

# Social Affairs

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## HEALTH AND SAFETY AT THE WORKPLACE – GENERAL FRAMEWORK

**Council Directive ([89/391/EEC](#)) of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the health and safety of workers at work**

### Objective

To introduce measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work.

### Relevance for the hospitality industry

As the European hospitality sector employs around 9 million workers, this Directive is of particular relevance for the hotel, restaurant and café sector.

### State of progress

The Council Directive was adopted on 12 June 1989. Member States had until 31 December 1992 to comply with the Directive.

On the basis of this Framework Directive, the Commission adopted on 11 March 2002 a new Communication ([COM\(2002\) 118 final](#)) on Adapting to change in work and society: a new Community strategy on health and safety at work 2002-2006.

### Content

The Directive is to be applied to all sectors of activity, both public and private. It shall not be applicable where characteristics peculiar to certain specific public service activities, such as the armed forces or the police, or to certain specific activities in the civil protection services, inevitably conflict with it.

This Framework Directive provides for:

- general obligations on employers (such as avoiding risks, adapting to technical progress, giving appropriate instructions to workers, etc...);
- protective and preventive services;
- measures in relation to first aid, fire-fighting and evacuation of workers, serious danger;
- worker information;
- consultation and participation of workers;
- training of workers; and
- workers' obligations.

Several directives dealing with specific horizontal or sectoral aspects of health and safety at the workplace (the so called individual directives) have been adopted on the basis of this Framework Directive (see official references).

For a summary of this Directive you can visit the [SCADplus](#) website (European Commission)

The Commission Communication first underlines that, considering the changes in society and in the world of work, the Community policy on health and safety should have the following up-to-date objectives:

- a continuous reduction in occupational accidents and illnesses;

- mainstreaming the gender dimension into risk evaluation, preventive measures and compensation arrangements;
- prevention of social risks;
- taking into account demographic changes in terms of risks, accidents and illnesses;
- taking into account changes in forms of employment, work organisation and working time; and
- taking into account the size of firms.

On this basis, the Communication promotes, in a first part, the strengthening of the prevention and the adaptation of the legal and institutional framework. The Communication emphasizes the role of the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work with regard to improve the collection of data and the dissemination of best practices. At the same time, the Commission will draw up guidelines on how to apply the directives and examine the adaptation of the existing legislation to emerging problems.

In a second part, the Communication encourages innovative approaches and voluntary agreements concluded by the social partners. In this context, the employment guidelines will include from 2003 national quantified objectives for reducing accidents at work and occupational illnesses.

### **HOTREC position**

HOTREC fully shares the concerns of the European institutions in relation to the health and safety of workers, but is of the opinion that these issues are better dealt with at national level.

### **Official references**

Council Directive ([89/391/EEC](#)) of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the health and safety of workers at work, O.J. L 183, 29.6.1989.

Commission Communication ([COM\(2002\) 118 final](#)) of 11 March 2002 on Adapting to change in work and society: a new Community strategy on health and safety at work 2002-2006

### See also

*Directives adopted on the basis of Council Directive 89/391/EEC:*

- Directive [2004/37/EC](#) on the risk from carcinogens, O.J. L 204
- Directive [2000/54/EC](#) on the risk from biological agents at work, O.J. L 262
- Directive [99/92/EC](#) on explosive atmospheres, O.J. L 23, 28.1.2000.
- Directive [98/24/EC](#) on the risks from chemical agents, O.J. L 131, 5.5.1998.
- Directive [94/33/EC](#) of 22 June 1994 on the protection of young people at work, O.J. L 216, 20.8.1994.
- Directive [92/85/EEC](#) on pregnant workers, O.J. L 348, 28.11.1992.
- Directive [92/58/EEC](#) on safety and health signs, O.J. L 245, 26.8.1992.
- Directive [91/383/EEC](#) on the protection of temporary workers, O.J. L 206, 29.7.1991.
- Directive [90/269/EEC](#) on manual handling of heavy loads, O.J. L 156, 21.6.1990
- Directive [90/270/EEC](#) on work with visual display units, O.J. L 156, 21.6.1990,
- Directive [89/656/EEC](#) on personal protective equipment, O.J. L 393, 30.12.1989.
- Directives [89/655/EEC](#) and [95/63/EC](#) on work equipment, O.J. L 335, 30.12.1995.
- Directive [89/654/EEC](#) on minimum requirements, O.J. L 393, 30.12.1989.