



Minutes of the Start up-Meeting WORKHEALTH

January 13-14, 2003
Berlin, BKK Bundesverband

Actions to be taken

Topic 1: Welcome and Introduction of Participants

The coordinators welcome the project partners. All participants give a short introduction of themselves. Some project partners are not able to attend the meeting (see annex 1). Karl Kuhn and Marc De Greef have to leave the meeting during the afternoon due to another meeting, Eleftheria Lehmann is expected to arrive in the evening.

Wolfgang Bödeker gives an introduction to the Federal Association of Company Health Insurance Funds (BKK Bundesverband). To explain its function and position he outlines the main characteristics and stakeholders of the German social insurance system (for slides presented during the meeting see annex 2).

The agenda is explained and adopted without changes.

All documents referred to in these minutes are provided as annexes.

Topic 2: Background

Health Monitoring in Europe: Wolfgang Bödeker gives an overview about the health monitoring programme by the European Commission. WORKHEALTH is among the last projects which are subsidised under the former action programme lasting from 1997 to 2002.

WORKHEALTH: The aims and work packages of WORKHEALTH as well as participating countries are pointed out (see annex 2). The budget calculation WORKHEALTH is based upon is explained. The slide concerning personnel costs contains two mistakes: The applicant's contribution should be 40% for all participants, moreover the figures in Yannis Tountas' row should be replaced with those in Marc De Greef's row and vice versa. The budget calculation as part of the project grant agreement is given in annex 3.

Julia Kreis presents a metaplan matrix for the collection of information about the current situation of work-related health monitoring in Europe. The participants are asked to answer the questions prepared (for results see below).

Topic 3: Objectives and Expectations of Participants

The proceeding for the collection of the participants' expectations is introduced (see annex 4) and it is agreed to carry out this group work in three groups which represent different professional perspectives the participants come from. Afterwards the results of each group are presented in the panel.

Summary: All in all, the participants express rather high expectations with regard to the project. Some of the major issues discussed are:

- 1) It is expected that WORKHEALTH should take a policy oriented approach. Starting from the demands at policy level, indicators should then be derived.
- 2) Elaborating on the comparability of data might be a cornerstone of WORKHEALTH as this is seen as a major problem by the participants. Especially between countries comparability often has to be questioned. However, data allow intranational comparisons and qualitative statements.

Two approaches for dealing with the problem of comparability are discussed: a) to focus more on survey data (rather than on data from administrative registers and statistics) and b) to be aware of the fact that no general comparability in a scientific way has to be given but rather an approximation.

It is suggested to try to incorporate some items of our interest in the new survey from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

- 3) It is crucial to define a unique selling point for the project; the WORKHEALTH issues are aimed to contribute to driving the agenda in the future.
- 4) Moreover, the evaluation of already existing systems in the synopses might be an added value for WORKHEALTH – if the systems are not only described, but also evaluated with respect to the information they contain.

A more detailed summary of the results is given in annex 4.

During the group work, all project partners filled out a questionnaire about their professional background. A compilation of these short biographies is given in annex 5.

Wolfgang Bodeker: contact Rob Anderson at EFILWC

Topic 4: Definition of Relevant Terms

It is pointed out that difficulties might arise from the fact that we have got different understandings of the same terms.

The coordinator points out the central concepts “work-relatedness” and “Public Health perspective” for which a common understanding within the project still has to be developed (for different interpretations see slides in annex 2). It is suggested to look at what we mean with “work” and e.g. “occupational health”, too.

It is decided to have a first try with already existing definitions (e.g., by WHO, ILO, OECD) in order to reach a common understanding for the most central concepts within the next months.

Coordinators: compile existing definitions for the most central concepts

Topic 5: Satellite Workshops

The function of the satellite workshops within work package II of the project together with the guiding questions is outlined (see annex 2).

Afterwards, the contents planned for the satellite workshops are presented by the organisers (see annex 2), except from the satellite “Public Health/ENWHP” which is presented by the coordinator as it is outlined in the paper “Satellite Workshops”.

Important aspects:

Labour Inspectorate

Eleftheria Lehmann is going to organise a national workshop in Germany first, in order to develop a national view, based on the 16 existing Labour Inspectorate institutions in Germany. This approach of standardisation within the member states is seen as an important added value of WORKHEALTH.

Eleftheria Lehmann is going to send out a questionnaire to the members of the Senior Labour Inspectorate Committee (SLIC) as well as to national Labour Inspectorate institutions in the member states to gain a supranational view. Participants are asked to provide her with the addresses for their respective countries.

For the satellite workshop it is planned to have guests from Labour Inspectorate institutions in Sweden, Poland and the Czech Republic.

all participants:
send addresses of Labour Inspectorate institutions to Eleftheria Lehmann

Social Insurance

It is decided that the Social Insurance Satellite will be linked to the Business Meeting of the Social Insurance Network ENSII and will take place following this.

During the first day, the need of indicators will be on the agenda; the second day will deal with the availability and quality of data.

Health and Safety at Work

The suggestion to merge the Health and Safety with the Public Health satellite is discussed. Arguments in favour for this are that, e.g., most items relevant for Public Health at the workplace are relevant for OSH, too, and that probably most of the indicators one will be talking about from these perspectives are the same. Some participants prefer to hold a common meeting for both of these perspectives (two full days altogether) which should then not be linked to the ENWHP Business Meeting in Athens as this would mean about 5 days in Athens. These aspects will be discussed and then decided together with Yannis Tountas, the organiser of the Public Health satellite.

Wolfgang Bödeker / Yannis Tountas: discuss date of Public Health satellite

Annex 6 gives an overview about the participation of all project partners at the satellite workshops.

Carlo Ottaviani presents the programme for the 6th International Congress on Work Injuries Prevention, Rehabilitation and Compensation which will be held by INAIL on 8th-11th June 2003. It is discussed in which way WORKHEALTH might be a topic at the congress. One idea is that a workshop might be held on work-related health monitoring. Input delivered by WORKHEALTH might be a presentation of the project and of the synopsis. It is suggested to involve other international institutions such as PAHOO, Canadian working groups and the WHO.

Topic 6: Project Organisation

Time schedule

The time schedule for WORKHEALTH is presented.

It is announced that Wolfgang Bödeker and Julia Kreis will send out a list which compiles the indicator systems of work-related health monitoring identified so far. Participants are asked to indicate further indicator systems known by them.

all participants:
comment on the list of indicator systems to be sent out bei Wolfgang Bödeker and Julia Kreis and indicate further systems

How to meet?

It is decided not to include weekend days in the meetings due to the already heavy workload during the week.

This might cause problems with the WORKHEALTH budget, as this is based upon the Apex fares which require an overnight stay at the destination from Saturday to Sunday. Participants are asked to check the possibility of booking cross-flights to get the Apex fare, as this is often still cheaper than a normal fare ticket.

Generally, participants are asked to give an early note to Wolfgang Bödeker or Julia Kreis in case they will have to exceed the Apex fares which are listed in the grant agreement for each participating country (see annex 3).

In case it is not possible to hold the meetings without using the Apex fare due to the higher costs, alternative dates which include the weekend are listed below together with the intended

all participants:
indicate early on if
Apex fares have to
be exceeded

Where to meet?

Some participants point out that Berlin is not the most comfortable and cheap venue for some participants, as there are for example no direct flights from Reykjavik as well as from Dublin. However, as the calculation is based on Berlin and as organising the event here is cheap and simple compared to other places, we will stick to Berlin as the venue.

How to meet?

The participants expressed their preference of meetings for two half days compared to one whole day. It is decided that they shall last from 14:00h to 14:00h in the future.

Dates for future workshops:

Workshop	Date	Place
Synopsis	09.-10.04.2003 (two half days) <i>no alternative</i>	Berlin
Satellite 1: Public Health/ENWHP	not yet decided; possibly merged with Satellite „Safety & Health at Work“	
Satellite 2: Safety & Health at Work	06.-07.10.2003 (two full days if merged with Satellite 1) <i>alternative: 03.-04.10.2003</i>	not yet decided
Satellite 3: Social Insurance (Parts A&B)	17.-18.09.2003 (two full days, following the ENSII-Business Meeting) <i>no alternative</i>	Stockholm
Satellite 4: Labour Inspectorate	01.-02.12.2003 (two half days) <i>no alternative</i>	Berlin
Indicators & Definition	02.-03.02.2004 (two half days) <i>no alternative</i>	Berlin (?)
Final Workshop	14.-15.06.2004 (two half days) <i>no alternative</i>	Berlin or Luxembourg (?)

Topic 7: Miscellaneous

It is agreed that a webpage for WORKHEALTH is not necessary at the moment.

The coordinators offer to serve as an email distribution point.

Eleftheria Lehmann suggests to agree on a common structure for the reports which will be composed by the satellite organisers about their workshops. She offers to send a proposal for a structure which follows the logic of the ECHI-report.

Eleftheria

Lehmann:

send a proposal
for a report
structure to
Wolfgang Bödeker

Topic 8: Summary – Current situation of work-related health monitoring in Europe.

The information given with coloured dots on the metaplan-matrix is summarised. The big majority of cells contain green dots which indicate that information is already available in the respective country. Participants give some more background information about the situation in their countries.

In Denmark there is a lot of data available from register data and surveys. Some of this might also be available in English. The same applies to Finland. Since a few years, also health interviews are held. Very much information is available, partly also in English. In the Netherlands, a lot of questionnaire-based information exist. However, for example information concerning the working conditions and preventive measures are collected on a voluntary basis and therefore not very reliable. Concerning occupational diseases there is a severe underreporting, as they do not imply any consequences for compensation. In Italy there is a complex and reliable system of notification for occupational diseases. INAIL is the only institution with respective figures – some of it might be available in English. Ireland also suffers from a tremendous underreporting with respect to occupational diseases. In Germany a very good register exists, but it might not represent what happens at the workplace. In Austria a lot of data from registers are available and also from the microcensus; available data on sick leave are of good quality, too. In Greece, administrative registers and statistics also show serious underreporting concerning work accidents and occupational diseases. In Iceland underreporting is a problem, too, as occupational diseases – as in the Netherlands – have no consequences in compensation.

All in all, this background information shows that the situation underlying the green dots is very different in the respective countries. Therefore, the green dots only really indicate that something is going on in the country. The next step should then be to ask whether this is optimal. Even in Finland, where a lot of effort is put into this subject, this is often not the case.

It is suggested to elaborate on this matrix as it might be an interesting tool, also to initiate discussion within the countries. A possible result might be one page per country with a short evaluation of the situation (i.e. comments on the quality of the information).

The matrix is reproduced in annex 7. Information about the situation in Finland and Iceland that were provided by Kari Kurppa and Sigurdur Thorlacius are attached as annex 8.

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