



Media Release

European Commission's SLIC Meeting in Malta discusses the Health and Safety of OHS Officers

16 June 2017

The multi-faceted aspects of the occupational health and safety of OHS officers were the main topics discussed in detail during the 72nd Meeting of the European Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC), which was held in Malta as part of Malta's Presidency of the Council of the EU on 8-9 June. Many high-level experts on the subject attended the meeting.

A brief feature documentary 'A Tribute to European OSH Inspectors' was launched on the day. It is available free of charge on the OHS's Facebook page (*OHS Malta*) or through <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHldrhVPiWs>

During the meeting, it was agreed that effective occupational health and safety (OHS) administration and inspection systems are considered to be fundamental in ensuring effective compliance with OHS regulations and with ensuring safer and healthier workplaces.

Various milestones have been reached since the first professional labour inspector agencies and systems appeared in Europe in the second half of the 19th century. However, the numerous developments in the socio-economic context of individual countries and Europe in general, as well as globalisation, call for a broader reflection on the changing role of OHS officers and the wide array of complex challenges they face nowadays.

OHS officers have to cope with changing working environments, multi-cultural workplaces and different forms of a shadow economy, which create new and unfamiliar problems in the area of labour inspection, adding an extra burden on inspectors and increasing the possibility of psychosocial risks.

Delegates at the meeting discussed first-hand experiences of the challenges OHS officers face and how they are dealt with in different European countries. They also discussed examples of good practice in diverse areas both in terms of internal procedures and policies as well as inter-departmental cooperation agreements. All the cases discussed offered a good foundation on which one can build to create a pan-European system of good practice and a higher level of protection for labour inspectors in general.

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From left to right:

Dr. Mark Gauci (Chief Executive Officer, OHSA-MT), Mr. Stefan Olsson (Director, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion), Ms. Charlotte Grevfors Ernout (Head of Unit at DG Employment), and Mrs. Teresa Moitinho (Senior Advisor, Health and Safety Unit, DG Employment)