

## National strategies in the field of OSH in the EU – BULGARIA

### Country Overview

Information source: <https://oshwiki.osha.europa.eu/en/themes/national-osh-strategy-bulgaria>.

Indicator name	
<b>Basic information</b>	<p><b>Current strategy</b></p> <p>Original version: <a href="#">Национална програма за безопасност и здраве при работа 2022-2024</a> (In English: National Programme for Occupational Safety and Health 2022-2024, English version not available)</p> <p>In Bulgaria, the national policy on safety and health at work is developed and implemented on the basis of trilateral cooperation at national, sectoral and regional level. The National Council on Working Conditions (NCWC) is the standing body responsible for coordination, consultation and cooperation for the development and implementation of occupational safety and health policy at national level.</p> <p>The NOSH 2022-2024 reflects the trends set out in the National Programme for Safety and Health at Work 2018-2020. It further develops the priorities of the NOSH 2018-2020 and ensures a continuity with the guidelines of the previous 'EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020'.</p>
<b>Background</b>	<p>In line with the priorities set out in the EU Strategic Framework and following a thorough analysis and report of the National Programme for Safety and Health at Work 2018-2020, the National Council on Working Conditions (Националният съвет по условия на труд) decided to develop a new National Programme for Safety and Health at Work (NOSH) 2022-2024. Its development takes into account national labour market problems and challenges and has been carried out in dialogue and with the input of employee and employers' representative organisations as well as all relevant institutions.</p>
<b>Characteristics and objectives</b>	<p>In accordance with a decision of the National Council for Working Conditions, an interinstitutional working group has been set up to develop the current National Programme for Safety and Health at Work 2022-2024. The vision of the NOSH is "Improving health and safety at work for every worker and at every workplace".</p> <p>The NOSH Programme implements activities in line with two strategic objectives and six operational objectives:</p> <p>Strategic objective 1. Managing the changes in the new world of work brought about by the green digital and demographic transitions.</p> <p>Operational objective 1.1. Improving OSH legislation.</p>

	<p>Operational objective 1.2. Ensuring effective and efficient enforcement of OSH legislation.</p> <p>Operational objective 1.3. Information provision on OSH policy.</p> <p>Strategic objective 2. Improving prevention of work-related diseases and accidents.</p> <p>Operational objective 2.1. Raising awareness and promoting the prevention of occupational risks.</p> <p>Operational objective 2.2. Extending the role of social dialogue to better protect against workplace risks.</p> <p>Operational objective 2.3. Increase preparedness for possible future health crises.</p> <p>The action plan includes information about the responsible body, the time frame as well as the budget for the activity.</p>
<p><b>Details and activity</b></p>	<p><b>Strategic objective 1. Managing the changes in the new world of work brought about by the green digital and demographic transitions.</b></p> <p><b>Operational objective 1.1. Improving OSH legislation</b></p> <p><i>Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonising occupational exposure limit values for chemical agents and carcinogenic, mutagenic, reprotoxic substances at the workplace, in accordance with the amendments to the Directives on the protection of the health and safety of workers from risks related to exposure to chemical agents and exposure to carcinogenic, mutagenic, reprotoxic substances.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: MLSP/MH. Implementation: In accordance with the deadlines laid down in the EU Directives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonising national OSH legislation according to the amendments to the Directive on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: MLSP/MH. Implementation: In accordance with the deadlines laid down in the EU Directives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonising national OSH legislation in accordance with amendments to the Directive on minimum safety and health requirements for the workplace.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: MLSP/MH. Implementation: 2024</i></p>

- Harmonising national OSH legislation in line with amendments to the Directive on minimum safety and health requirements when working with display screen equipment.

*Responsibility: MLSP/MH. Implementation: 2024*

- Optimising the implementation and documentation of OSH training related to digital transition.

*Responsibility: MLSP, social partners. Implementation: June 2023*

- Improving the regulatory framework for teleworking.

*Responsibility: MLSP, social partners. Implementation: 2023-2024*

- Improving the system of compulsory preliminary and periodic medical examinations of employees.

*Responsibility: MLSP, MH, social partners. Implementation: 2022*

**Operational objective 1.2. Ensuring effective and efficient enforcement of OSH legislations**

*Actions*

- Strengthening the administrative capacity of the General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency GLI EA.

*Responsibility: GLI EA. Implementation: 2022*

- Carrying out effective workplace inspections.

*Responsibility: GLI EA. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Implementation of new and flexible forms of inspection.

*Responsibility: GLI EA. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Improving the interaction between trade unions and the General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency for effective workplace inspections.

*Responsibility: GLIA EA, social partners. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Investigation of accidents.

*Responsibility: MIA, FSPP, GLI EA, MEW/REWI, employers. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Joint participation of inspectors in national control campaigns and (pilot) projects, incl. ECHA.

*Responsibility: REWI, GLI EA, RHI. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Conducting regulatory compliance checks at the offices and laboratories of the Environmental Executive Agency (EEA).

*Responsibility: OSH responsible of the EEA, OOM experts. Implementation: annually*

- Carrying out permanent control of compliance with occupational safety and health legislation in the State Aviation Operator.

*Responsibility: State Aviation Operator. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Carrying out effective workplace inspections, training and control of OSH knowledge at the National Railway Infrastructure Company State Enterprise.

*Responsibility: NRIC SE. Implementation: 2022-2024*

### **Operational objective 1.3. Providing information on OSH policy**

#### *Actions*

- Processing and systematisation of statistical and operational information on accidents at work and occupational diseases.

*Responsibility: NSSI. Implementation: Quarterly and annual for the operational information and 18 months after the end of the reference period – for the finalised statistics of occupational accidents.*

- Processing and publication of information on temporary disability.

*Responsibility: NSSI. Implementation: Quarterly and annual information.*

- Disseminating OSH information materials, guides to good practice, risk assessment tools, etc. in the education sector.

*Responsibility: MES, RDE. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Providing information in compliance with the legislation in the field of OSH.

*Responsibility: State Aviation Operator. Implementation: ongoing*

- Raising awareness on managing occupational risks for older workers.

*Responsibility: FWC, social partners. Implementation: 2023-2024*

**Strategic objective 2. Improving the prevention of work-related diseases and accidents**

**Operational objective 2.1. Raising awareness and promoting prevention of occupational risks.**

*Actions*

- Supporting practices aimed at combatting the informal economy and undeclared work in companies by using the possibility provided in Article 114a (1) of the Labour Code.

*Responsibility: GLI EA. Implementation: 2022*

- Raising awareness with information material on the rights and obligations of workers and employers in Bulgaria.

*Responsibility: GLI EA. Implementation: 2022*

- Developing guidelines to prevent of work-related musculoskeletal disorder.

*Responsibility: FWC, social partners. Implementation: 2023*

- Raising awareness of work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

*Responsibility: MLSP/MH, social partners. Implementation: 2022*

- Raising awareness of OSH risks in the context of digitalisation.

*Responsibility: MLSP/MH, social partners. Implementation: 2023-2024*

- Encouraging employers to improve working conditions in companies, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

*Responsibility: FWC/employers. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Maintaining and improving internal OSH regulation within the system of the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Education and Science.

*Responsibility: MES/RDE. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Raising awareness related to the severity of work-related diseases and disabilities and the prevention of occupational risks.

*Responsibility: NCPHA, MH. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Increase the competence of managers and employees to enhance social dialogue in the implementation of OSH legislation.

*Responsibility: Working Conditions Fund/social partners. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Conducting training seminars related to dangerous substances for the industry and for the central and regional control authorities.

*Responsibility: MEW/MH, REWI, GLI EA, RHI, social partners. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Raising awareness and promoting prevention of occupational risks in the State Aviation Operator.

*Responsibility: State Aviation Operator. Implementation: 2024*

- Improving the awareness and competence of workers to ensure occupational health and safety with the aim of preventing occupational hazards in the National Railway Infrastructure Company State Enterprise.

*Responsibility: NRIC SE, MTC. Implementation: 2022-2024*

- Increasing the competence of employers and workers to manage psychosocial risks in the public administration.

*Responsibility: social partners/FWC. Implementation: 2023-2024*

- Increasing the competence of employers and workers on risk assessment and specific prevention solutions for people with “short stature”.

*Responsibility: social partners/FWC. Implementation: 2023-2024*

- Providing health surveillance in high-risk sectors.

*Responsibility: FWC/MH. Implementation: 2023-2024*

- Rehabilitation and reintegration of workers following an occupational accident or disease.

*Responsibility: NSSI. Implementation: 2022-2024*

**Operational objective 2.2. Strengthening the social dialogue to improve occupational health and safety**

*Actions*

- Development of sectoral/branch social dialogue in the field of occupational health and safety.

	<p><i>Responsibility: social partners/sectoral/sectoral councils. Implementation: 2022-2024</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the role of collective bargaining by industry/branch to improve OSH.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: social partners/sectoral/branch councils. Implementation: 2022-2024</i></p> <p><b>Operational objective 2.3. Increase preparedness for possible future health crises</b></p> <p><i>Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the risk of spreading infections, including workplaces.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: all control bodies. Implementation: 2022-2024</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations for enhancing the health and work ability of healthcare workers to deal with possible future health crises.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: NCPHA, MH. Implementation: 2022-2024</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop plans and programmes to deal with possible future health crises in the education sector.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility: MES, RDE. Implementation: persisting in an epidemiological situation.</i></p>
<p><b>Actors and stakeholders</b></p>	<p>The Council of Ministers determines the government policy in the field of occupational safety and health in the Republic of Bulgaria.</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) is part of the Council of Ministers. MLSP designs, directs, coordinates and implements the government policy for ensuring occupational safety and health.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health (MH) (Министерство на здравеопазването) manages and coordinates the policy and activities on protection and improvement of health at work. The Ministry of Health cooperates with MLSP in elaborating laws and norms and coordinates occupational health services. The Ministry of Health includes following institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Health Inspectorates (RHI)</li> <li>National Centre of Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA)</li> <li>National Centre for Radiobiology and Radiation Protection (NCRRP).</li> </ul> <p>The General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency GLI EA (Изпълнителна агенция "Главна инспекция по труда" - ИА "ГИТ") is subordinated to MLSP. GLI EA exercises overall control for compliance with the labour legislation on ensuring health and safety at work and on employment relations, as well as specialised control under the Employment Promotion Act and the other</p>

	<p>statutory instruments on employment and unemployment containing explicit provisions to that end.</p> <p>The effective trilateral cooperation at national, sectoral and regional level is an important factor for the implementation of the national occupational safety and health policy. The National Council on Working Conditions is a permanent body at the national level for coordination, consultation and cooperation in designing and implementing the policy for ensuring safety and health at work.</p> <p>Other bodies involved in the action plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRIC - State Enterprise "National Railway Infrastructure Company"</li> <li>• GLI EA - Executive Agency "Main Labour Inspectorate"</li> <li>• EEA - The Environmental Executive Agency</li> <li>• MIA- Ministry of Internal Affairs</li> <li>• MH - Ministry of Health</li> <li>• MES - Ministry of Education and Science</li> <li>• MEW - Ministry of Environment and Water - Ministry of Environment and Water</li> <li>• MLSP - Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</li> <li>• MTC - Ministry of Transport and Communications</li> <li>• MoF - Ministry of Finance</li> <li>• NSSI - National Insurance Institute</li> <li>• NCPHA - National Center for Public Health and Analysis</li> <li>• FSSP - Fire safety and protection of the population</li> <li>• RHI - Regional Health Inspection</li> <li>• REWI - Regional Environment and Water Inspection</li> <li>• RDE - Regional Directorate of Education</li> <li>• OOM - Office of Occupational Medicine</li> <li>• FWC - Fund "Working Conditions".</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources and timeframe</b></p>	<p>Time frame: 2022 - 2024</p> <p>Resources: The financing of the action plan will be charged to the budget of the involved bodies (see action plan) and the Working Conditions Fund.</p> <p>No additional expenditure is foreseen from the state budget for the implementation of the programme.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>The current National Programme for safety and health 2022-2024 includes an analysis of the situation and trends of the Bulgarian working condition as well as an analysis of the previous strategy.</p> <p>NPBZR prepared a detailed report on the implementation of the National Programme for Safety and Health at Work 2018 – 2020[3].</p> <p>The report consists of two parts. In the first part, a brief description of the results in the indicated priority areas is given, and in the second part, the degree of implementation of the relevant activities/measures is presented in tabular form.</p>

	<p>Indicators for the implementation of the National Programme for Safety and Health at Work 2022-2024 are listed in the action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of OELs/number of new OELs for chemicals</li> <li>• Number of legal acts issued</li> <li>• Number of training sessions carried out for inspectors</li> <li>• Number of workplace inspections</li> <li>• Number of information material available (OSH policy)</li> <li>• Number of published OSH material (videos, brochures, webinars)</li> <li>• Number of national events (conferences, seminars, campaigns)</li> <li>• Number of OSH trainings</li> <li>• Number of studies and analysis</li> <li>• Number of workers undergoing rehabilitation</li> <li>• Number of employees covered by medical surveillance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relationship to EU Strategic Framework</b></p>	<p>The Bulgarian National Programme for Safety and Health at Work 2022-2024 is in line with the priorities set out in the EU Strategic Framework.</p> <p><b>Key objective 1 of the EU Strategic Framework</b> (Anticipating and managing change) is covered by the operational objective 1.1 and following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modernising and simplifying EU OSH rules in the context of the green and digital transitions is covered by action 4, 5, 26</li> <li>• Focus on psychosocial risks mental health problems is covered by action 34</li> <li>• Focus on ergonomic risks related to the digitalisation is covered by action 24, 25</li> <li>• Demographic change – labour market participation of older workers is covered by action 21, and by operational objective 2.1: active ageing, adapt the working environment to specific age needs, and allowing older workers to continue their professional careers in a safe and healthy way.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key objective 2 of the EU Strategic Framework</b> (Improving prevention of work-related diseases and accidents) is covered by the operational objective 2.1 (including musculoskeletal and psychosocial risks). The operational objective 2.1 has a focus on rehabilitation and reintegration of workers.</p> <p><b>Key objective 3 of the EU Strategic Framework</b> (Increasing preparedness – responding rapidly to threats) is covered by the operational objective 2.3. The term preparedness is used in operational objective 2.3.</p> <p>No relation could be detected to the prevention of workplace violence and fighting discrimination.</p>