

The World Day for Safety and Health at Work in Moldova



The World Day for Safety and Health at Work (OSH Day) is an international campaign initiated by the ILO to promote safe, healthy and decent work. Celebrated on 28 April, it aims to reduce the incidence of work-related accidents and diseases each year, including HIV/AIDS. The theme for the OSH Day in 2009 is: Health and life at work – A basic human right. OSH day stresses the prevention of occupational accidents and disease, and the protection of workers' health and safety.

For this year's celebration in Moldova the ILO National Coordinator, the ILO/GTZ HIV/AIDS project team in Moldova, together with the National Confederation of Trade Unions and Government representatives, organized two roundtables to discuss issues related to recently adopted Occupational Safety and Health Law and its implementation; inform workers about health protection at work, and encourage employers to include HIV/AIDS prevention into existing occupational health and safety programmes.

On 24 and 28 April Labour Inspection representatives delivered presentations on recently adopted OSH Law, on new regulations with reference to law enforcement and its efficient implementation. Ministry of Health representatives also provided valuable inputs towards collaboration between labour and health sector institutions concerned with occupational safety and health.

These events highlighted the importance of OSH subject and discussed the main national framework barriers towards ensuring safety and health at work. Every participant received a file with information on ILO conventions, OSH and HIV/AIDS, the ILO Code of Practice in the world of work, OSH Law. As an output of the meeting on 24 April, Labour Inspection concluded a framework of collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Human Rights Centre, Confederation of Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations. Participants agreed that OSH subjects are very important and found it important to coordinate actions in efficiently implementing the OSH Law taking into account each stakeholder's contribution. In addition, the Ministry of Health representatives informed the audience about a new Centre to be created according to a new adopted Law on 10 February 2009 on public health state monitoring. This new institution shall deal with risk assessment of people at the work place. At the moment, the Ministry of Health is developing normative acts to support the Law nr. 10 of February 2009.

On 28 April the trade unions jointly with the ILO organised a public event on OSH with special focus on the risks and human costs of labour accidents and professional injuries on the job. They deliberated on how risks can be prevented and how commitments should be shared by both government, trade unions and employers' organizations.

The ILO national coordinator delivered a message on behalf of the ILO sharing its values on the issue and reiterating the need of prevention in OSH matters.

The events were attended by around 200 participants including government, trade unions, employers' organizations, civil society, WHO, etc.

OSH and HIV/AIDS workplace policies

In compliance with the DWCP in Moldova Priority 3, Outcome 2, raising awareness on HIV/AIDS workplace policies has been conducted. In partnership with the ILO/GTZ project, around 200 participants from the world of work and health sectors were informed about the spread of HIV and its impact on Moldova's labour force, and about the design and implementation of workplace policies on HIV/AIDS.

HIV represents an occupational risk both for workers who have direct contact with blood and body fluids, and for some workers in the formal and informal economy, where the risk of contracting HIV appears not as a result of direct working activity, but due to the unfavorable conditions it take place in. For example, spending long periods away from home makes drivers, seafarers, uniformed services more vulnerable to HIV; and limited access to information and lack of social protection puts migrant workers under a higher risk of HIV infection.

The April issue of the Occupational Health and Safety magazine in Moldova prepared and published an article on OSH International Day, national OSH statistics and raised awareness on HIV/AIDS epidemic impact on the world of work and efficient ways to tackle the problem along with other health related matters.

According to the ILO Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, HIV/AIDS should be recognized as a workplace issue, and treated like any other serious illness/condition in the workplace. The workplace has a big role to play in the global fight against the spread of epidemic, and the programmes on promoting health at work can represent a starting point for the awareness raising campaigns on HIV/AIDS. The ILO encourages employers' representatives to organize activities on informing employees about HIV/AIDS at the workplace within the Safety and Health at Work events.

The International Labour Organization offered technical support to national partners to organize these events, by covering costs and providing inputs to event programme design and organization.