

Awarded! Social Partnership Alliance for Health and Safety in Hamburg

Nov 26, 2013



On Thursday 24 October 2013, during the European Week for Safety and Health at Work, the Hamburg OSH Partnership held an event to celebrate its winning of a European Good Practice Award 2013 and to further promote the campaign of “Working together for risk prevention”.

Following their success in the national and European Good Practice competitions, the European Award has been handed over to the Hamburg OSH Partnership by European Commissioner Lázló Andor and EU-OSHA Director Christa Sedlatschek in the European Award Ceremony in Dublin in April this year. The event in Hamburg has been organised in order to recognise all national partners in a decent ceremony and further stimulate the exchange of good practices.

Mrs. Cornelia Prüfer-Storcks, Minister for Health and Consumer Affairs of the federal state of Hamburg, opened the event, outlining the outstanding results already achieved by the OSH Partnership since its foundation through a formal agreement 10 years ago. Dr. Dietmar Elsler gave a presentation on behalf of EU-OSHA showing the results of the Campaign throughout Europe and explaining more in detail the criteria of the Good Practice Awards Jury which led them to reward the Hamburg Partnership as a European winner. The partnership represents a very good practical solution for reaching many sectors and above all SMEs to implement OSH-prevention as a permanent component of the company leadership strategy. All single projects have involved close collaboration of management, employees and social partners. The example meets and exceeds all demands of the EU-OSHA concerning good practices.

In a grand hand-over ceremony, minister Prüfer-Storcks and Dr. Elsler handed over the award certificates to the seven partner organisations:

- Hamburg Chamber of skilled Crafts (KöR)
- German Trade Unions Association Hamburg (workers)
- Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs – Labour Inspection
- Hamburg Chamber of Trade (KöR)
- UVNord - Association of Employers in Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein e.V. (employers)
- Association of Hamburg based Industries
- German Accident Insurance Company - Regional Association Northwest

The Partnership has developed solutions for specific problems affecting small and medium-sized businesses in particular. Measures were implemented in pilot companies involving both management and employees. As a result a preventive OSH strategy was developed and implemented through a number of successful projects in the city. One collaborative scheme developed risk assessments in outpatient care, providing practical assistance for 350 health care businesses in Hamburg. With the help of a moderator, management and employees were involved in identifying problems, implementing solutions and checking their effectiveness. Around 1,300 garages and car repair workshops in Hamburg, which since 2005 have had to comply with the Dangerous Substances Directive, were assisted through a toolkit guide on how to deal with hazardous substances. The toolkit described the correct behaviour for any activity involving hazardous substances.

The Hamburg OSH Partnership and EU-OSHA are both interested to continue their collaboration in future projects, such as developing interactive risk assessment tools for SMEs (OiRA) and exchange of good practices in several sectors.