A guide to developing, implementing, maintaining and updating an OiRA tool for your sector

Step 1: Preparation and development of an OiRA tool

1. Put together a project team which could consist of:

- Stakeholders al the level of the sector organisations (employers and employees organisations)
- The labour inspectorate (to help identify the main risks in the sector,…)
- OSH-experts in the sector: a specialist in working conditions in the sector
- The end-users: employers and employees in micro and small enterprises
- Sector specialist: one who knows the sector, possibly a policy officer from the sector and who also manages the project

2. Draw up a project plan with the following aspects elaborated specifically for your sector:

    - Determining selection criteria and approaching companies for participation in pilot tests.
    - Listing the most important sector risks on the basis of the information available: company visits, discussions, collective labour agreement or health and safety agreements, etc.
    - Listing available and feasible solutions for sector risks.
    - Discussing/testing the draft OiRA tool in the project team.
    - Companies carry out pilot tests involving employers and employees.
    - Communication to the sector: employers and employees.
    - Agreeing on the distribution and implementation in the sector and on maintenance and updating of the OiRA tool.

3. Needless to say: make it as easy as possible for the end-users (companies (management / executives) and employees) to participate actively in the development by asking them what they think are the most important working processes and occupational risks in the sector, what the OiRA tool must be able to do for them, what benefits it will bring them and what practical solutions they have.

4. Ensure that pilot tests by employers and employees form part of the development process. Always check the following:

    - does the tool meet the programme of requirements, for example

- is the scope good?
- is there a balance between 'completeness' and 'focus and feasibility'?
- is it user-friendly?
- does the tool find the priority risks, does it distinguish well between the presence and absence of risks and are any risks well covered by suitable measures?
- are there tips for additional practical solutions?

Step 2: Implementation of the OiRA tool in your sector

A correct implementation of the OiRA tool will ensure that it will be used by employers/employees and applied on the shop floor.

1. Differentiate by actor
   The employer is obliged to have an up-to-date risk assessment. However employees, prevention staff, staff representatives, etc. all influence the use and application of the risk assessment. It is therefore important to approach these groups as well.

2. Written and digital communication channels
   There are many different communication channels that can be used e.g. articles in periodical sector newsletters and journals, letters, e-mail messages, information on employers` organisations websites, etc.

3. Use of language, obligation or help for companies

   Carrying out a risk assessment is a legal obligation and takes time. Generally speaking the law is not a source of inspiration for the employer. But the obligation to carry out a risk assessment can also be put forward in a positive light. Try to adapt your approach to the perceptions of the employer, use language he/she will understand and emphasize the sector-specific nature of the tool.

4. Give support

   Offering workshops about filling in the OiRA tool can persuade employers to start to use the digital tool and also provide feedback to the developers on what statements raise questions and facilitate the improvement of the tool.

5. Employer and employees

   After the risk assessment has been carried out, employees often have to do their work differently. So support from them is extremely important. The first step is for employees to be aware of the risks involved in their work. If only for this reason the employer should involve employees when dealing with the hazard identification step, making plans and developing practical solutions for problems that come to light when the risk assessment is carried out. This also makes it more likely that the proposed solutions will indeed be practicable.

Step 3: Maintenance and updating of the sector-specific OiRA tool

OiRA tools have to be maintained and updated periodically.

Maintenance implies minor changes for example, as a result of teething problems or comments from the users.

Updating involves more fundamental changes to the OiRA tool, for example if legislation changes, or new working processes and technologies are adopted in the sector that entail significant new risks at work.

The developers can decide at any time to update their OiRA tool. However, we recommend updating a tool only when major changes have to be introduced (e.g. new risks, legislation, etc.).

OiRA end-users will be notified of any update through the OiRA tool itself.

All OiRA tools have a 2 year expiry date from the latest publish date and EU-OSHA will remind account holders about the need to review the tool at this time. The procedure is as follows:

Three months before the expiry date, the developer receives a notification from EU-OSHA informing them that they must review the validity to their OiRA tool and including a link to a form which they must fill in.

1. The developer checks the tool and clicks on the appropriate box in the link included in the email sent by EU-OSHA:

   - The OiRA tool is still up-to-date.

   - The OiRA tool has been modified or updated in anyway (end users will be alerted that the tool has been modified).

   - The OiRA tool is no longer relevant and will not be used any further (end users will have access to saved sessions of the RA but won't be able to create new ones).

2. If there is no response from the account holder, EU-OSHA will send an email informing them that their tool has reached its expiry date without having been reviewed. They will be invited to access the OiRA tool generator to review the tool. Failure to do so will lead to EU-OSHA freezing the tool.