen social research on alcohol and drugs in Sweden. Experts who are important in the field of alcohol and the

workplace are Bo Sandberg (Bo.Sandberg@sorad.su.se) and Börje Olsson (borje.olsson@sorad.su.se). They are responsible for projects in the alcohol and the workplace sphere at the Sorad. Unfortunately, we were not able to receive more details about projects, but the Sorad's website provides a good overview of their work. They also suggested contacting Alna for more information.

Alna in Sweden is an organisation that works on alcohol and drug prevention in workplaces. We contacted several departments of this organisation: National Office at alna.riks@alna.se, Stockholm Office alna.stockholm@alna.se and general information mail at info@alna.se. The contact person of Alna is Ms. Ingela Eriksson of Alna Stockholm (ingela.eriksson@alna.se), she gave us names of the Swedish companies that are members of Alna and have alcohol policies:

ICA AB

Retail Company

Tel: 08 587 519 65

Email: bjorn.olsson@ica.se

Systembolaget

Swedish Alcohol Retail Monopoly

Tel: 08 503 300 00

Email: kundtjanst@systembolaget.se

Elfa AB

Electronics Supplier

Tel: 08 580 941 00

Email: eva.norling@elfa.se

Jämtlands Flygflottilj Frösön

Swedish Armed Forces

Tel: 063 19 70 75

Email: exp@f4.mil.se

Forsmarks Kraftgrupp AV

Forsmark Power Plant

Tel: 0173 810 00

Email: cin@forsmark.vattenfall.se

We have contacted those companies with a question about their internal alcohol policies, but we have not received any reply until now.

UK

Among others, we contacted the Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS) in the UK (info@ias.org.uk) with the question about alcohol and the workplace. In response, we were sent to their website www.ias.org.uk to look at their fact sheets on this topic (more information in the chapter on the Internet search).

5. Examples of good practice

Example 1

Dealing with a drinking problem at the workplace. Tips for employers. (Source: www.acas.org.uk)

Where a worker's absences, deterioration in performance or even misconduct at work are due to consistent heavy drinking then it may be appropriate to treat the problem as one of illness. However, it is advisable to proceed with caution. The following steps should help:

- keep accurate, confidential records of instances of poor performance or other problems
- interview the worker in private. If the worker is actually drunk, wait until he or she is sober
- concentrate on the instances of poor performance that have been identified
- ask for the worker's reasons for poor performance and question whether it could be due to a 'health' problem, without specifically mentioning alcohol in the first instance
- discuss possible work-related causes such as excessive workload or too much responsibility
- if appropriate discuss the organisation's alcohol policy and the help available inside or outside the organisation
- agree future action
- arrange regular meetings to monitor progress and discuss any further problems if they arise.

Counselling for alcohol problems is a delicate process, and may best be tackled by a trained counsellor. In the first instance, the manager or the supervisor should discuss any problems with, for example, time keeping and/or performance. The worker may then be offered the opportunity to discuss any underlying cause, if appropriate, with a trained counsellor, possibly in the presence of the manager concerned. In some organisations the personnel department may have staff with the appropriate counselling skills; if not it may be helpful to contact one of the professional organisations mentioned. It is wise to check in advance what facilities are available in case they are needed.

Example 2

A straightforward **four-step process for dealing with alcohol problems at work** is set out below. All companies - large and small - can benefit from a policy on alcohol. (Source: www.hse.gov.uk)

Step 1 - Find out if there is a problem

- Problems may come from employees:
- drinking during working hours;
- drinking during breaks or before coming on shift;
- drinking heavily regularly, outside working hours;
- getting drunk outside working hours.

You may find it useful to find out from your employees what they know about the effects of alcohol on health and safety, what they feel currently about drinking alcohol during working hours and their understanding of any restrictions or rules on alcohol use in your business.

You may also want to explore the information you have on:

- sickness absence;
- productivity;
- accident records;
- disciplinary problems. This may help you to find out if alcohol is harming your business.

There are many reasons why someone develops a drinking problem. Working conditions - for example stress, excessive work pressure, unsocial hours or monotony - may be a factor in someone starting to drink more. Opportunity can also be a factor; for example in jobs where there is ready access to alcohol or where drinking and entertaining is a normal part of doing business. Lack of supervision combined with opportunities to drink during working hours may mean that a drinking problem goes unnoticed. People with drinking problems are not, however, the sole cause of alcohol-related problems at work. A business will suffer if any employee drinks during working hours in such a way that the work suffers, phones in sick after a heavy drinking session the night before, or comes to work with a hangover.

Step 2 - Decide what to do

A good start is to ask yourself the following four questions:

- Question 1: Am I happy for my employees to drink alcohol
 - ... during working hours?
 - ... during lunch and other breaks?
 - ... on special occasions?
 - ... when entertaining clients?
- Question 2: Do I expect the same from staff working in safety-sensitive jobs when it comes to not drinking alcohol as I do from staff working in non-safety-sensitive jobs or management positions?
- Question 3: How would I deal with an employee who is finding it difficult to control his or her drinking and whose work is suffering as a result?
- Question 4: How would I deal with an employee who turns up for work drunk or flouts known restrictions on drinking alcohol?

Dealing with an employee with a possible alcohol problem:

- Employees with a drink problem have the same rights to confidentiality and support as they would if they had any other medical or psychological condition.
- Disciplinary action should be a last resort. A court may find a dismissal unfair if an employer has made no attempt to help an employee whose work problems are related to drinking alcohol.
- The cost of recruiting and training a replacement may be greater than the cost of cost of allowing someone time off to obtain expert help.
- Many people with an alcohol problem are able in time to regain full control over their drinking and return to their previous work performance.
- It may be very difficult for people to admit to themselves or others that their drinking is out of control. They need to know that you will treat their drinking problem as a health problem rather than an immediate cause for dismissal or disciplinary action.
- If employees' drinking is a matter of concern, they should be encouraged to seek help from their GP or a specialist alcohol agency.

Consulting others

In deciding what to do, you will almost certainly need to consult others. In larger organisations, good practice would be to set up a working party led by a senior manager to look at the issue of alcohol as it affects the business, also involving the occupational health practitioner where available. This may not be feasible in smaller businesses, but you will find it useful to talk to:

- other managers;
- supervisors;
- staff representatives/trade union representatives;
- employees.

Step 3 - Taking action

In taking action, you need to ensure that you have the support of other managers and gain the support of your employees. The personal involvement of the boss will also make a huge difference when it comes to introducing any changes. The most important questions are:

- WHAT needs to be done?
- WHO needs to do it?

You also need to think about communication and training. How will current staff and any recruited in the future know the company's rules about drinking? Does anyone need more information or training?

Supervisors and other managers need to be clear about company rules and what to do if they suspect employees' drinking is affecting their work. They also need to be aware of the implications of not tackling possible alcohol misuse, especially where safety is an issue. Your local alcohol advisory service may be able to help train managers to recognise if someone has an alcohol problem and the best way to handle the situation. The service may charge for training. Many larger organisations have a policy that describes their position on employees' drinking. A written alcohol policy has many advantages, for example leaving less room for misunderstanding than an informal 'understanding'. A model alcohol policy is described in Box 4. It does not have to be a long or complicated document.

Model alcohol policy

A model workplace alcohol policy would cover the following areas.

- Aims
Why have a policy?
Who does the policy apply to?
(Note: best practice would be for the policy to apply equally to all grades of staff and types of work.)
- Responsibility
Who is responsible for implementing the policy?
(Note: all managers and supervisors will be responsible in some way but it will be more effective if a senior employee is named as having overall responsibility.)
- The rules
How does the company expect employees to behave to ensure that their alcohol consumption does not have a detrimental effect on their work?
- Special circumstances
Do the rules apply in all situations or are there exceptions?
- Confidentiality
A statement assuring employees that any alcohol problem will be treated in strict confidence.
- Help
A description of the support available to employees who have problems because of their drinking.
- Information
A commitment to providing employees with general information about the effects of drinking alcohol on health and safety.
- Disciplinary action
The circumstances in which disciplinary action will be taken.

Step 4 - Checking what you have done

As with any other kind of initiative, you should regularly check if it is working and whether any changes need to be made.

Summary checklist:

- Find out if you have a problem.
- Make a list of who you need to consult.
- Decide how your company expects employees to limit their drinking.
- Consider how you can make sure that if an employee has a possible alcohol problem, this is noticed and help is offered.
- Decide at what point and in what circumstances you will treat an employee's drinking as a matter for discipline rather than a health problem.
- Think about how you will let your workforce know about company policy on alcohol - consider introducing a formal written alcohol policy.
- Find out if any of your managers or other staff need more information or training.
- Consider providing staff with general information about alcohol and health.

Example 3

Developing and Implementing Alcohol Policy (Source: www.alcohol-services.co.uk)

When developing an alcohol and drug policy it is important that your business identifies its own particular needs and reflects these in the policy, taking into account present staff guidelines and contracts. What follows are key stages of developing and implementing your policy:

Set up a steering group

This group of staff will help develop the policy. It should include management, staff/union, personnel/human resources and occupational health.

Define objectives

What is the policy trying to achieve? How are you going to do this? Are there any issues specific to your organisation that need to be addressed? What is the overall time scale?

Consult the workforce

What are the current staff practices and/or attitudes? Are there pockets of concern or vulnerability?

Design and draft the policy

Organise necessary professional training and information. Decide who will write it and how it links in with current policies.

Further consultation

Have all parties read the policy and given feedback and where necessary, re-write policy.

Launch the policy

Have a formal launch of the new policy to ensure that all your staff is informed about it.

Training and education

Provide all the relevant training and education for all areas of the workforce.

A workplace alcohol and drug policy has many benefits, it can:

- Safeguard the health, safety and welfare of your employees
- Fulfil your legal duty of care
- Create a more productive environment
- Reduce the risks and accidents
- Reduce the cost of absenteeism
- Help you raise awareness, so your staff live healthier lives

Example 4

The **UK government's new alcohol harm-reduction strategy in the workplace** (Source: www.publichealth.nice.org.uk)

- Alcohol misuse leads to loss of productivity for the country and loss of employment opportunities for the individual. Alcohol misuse among employees costs up to £6.4bn in lost productivity through increased absenteeism, unemployment and premature death. It can also lead to unemployment and loss of quality of life for individual problem drinkers, who tend to stay in jobs for shorter periods than employees who do not misuse alcohol.
- There is a clear framework on health and safety, but less emphasis on general awareness. There is a clear framework in health and safety law, as well as in practices adopted by individual businesses, to ensure that alcohol does not cause accidents in the workplace. However, as well as being a health and safety issue, alcohol misuse is a major cause of absenteeism, lost productivity and profitability.

Employers need to know how to recognise when an employee has an alcohol problem and what actions to take and procedures to follow. The Department of Health and the Health and Safety Executive recommend that employers should have an alcohol policy setting out signs to look for and procedures to follow. While over half of employers do have an alcohol policy, and there are many examples of good practice, many of those who have no policy are likely to be small businesses who could benefit from advice on what to do.

Example 5

Contents of an alcohol policy (Source: www.seeda.co.uk)

Issues to be considered in a written policy:

- Introduction – including the reasons for such a policy;
- Aims and objectives of the policy – what should the policy achieve?;
- Responsibilities – of managers, supervisors and all employees;
- Definitions – e.g. dependency, illegal drugs, prescribed drugs;
- Rules – key rules that must be complied with;
- Confidentiality statement;
- Education – raising awareness of risks to staff;
- Training – to ensure consistent and fair application of the policy;
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – how help is provided;
- When disciplinary procedures may be used;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the policy.

Example 6

Key players in the area of alcohol and the workplace (Source: www.tuc.org.uk)

There are three key players in the area of alcohol and the workplace - government, employers and trade unions. The Trade Union Congress is calling on these players to undertake **four** key actions, which would like to see encompassed in the UK National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy. They are:

Government:

1. Provide and spread the use of occupational health services bearing in mind the needs of small and medium sized enterprises.
2. Take action against stress in the workplace, including regulatory action, guidance and enforcement to remove some of the main causes of work-related drinking.
3. Offer financial incentives for employers who take action to acknowledge that employers are providing a service to assist in what is also a wider social issue. This could be in the form of tax credits for those employers who provide an employee assistance programme or an occupational health service.
4. Fund research of the type indicated above.

Employers:

1. Adopt a holistic policy on alcohol in the workplace in partnership with unions.
2. Provide an assistance programme and/or an occupational health service.
3. Introduce a rehabilitation programme to assist members of staff back into the workforce or help them to remain as an effective contributor.
4. Adopt an approach to managing alcohol at work based on the HSE's guide to tackling any workplace risk - that is, measure, assess, remove the cause and treat and assist the person.

Unions:

1. Negotiate a policy etc with the employer and consult with their members on the issue of alcohol at work.
2. Train and provide information to trade union reps on how to deal with alcohol and work.
3. Raise awareness of the issue with their members.
4. Provide representation for members facing disciplinary hearings in relation to misuse of alcohol at work and to act as advocates for those in rehabilitation.

Example 7

Safety policy and guidance note of the University of the West of England - alcohol in the workplace (Source: <http://imp.uwe.ac.uk>)

Introduction

It is generally regarded that alcohol consumption can be a pleasurable and social activity. However, the workplace will often be an inappropriate place for the consumption of alcohol. The University, having licensed premises on its campuses selling alcohol, considers it appropriate to balance this availability of alcohol with guidance on its consumption by staff whilst at work.

Aim

The policy aims to address the effect of alcohol consumption on the occupational health and safety of those that have consumed alcohol and their impact on placing others at risk. The guidance outlines the risk, its control by management and indicators of risk factors for consideration.

Other issues of alcohol consumption will attract health promotion activity and health treatment and will be covered either explicitly or implicitly by other employment policies. These additional aims might be to:

- Promote the good health and well-being of employees
- Make known the harmful effects of the excessive consumption of alcohol
- Promote safe and sensible drinking habits
- Offer employees with alcohol-related problems affecting their work, referral to an appropriate agency for assistance

Statement

The University requires those who consume alcohol whilst working will do so sensibly and responsibly whilst ensuring that risks to safety are adequately controlled and their performance at work shall be unaffected by the alcohol. The University intends that alcohol-related matters be dealt with by the same risk assessment process as is applied to all its occupational risks.

Scope

This policy extends to all University staff whilst engaged in university work. Also, it is applicable to those others whose work under the University's control may affect the safety of the University's staff, students and visitors (e.g. contractors, suppliers).

Legal position

The University has a duty in civil and criminal law for the safety of its employees and for others affected by the University's activities. Consequently it will not permit an employee, or other person (see "scope") under its control, known to be under the influence of alcohol, to continue to work if to do so places that person or others at risk. Each employee has a personal duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions. Consequently, an employee must not consume alcohol during or before their work such that their work or conduct may risk harm to themselves or others.

6. Conclusion & recommendations

Based on a literature search of documents about alcohol and the workplace published after 1995, an extensive internet search and emailing contacts with over 100 specialists throughout the European Union, a picture was obtained regarding the situation on alcohol and the workplace in the European Union. It should be mentioned that this investigation has its limitations, because (1) available time did not allow us to extensively chase people who did not respond to our emails and (2) only documents were analysed which were published in English. Conclusions and recommendations should be assessed in this light.

In conclusion the following can be said:

Data provided by various sources clearly indicate that alcohol can cause problems in the workplace. It can create unsafe situation leading to accidents, and it can cause absenteeism, health risks and loss of productivity and profitability.

Fortunately, a lot has been done in the European Union to develop strategies to reduce alcohol related harm at the workplace. Sufficient research has been conducted and enough projects have been carried out to know what to do.

Most of the methods are based on the Harm Reduction philosophy e.g. focus on early interventions, desire to help people instead of dismissing them, etc. Often external agencies are hired to give advice and train companies on internal alcohol policies. Some companies, such as transportation companies, the health care sector, and the alcohol industry, choose for alcohol testing as an internal method of intervention against alcohol misuse in the workplace. This method may be appropriate for certain professions, but may create moral dilemmas within companies when employees are tested who do not endanger the lives of others when using alcohol.

Although we have come across a lot of positive developments, we also noticed that in some countries (almost) nothing is happening in the sphere of alcohol and the workplace: companies and institutions are not interested and are not working on this subject. Possible explanations may be found in cultural and historical background, lack of resources to develop internal alcohol policies and interventions and/or the fact that some organisations do not see the necessity of doing something about alcohol and the workplace, for example because they don't see a problem.

Although there is sufficient information available within the European Union to develop guidelines to create good (internal) alcohol policies in the workplace and to develop education for managers, policy makers, workers and all those who may be interested in this theme, there are still some important issues left:

- How to motivate companies which do not have an alcohol policy to get one?
- How come that subject of alcohol and the workplace is not high enough on the agenda of countries and companies in the European Union?

- Why is there a discrepancy between high costs of alcohol related harm in the workplace on the one hand and low interest of managers and politicians to do something about it on the other hand?

We therefore **recommend** to develop a project which would pay attention to analysing the above mentioned questions and which would develop a strategy on how to get the issue of alcohol and the workplace higher on the agenda. This would entail extensive conversations with Human Resource managers and policy makers. Such a project should include concrete recommendations on how to effectively implement policies and interventions which would reduce alcohol related harm at the workplace.