

# SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024

DUBLIN CASTLE, HIBERNIA  
CONFERENCE CENTRE

TUESDAY, 12  
NOVEMBER 2024  
9:30AM - 4:30PM

**HSA**

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority



<b>9:30 - 9:55</b>	Conference Opening / CEO Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr Conor O'Brien, Chief Executive Officer, HSA</li></ul>
<b>9:55 - 10:10</b>	Consultation and the Role of Safety Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr Mark Cullen, Assistant Chief Executive, Occupational Safety, HSA</li></ul>
<b>10:10 - 11:00</b>	Learning From Evidence (Data From Safety Representatives Survey and HSA Operations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr Joan Cahill, Enterprise &amp; Employee Supports (EES), HSA</li></ul>
<b>11:00 - 11:30</b>	Tea and Coffee Break	

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<b>11:30 - 11:50</b>	Union Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr Pat Kenny, Communication Workers' Union</li><li>• Mr David Hughes, Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation</li></ul>
<b>11:50 - 12:10</b>	Employer Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr Michael Gillen, Ibec</li></ul>
<b>12:10 - 13:00</b>	Lightning Rounds with Safety Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Panel chaired by Alex Shortt, EES Team, HSA</b></li><li>• Mr Alan Jordan, Irish Rail</li><li>• Mr Noel Lacey &amp; Mr Anthony Finn, An Post</li><li>• Ms Karen Eccles, INMO</li><li>• Mr Padraig Allen, Inspector, HSA</li></ul>
<b>13:00 - 14:15</b>	Lunch	

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<p><b>14:15 - 15:30</b></p>	<p>Panel Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Panel chaired by Dr Joan Cahill, EES, HSA</b></li> <li>• Mr Andrew Smith, Building and Allied Trades' Union (BATU)</li> <li>• Ms Linda Kelly, Health and Social Care, Fórsa</li> <li>• Mr Michael Gillen, Ibec</li> <li>• Mr David Broderick &amp; Mr Jonathan McDade, SFA</li> </ul>
<p><b>15:30 - 16:00</b></p>	<p>Panel Questions</p>	
<p><b>16:00 - 16:10</b></p>	<p>New Safety Representative eBook and HSA Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Joan Cahill, Enterprise &amp; Employee Supports (EES), HSA</li> <li>• Edel Guckian, EES Team, HSA</li> </ul>
<p><b>16:10 - 16:30</b></p>	<p>Conference Close and Thanks</p>	

# SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024

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Join at  
**slido.com**  
**#3933 620**

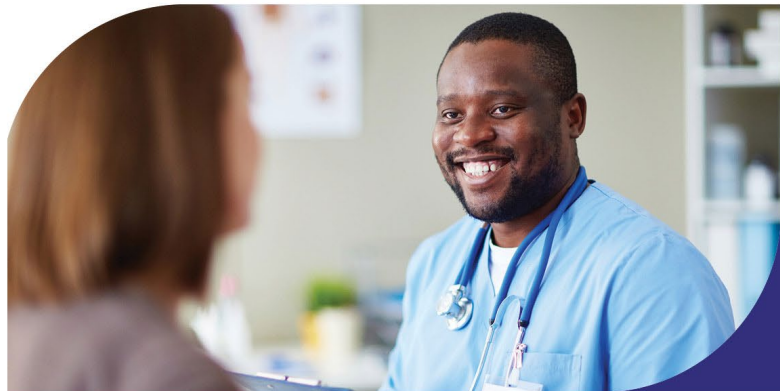




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# Welcome! Safety Representatives National Conference



Dublin Castle

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024



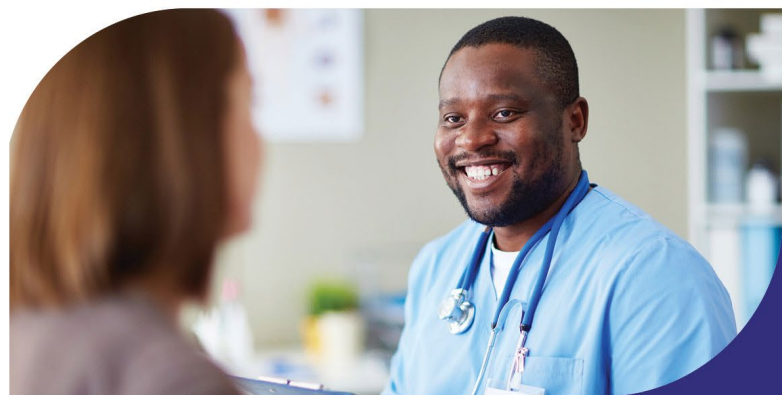
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## Consultation and the Role of Safety Representatives

Dublin Castle

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024





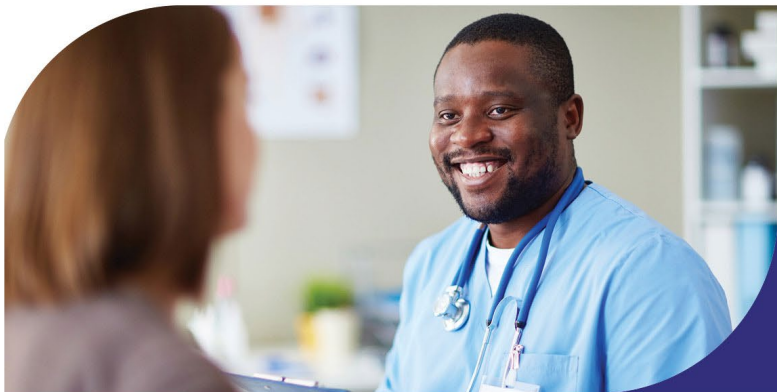
# HSA

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## Consultation & Role of Safety Rep

Safety Representative Conference

12 Nov 2024



**Mark Cullen**

**Assistant Chief Executive OS Division**

# Consultation

- **Why?**
  - Legal requirement
- **Prescribed In the 2005 ACT**
  - 26.—(1) **Every employer shall**, for the purpose of promoting and developing measures to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees and ascertaining the effectiveness of those measures—
    - (a) *consult his or her employees for the purpose of making and maintaining arrangements which will enable the employer and his or her employees to co-operate effectively for those purposes,*
    - (b) *in accordance with the arrangements referred to in paragraph(a), **consult with his or her employees, their safety representatives or both**, as appropriate, in advance and in good time regarding—*



# Consultation - Benefits

- **Legal** -Employers will be in compliance with the Law
- **Motivated** - Workplaces where employees are involved in taking decisions about health and safety are safer and healthier.
- **Influence** - Your employees influence health and safety through their own actions.
- **Involvement** - Employees are often the best people to understand the risks in their workplace.
- **Engagement** – Consultation will help:
  - Identify joint solutions to problems;
  - Develop a positive health and safety culture;
  - Ensure risks are managed sensibly;
  - Reduce accidents and ill health.

# Electing Safety Rep & Role Safety Rep



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- Employees elect the Safety Rep
  - Employer agreement - more than 1
- Process of election employees decide
  - Employer can facilitate & help
- Role of Safety Rep
  - Responsible role **not** responsibility
  - **Represent employees** - engage with management/make representation to management
  - **Inspect workplace** - after giving reasonable notice to the employer, have the right to inspect the whole or part of a workplace
  - **Investigate** - accidents and dangerous occurrences in the workplace
  - **Accompany** Inspector
    - receive advice and information from inspectors in relation to OSH at the workplace;
    - make verbal or written representations to inspectors

# Safety Representatives – Benefits

- They are **elected by** the employees – represent the workers
- Having a safety representative will
  - ✓ Show workers that their company is serious about promoting safety and health, **they will be motivated to do more** to ensure compliance.
  - ✓ Help employers to engage workers to follow safe work procedures.
  - ✓ A safety representative will ensure workers are **involved in the development and review** of those procedures.
  - ✓ A Safety Rep will ensure that workers opinions are valued and considered.
  - ✓ Workers who are doing the jobs will have valuable insights to offer and the Safety Rep will ensure these insights are considered.
- Employers and employees will reap the benefits of having a safety representative and consultation

# HSA Perspective – Consultation & Safety Representatives

- **Consultation**

- It is a legal requirement
- Consultation in the workplace helps to increase overall OSH compliance
- Provides for issues to be resolved rather than escalated
- Everyone will feel they are listened to and valued

- **Safety Representatives**

- Ensures workers have a say
- Provides a mechanism to resolve issues
- Supports management in helping achieve compliance



# HSA

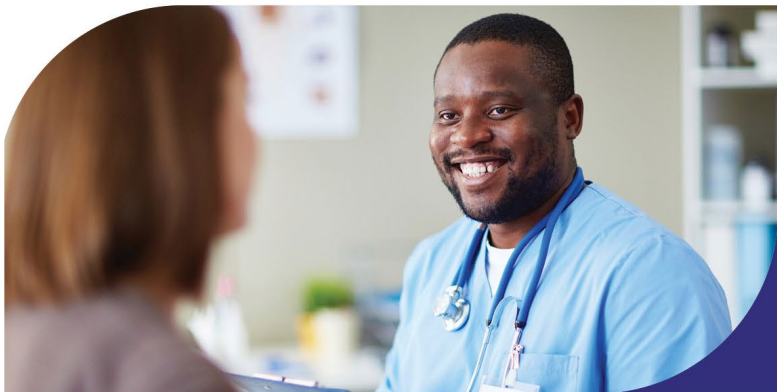
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Health and Safety Authority

Go raibh maith agaibh  
Thank you

T: 0818 289 389

E: [contactus@hsa.ie](mailto:contactus@hsa.ie)

W: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

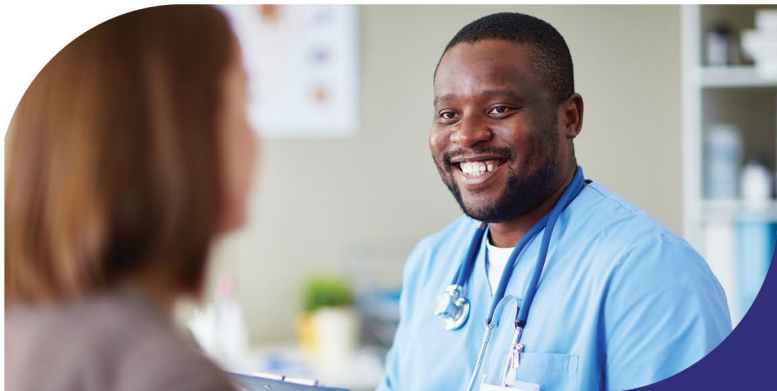




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## Learning From Evidence (Data From Safety Representatives Survey and HSA Operations)



Dublin Castle

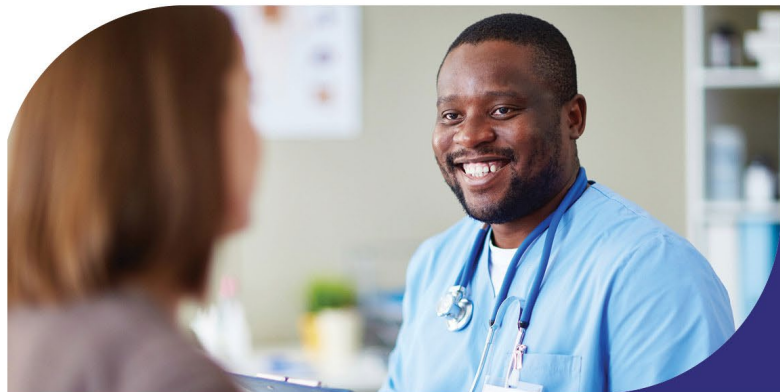
12<sup>th</sup> November 2024



**HSA**

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# Consultation and Safety Representatives Survey



Dr Joan Cahill, EES

12 November 2024

# Introduction

- Dr Joan Cahill
- Enterprise and Employee Support, Occupational Health
- Safety Representatives portfolio
  - Promote Safety Representative role
  - Develop resources
  - Stakeholder engagement – training, workshops (many attending here today)
  - Safety Representatives Committee
  - **Evidence (survey, operational data)**
- Several teams at HSA
  - Communications Team
  - Inspectors



**Who is your workplace's Safety Representative?**

Help build a safe and healthy workplace for you and your colleagues

Your Safety Representative's details:

Name: .....

Phone: .....

Email: .....

Videos and information for Safety Representatives are available at:

[hsalearning.ie](https://hsalearning.ie)  
HSA Online Courses

 [BeSMART.ie](https://www.beSMART.ie)

0818 289 389 [contactus@hsa.ie](mailto:contactus@hsa.ie) [f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [in](#) [hsa.ie](https://hsa.ie)



# Presentation Overview

## SURVEY – DATA & EVIDENCE (Listening, Learning, Motivated)

1. Background to survey
2. 2024 survey objectives, design and participation
3. Analysis approach and sample
4. Summary interpretation
5. Findings
  - I. Statistics and evidence (1 question)
  - II. Key talking points
6. Next Steps
7. Questions



# Background to Survey

- Using data and evidence to learn about perception of consultation and Safety Representative role (operational reality)
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Collect detailed data (2024 Survey)
- Other relevant datasets
  - HSA operational data (questions sets/inspection)
  - ESENER 2019 survey (for IE, n=1,999)
- **Dissemination**
  - **Conference**
  - **Directive (EU) 2019/1024** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information (recast)



# Dataset & Findings Available on HSA website



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The screenshot shows the HSA website page for Safety Representatives. The page is titled "Safety Representatives" and features a navigation menu with categories like Topics, News, Checklists, Legislation, Publications and Forms, Safety Alerts, Employer and Employee Support, Education, Violence at Work, and Workplace Health. The main content area includes a video player, a list of related links, and a list of related files. A blue arrow points to the "Consultation and Safety Representatives Survey 2014" link in the Related Link(s) section.

**Safety Representatives**

**Safety Representatives Working Together for a Safe and Healthy Workplace**

A Safety Representative is an employee elected by their fellow employees, whose main role is to represent them to management on all health and safety issues. The Safety Representative provides a direct link between the employer and employees on issues that may be identified through workplace inspections or through direct communication with fellow workers.

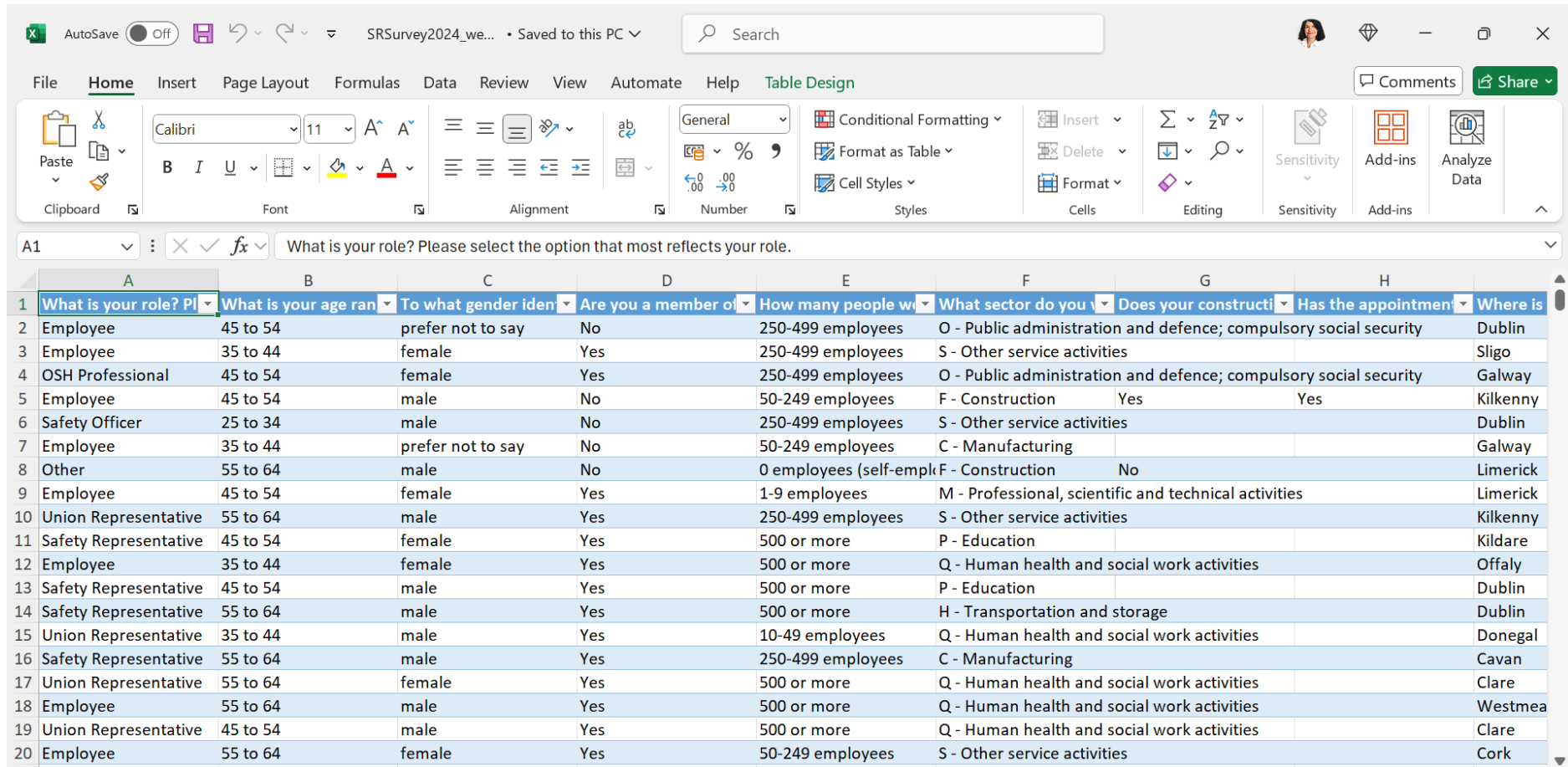
**Related Link(s)**

- [Consultation and Safety Representatives Survey 2014](#)  
The role conducted an anonymous online survey on Consultation and Safety Representation between April and June 2014.
- [hselearning.ie](#)  
HSA Learning - free online courses for enterprises and employees.

**Related File(s)**

- [Safety Representative Resource Book](#)  
Format: PDF | File Size: 11.02 MB
- [Safety Representatives and Safety Consultation Guidelines](#)  
Format: PDF | File Size: 4.65 MB

# Dataset



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	What is your role? Please select the option that most reflects your role.	What is your age range?	To what gender identity do you identify?	Are you a member of a trade union or other workers' organization?	How many people work in your sector?	What sector do you work in?	Does your construction work involve any of the following activities?	Has the appointment been made by a trade union or other workers' organization?	Where is the appointment made?
2	Employee	45 to 54	prefer not to say	No	250-499 employees	O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security			Dublin
3	Employee	35 to 44	female	Yes	250-499 employees	S - Other service activities			Sligo
4	OSH Professional	45 to 54	female	Yes	250-499 employees	O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security			Galway
5	Employee	45 to 54	male	No	50-249 employees	F - Construction	Yes	Yes	Kilkenny
6	Safety Officer	25 to 34	male	No	250-499 employees	S - Other service activities			Dublin
7	Employee	35 to 44	prefer not to say	No	50-249 employees	C - Manufacturing			Galway
8	Other	55 to 64	male	No	0 employees (self-employed)	F - Construction	No		Limerick
9	Employee	45 to 54	female	Yes	1-9 employees	M - Professional, scientific and technical activities			Limerick
10	Union Representative	55 to 64	male	Yes	250-499 employees	S - Other service activities			Kilkenny
11	Safety Representative	45 to 54	female	Yes	500 or more	P - Education			Kildare
12	Employee	35 to 44	female	Yes	500 or more	Q - Human health and social work activities			Offaly
13	Safety Representative	45 to 54	male	Yes	500 or more	P - Education			Dublin
14	Safety Representative	55 to 64	male	Yes	500 or more	H - Transportation and storage			Dublin
15	Union Representative	35 to 44	male	Yes	10-49 employees	Q - Human health and social work activities			Donegal
16	Safety Representative	55 to 64	male	Yes	250-499 employees	C - Manufacturing			Cavan
17	Union Representative	55 to 64	female	Yes	500 or more	Q - Human health and social work activities			Clare
18	Employee	55 to 64	male	Yes	500 or more	Q - Human health and social work activities			Westmeath
19	Union Representative	45 to 54	male	Yes	500 or more	Q - Human health and social work activities			Clare
20	Employee	55 to 64	female	Yes	50-249 employees	S - Other service activities			Cork

# Survey Objectives

- **Understand safety consultation and safety representation**
  - Role and perception of safety representatives by different actors/roles across a variety of sectors, company sizes and contexts.
  - Elicit 'operational' information about the experiences of active safety representatives (i.e., training, access to resources, interaction with HSA inspectors etc).
- **Obtain actionable insights to inform our strategy and programme of work**
- **Visibility & Improvement/Change**



# HSA Survey Design, Participation & Analysis

HSA

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- Design
  - Anonymous online survey.
  - Stakeholder engagement and review (survey design).
- Administered April to End June 2024.
- N=854 respondents.
- Analysis
  - Data cleaning and coding.
  - Statistical analysis using R/R Studio.
- Interpretation.



# Survey Sections & Logic

- **Completed by All (n=854)**
  - *Section 1: consent*
  - Section 2: respondent profile
  - Section 3: company profile
  - Section 4: consultation and safety representatives
  - Section 7: HSA resources and supports
- **Completed if have a SR at your company (n=721)**
  - Section 5: safety representative role at company
- **Completed if a SR (n=309)**
  - Section 6: experience of active safety representatives



# Approach & Some Caveats..

- **Descriptive statistics – trends from 1 sample**
- Look at sample (individual and company profiles)
  - Is it representative
  - What does it tell us
- Analyse specific questions in more detail...
  - Focus on subset of questions
  - Findings for specific groups/profiles
- Benchmarking/comparisons with other datasets (EUOSHA/ESENER 2019, HSA Operational data)
- Statistical tests

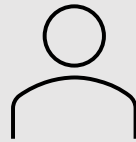




# Sample

## Respondent Profile

- **Employees (36%), small participation of employers (2%)**
- Member of Trade Union (65%)
- Acting in SR role (36%)

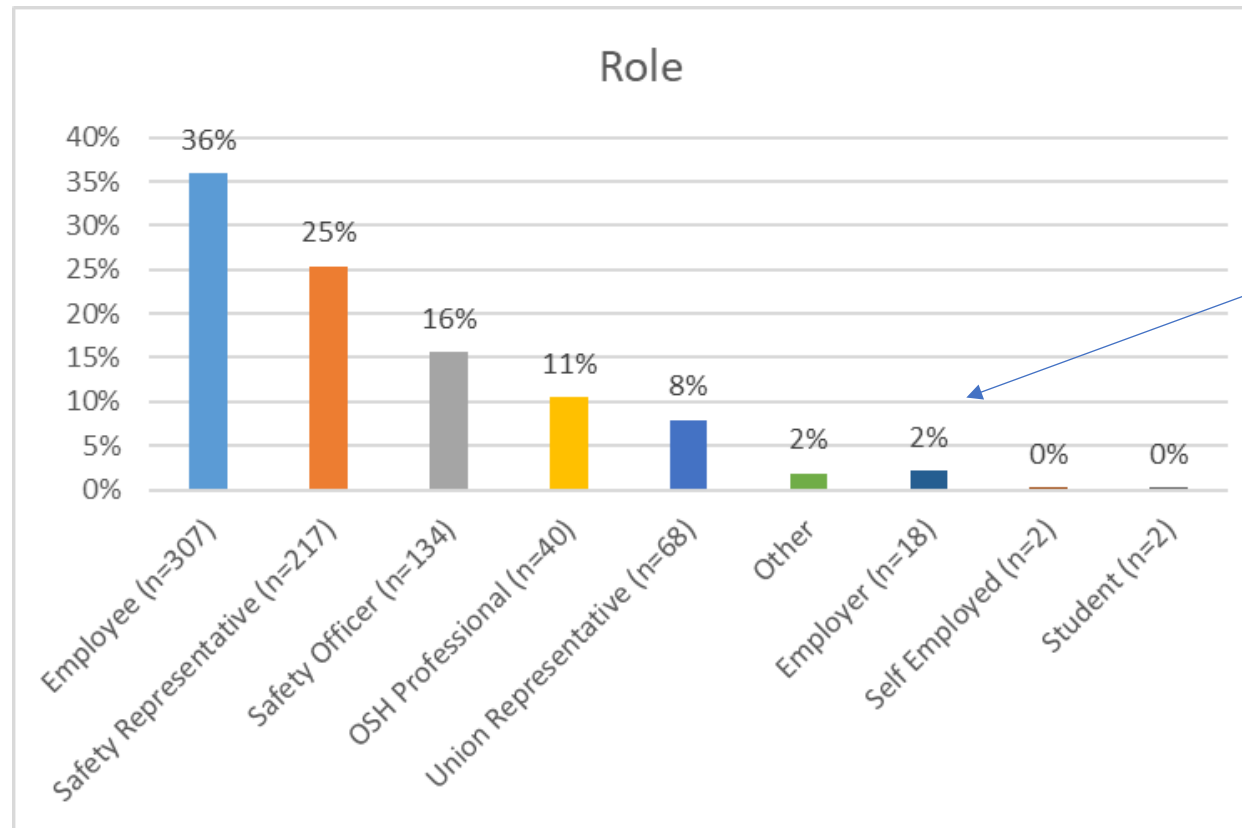


## Company Profile

- **Larger enterprises - 500 or more employees (36%), only 3% (1 to 9), 15% (10 to 49)**
- Education (20%), health (17%), manufacturing (9%), construction (8%)
- ISO 45001 Certified (41%)
- **Trade Union Recognition at company (81%)**
- **Safety Rep at company (84%)**
- **Health and Safety Committee (79%)**

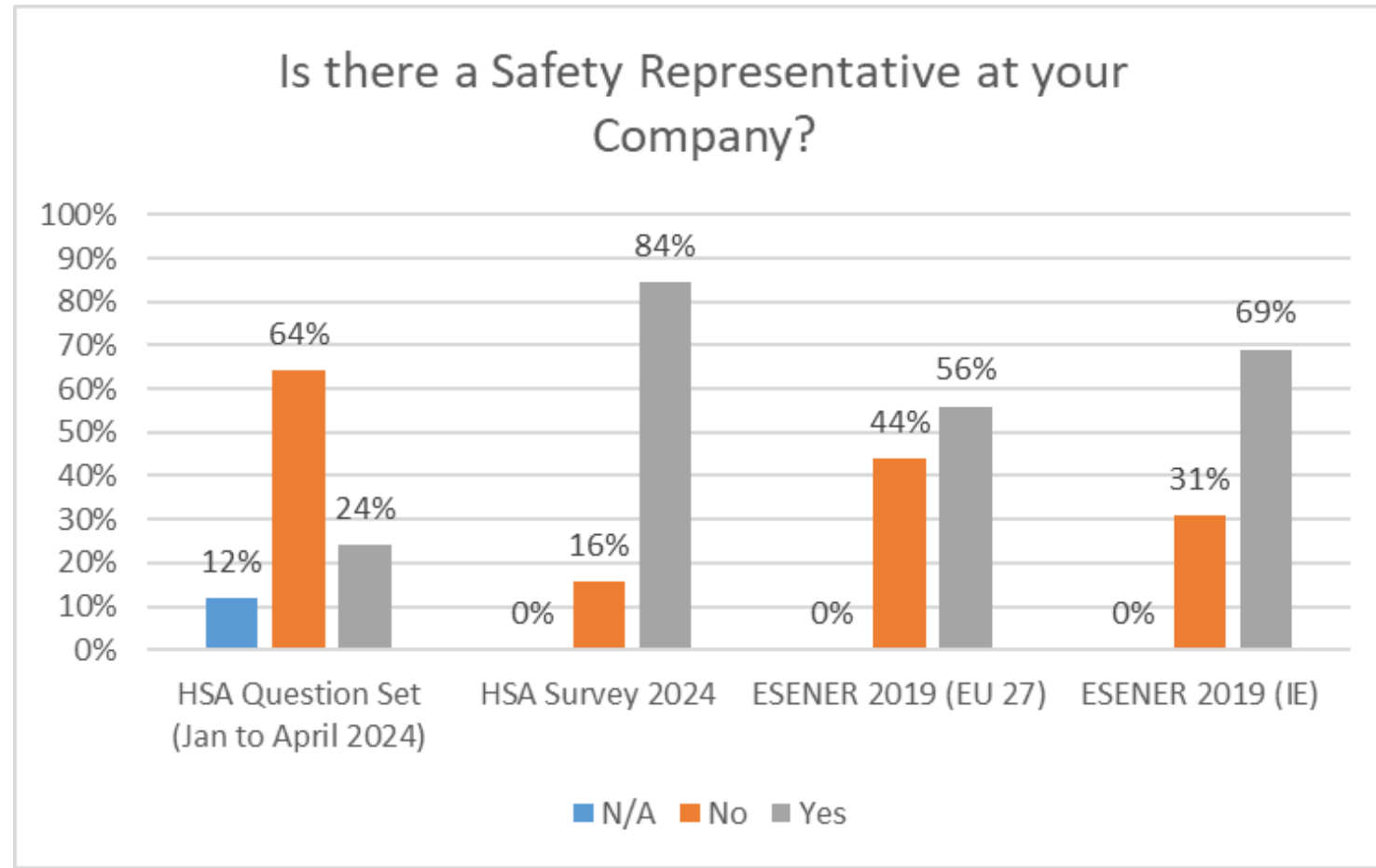


# Respondent Roles

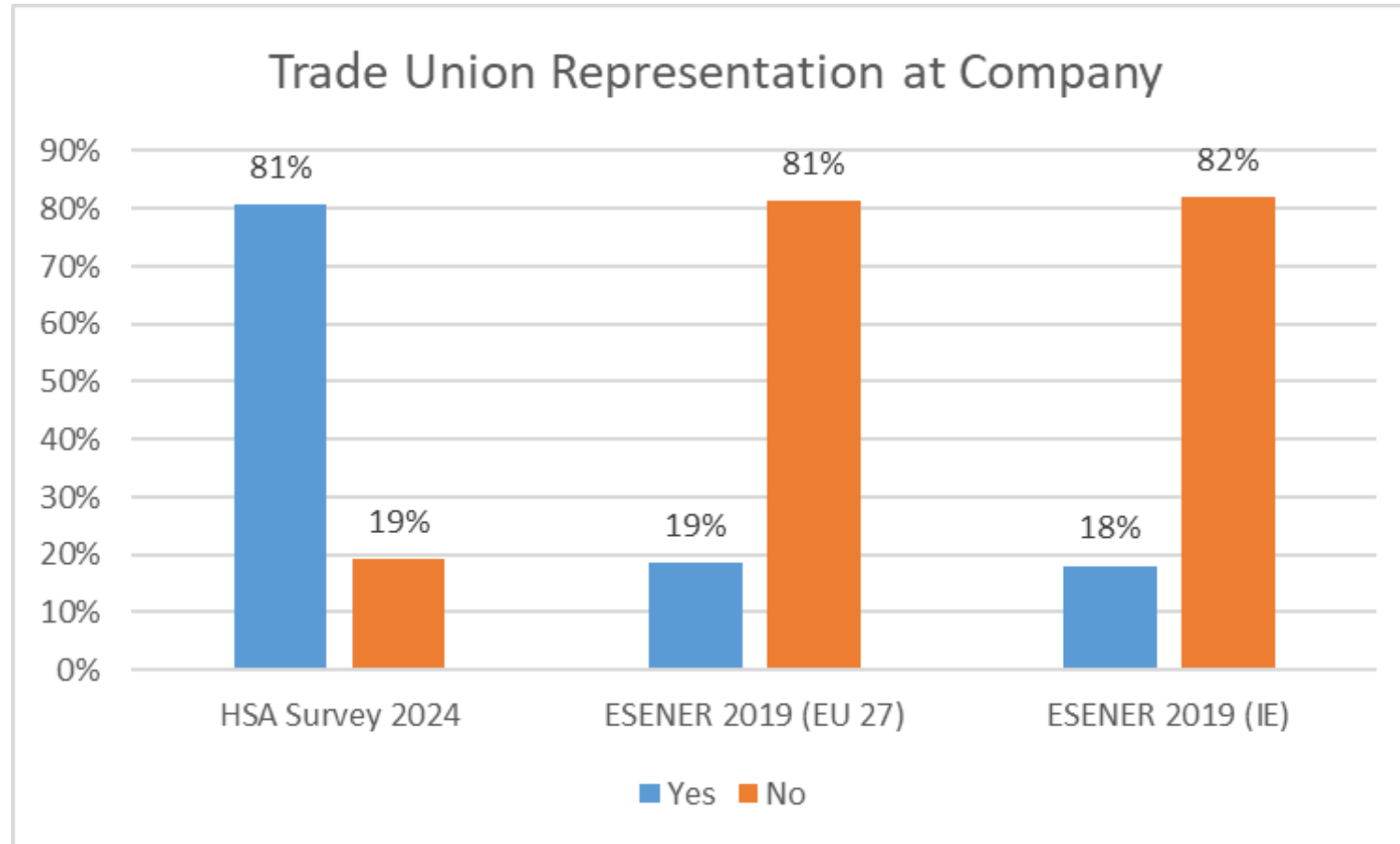


Low participation employers

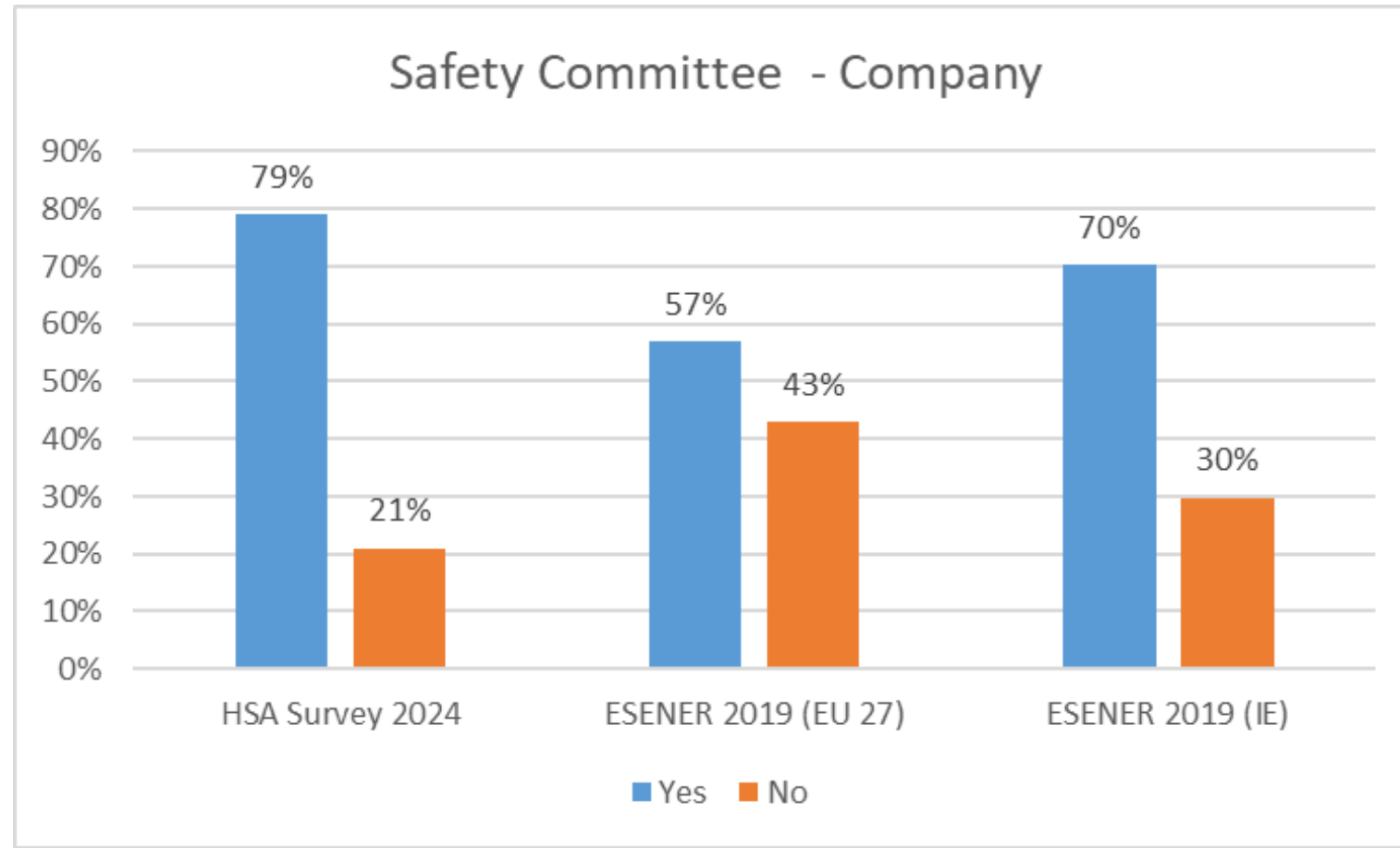
# Sample – Safety Representative at Company



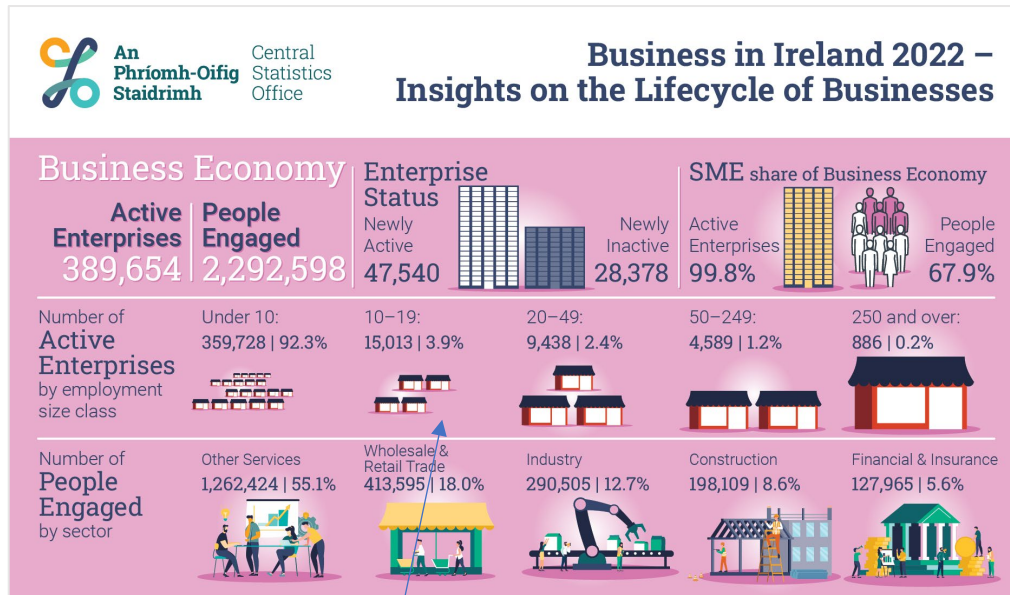
# Sample – Trade Union Recognition at Company



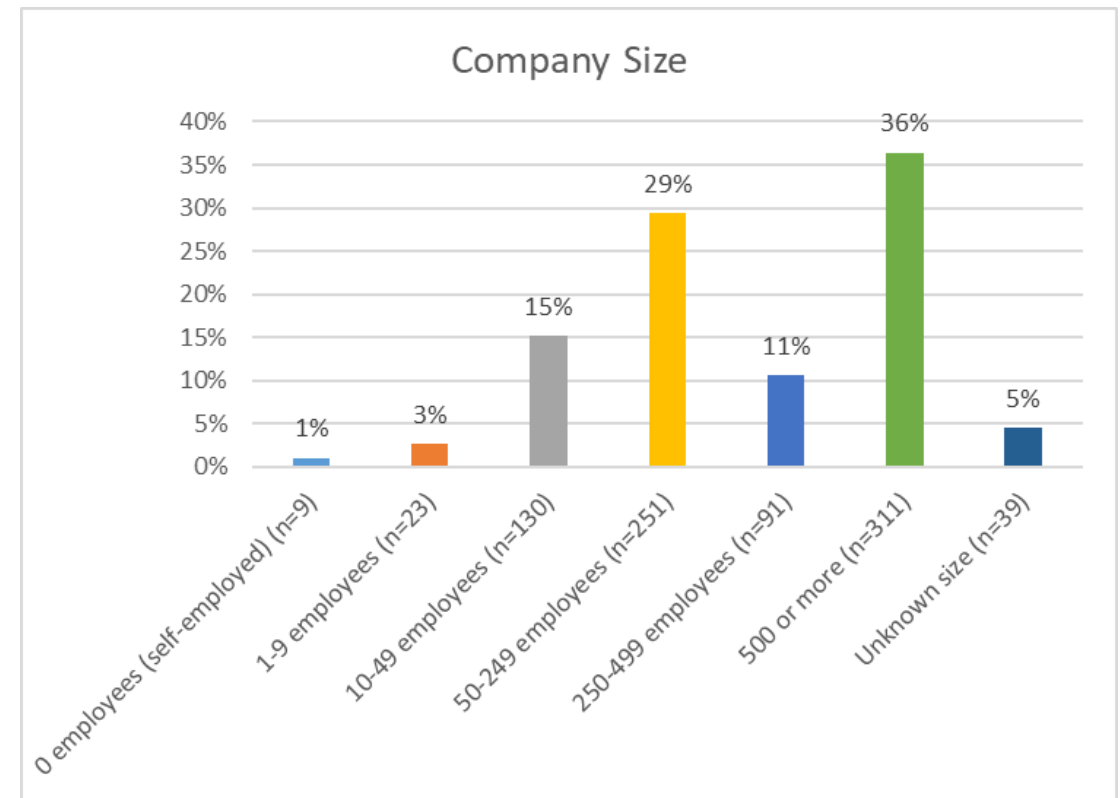
# Sample – Safety Committee at Company



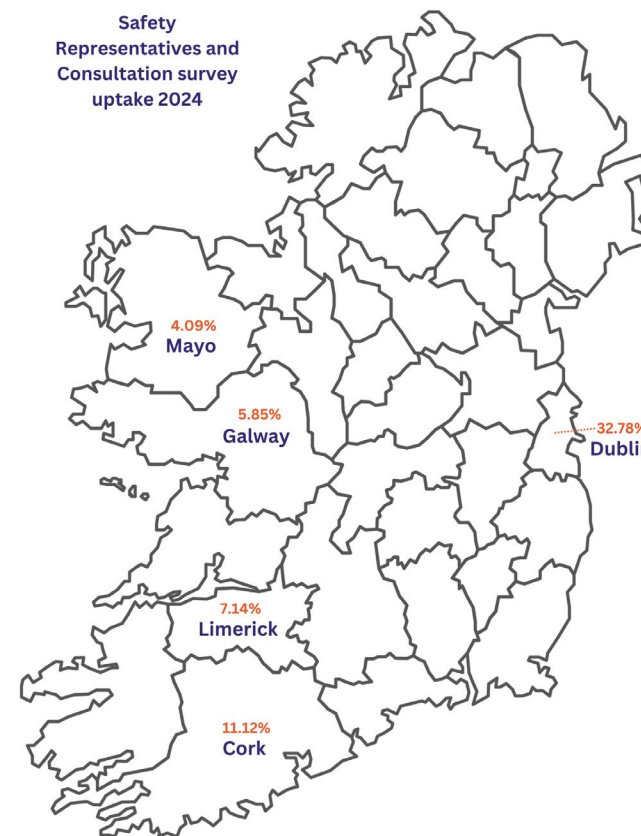
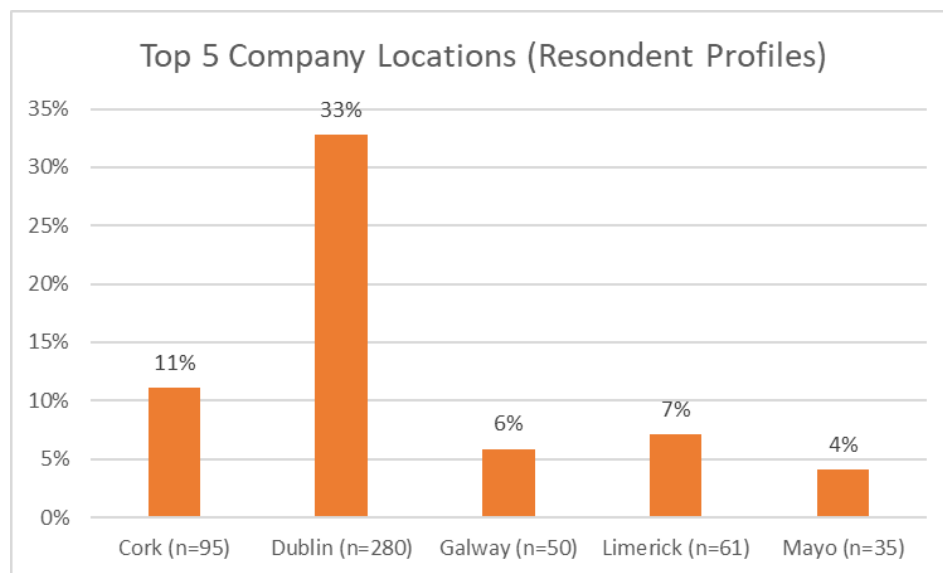
# Sample – Company Size



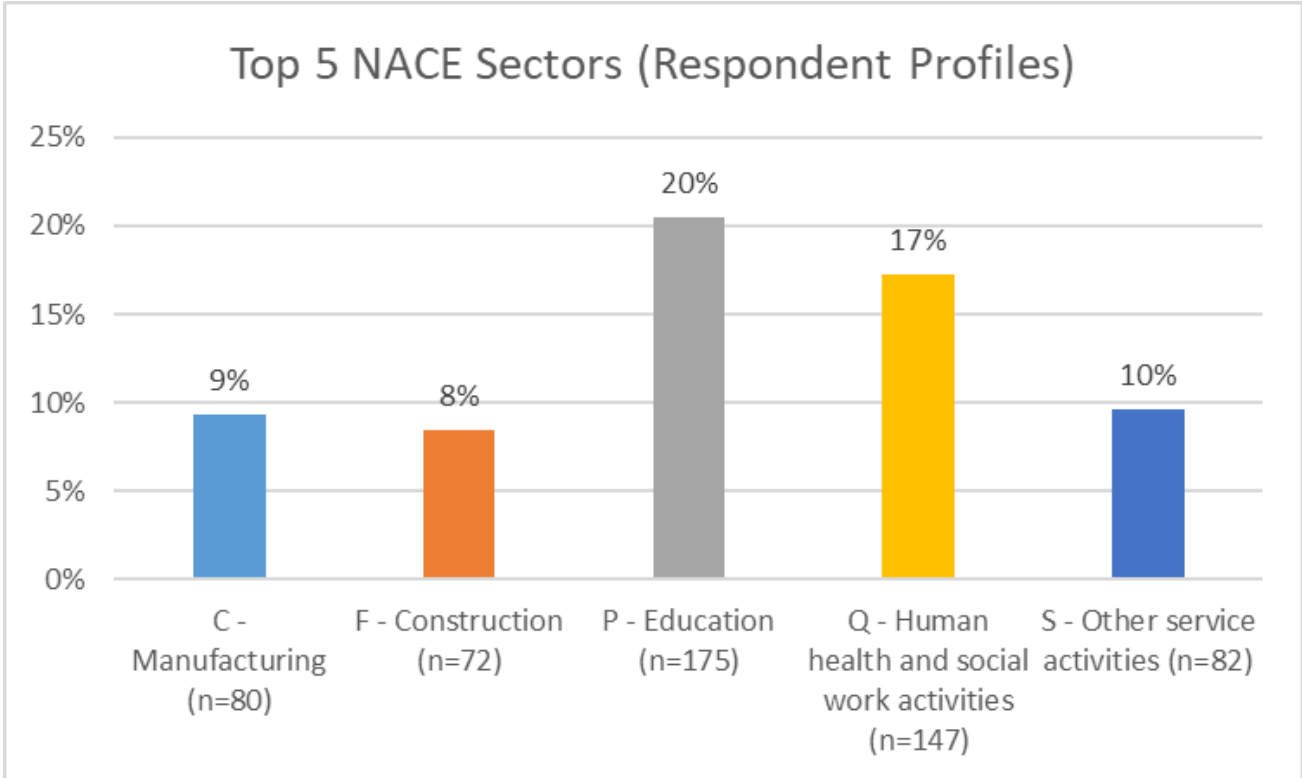
<10 = 92.3%



## Top 5, Company Location (Respondent Profiles)



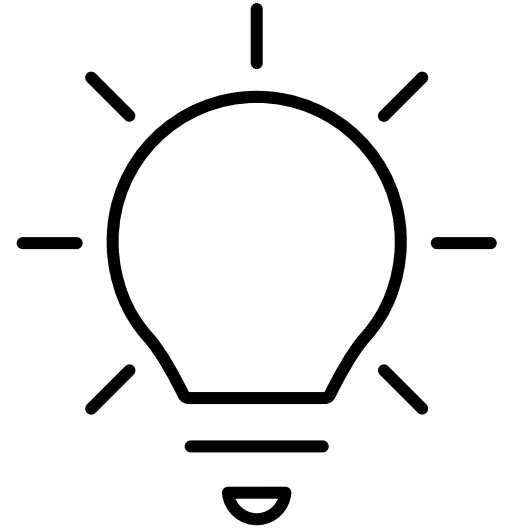
# Top 5 Sectors (Respondent Profiles)





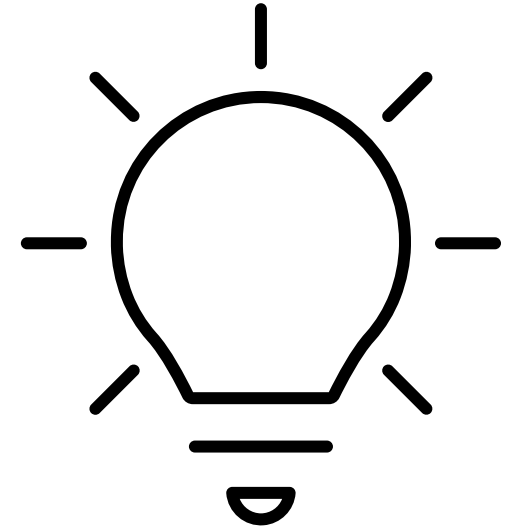
# Summary Interpretation

- Refer to data from survey (conservative).
- Good news for all stakeholders
  - Interest (survey participation).
  - Benefits of safety representatives (consultation, compliance, prevention).
  - Good regulation.
- Room for improvement
  - Consultation.
  - Management valuing role.
  - Management consider/ask for views.
  - Frequency with which OSH discussed.



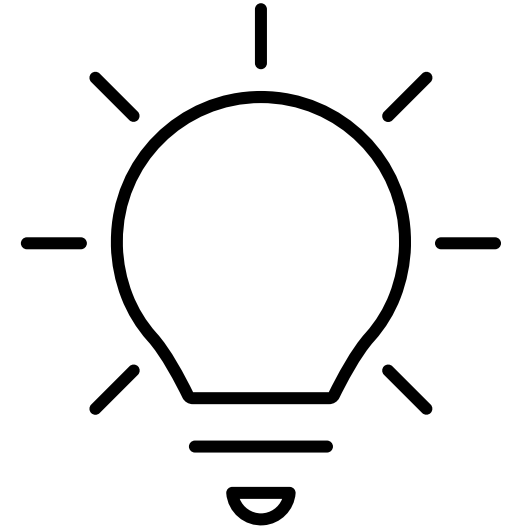
# Summary Interpretation

- Operational aspects to be addressed
  - Knowledge inspector coming/if advised.
  - Access to inspector reports.
  - Training (recurrent).
  - Frequency SR attend safety committee meetings.
  - Addressing awareness (don't knows!).
- Addressing enablers (management support, management facilitating appointment of role where applicable).
- Addressing barriers (time to perform functions).
- HSA resources
  - Awareness of resources
  - Needs (practical information)
  - Roadmap for Resource Book (eBook/Edition 4)



# Summary Interpretation

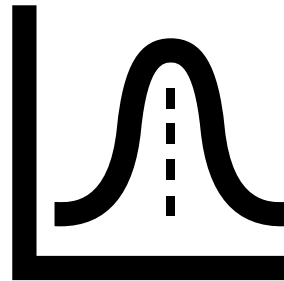
- Small organisations and consultation/Safety Representation.
- Caveats
  - Sample.
  - Further statistical analysis.
  - Limits of survey – deep insights for change.



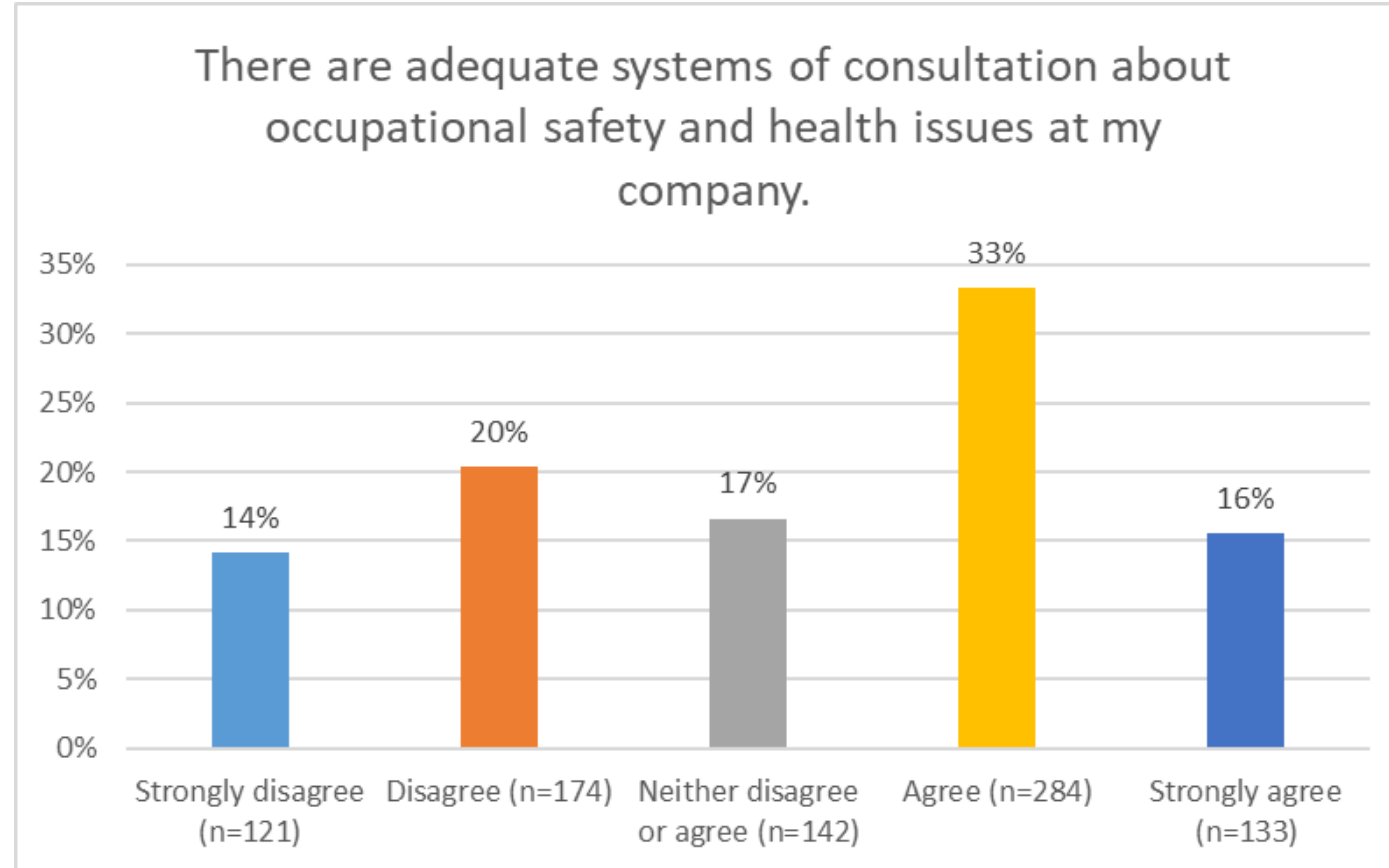
# Getting Excited about Statistics & Evidence

There are adequate systems of consultation about occupational safety and health issues at my company .

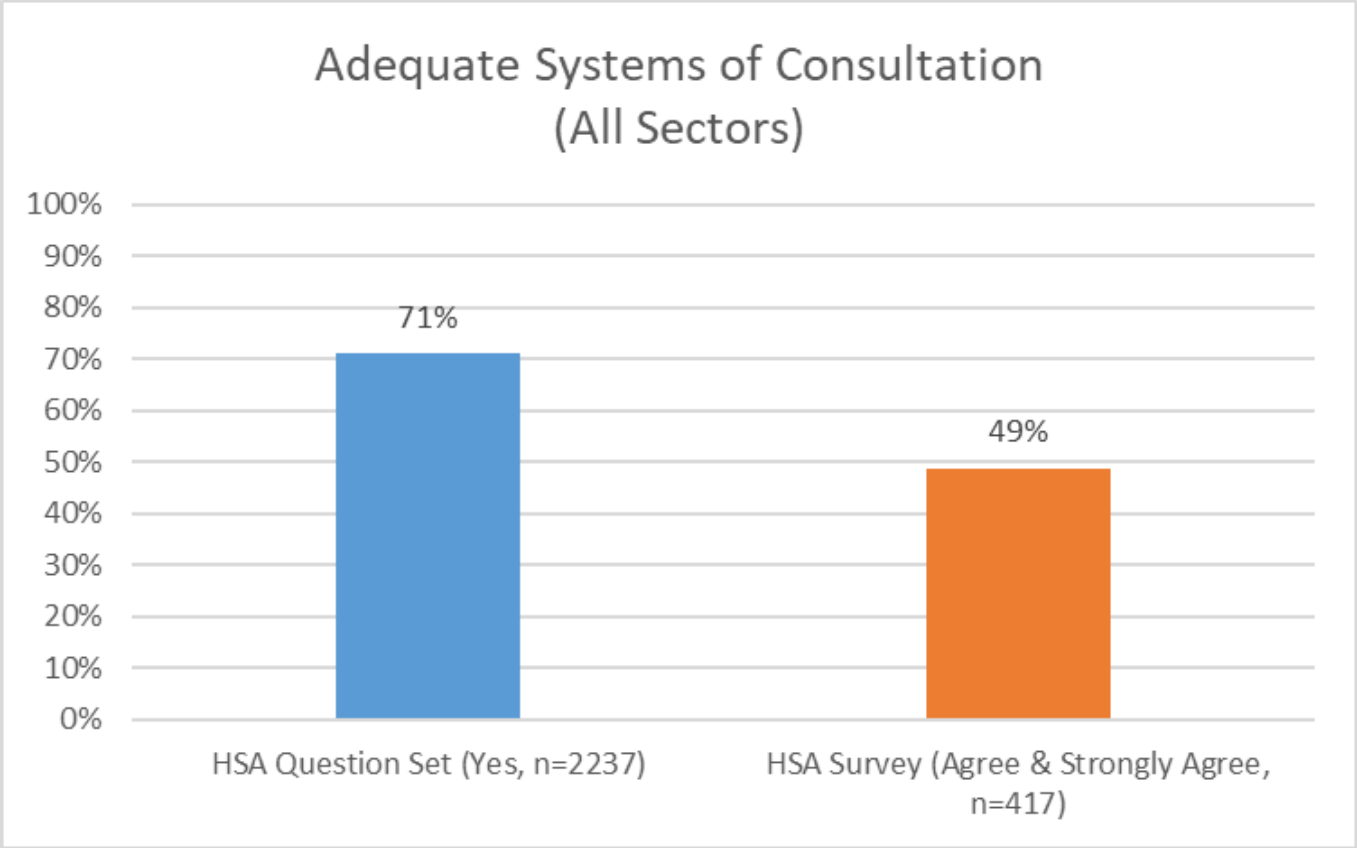
(strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree)



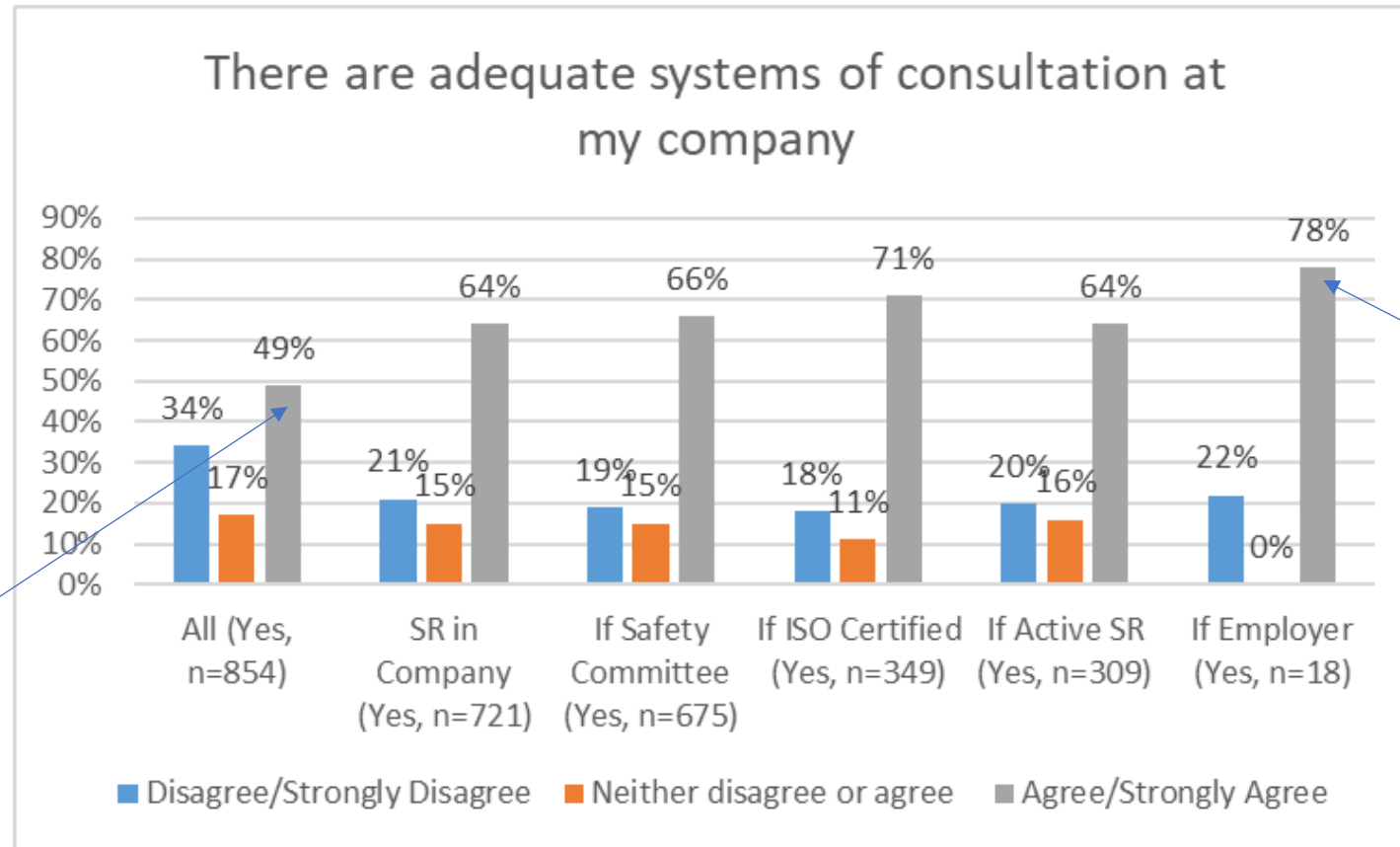
# Adequate Systems of Consultation



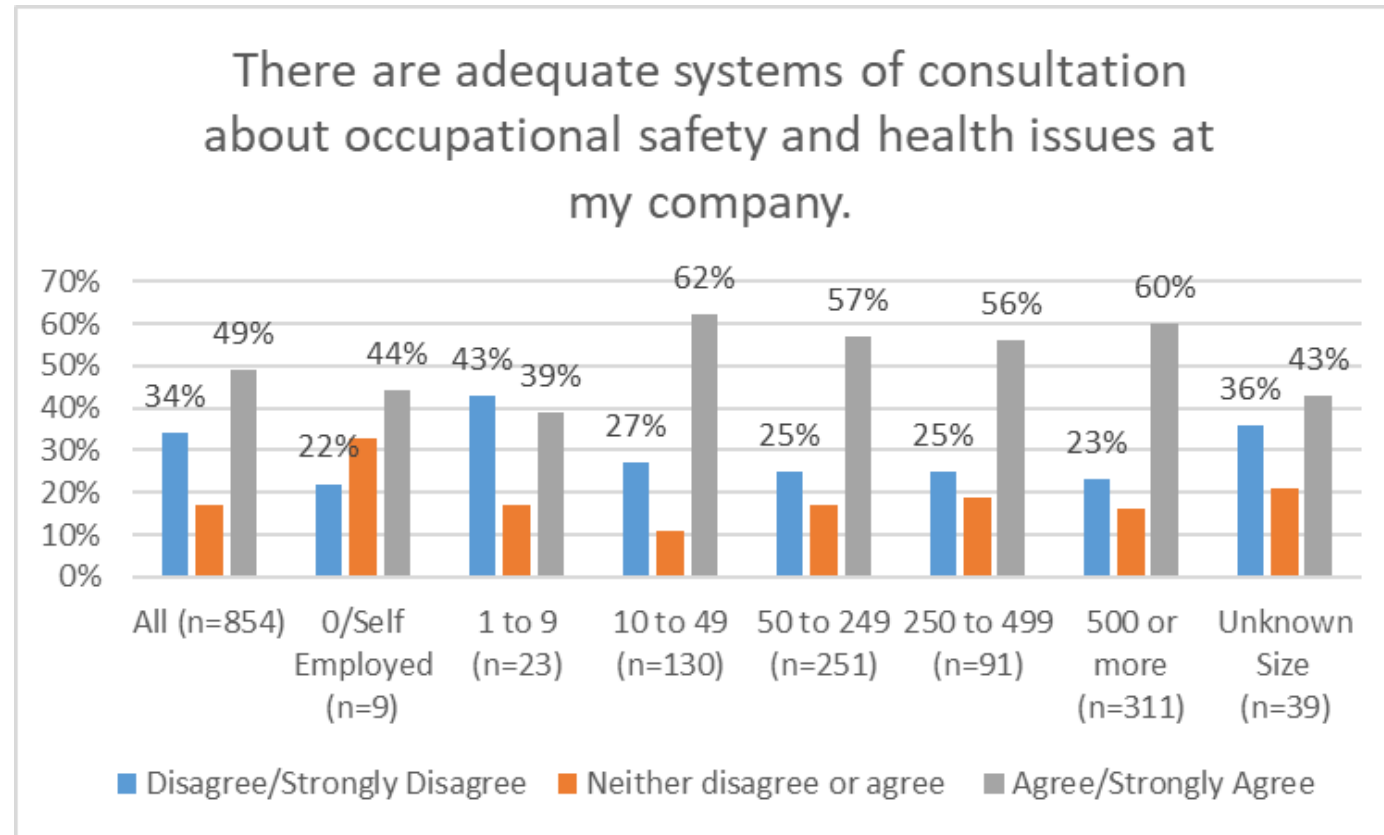
# Adequate Systems of Consultation



# Adequate Systems of Consultation (Profiles, 3 Points)

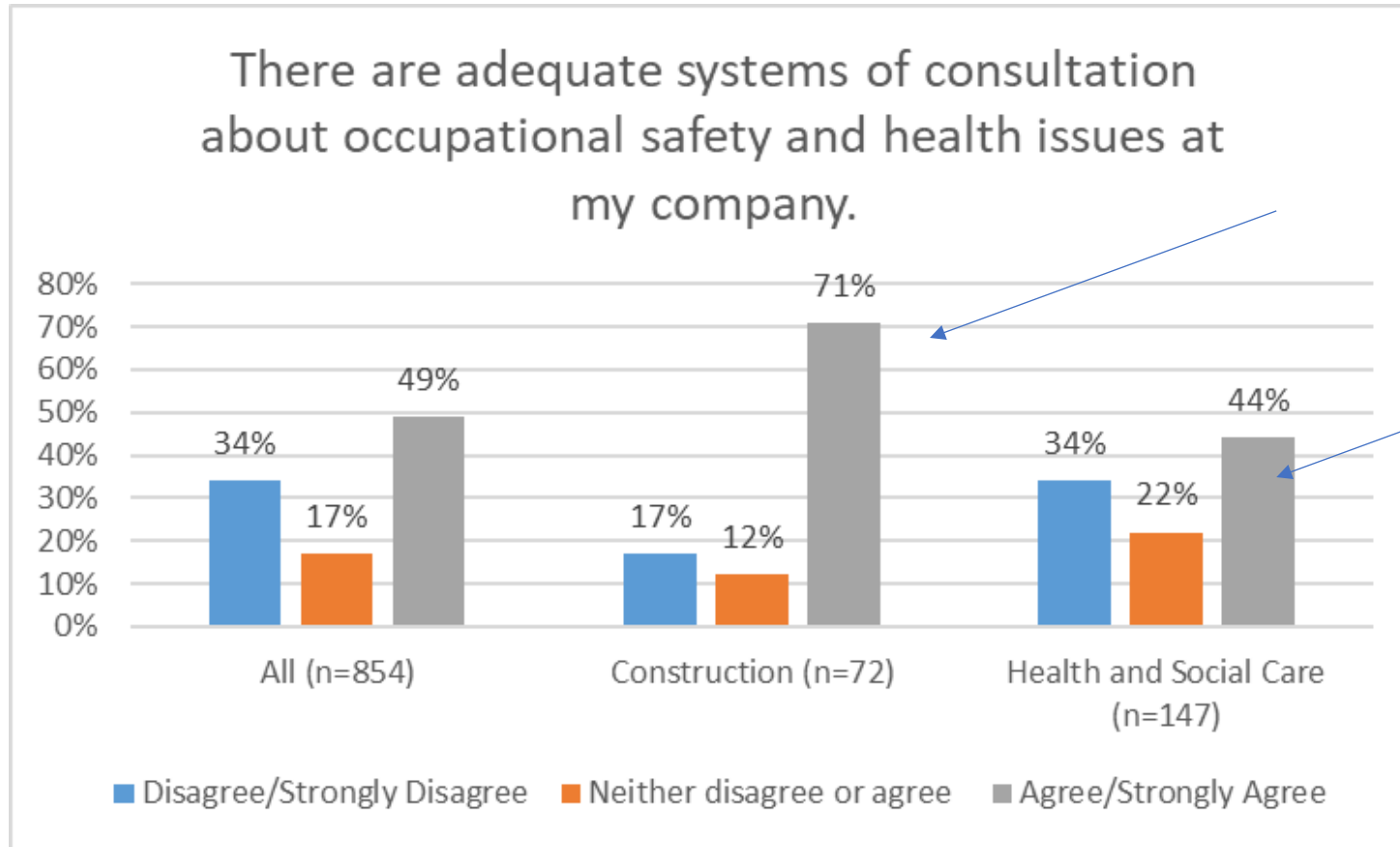


# Adequate Systems of Consultation (Company Size, 3 Points)

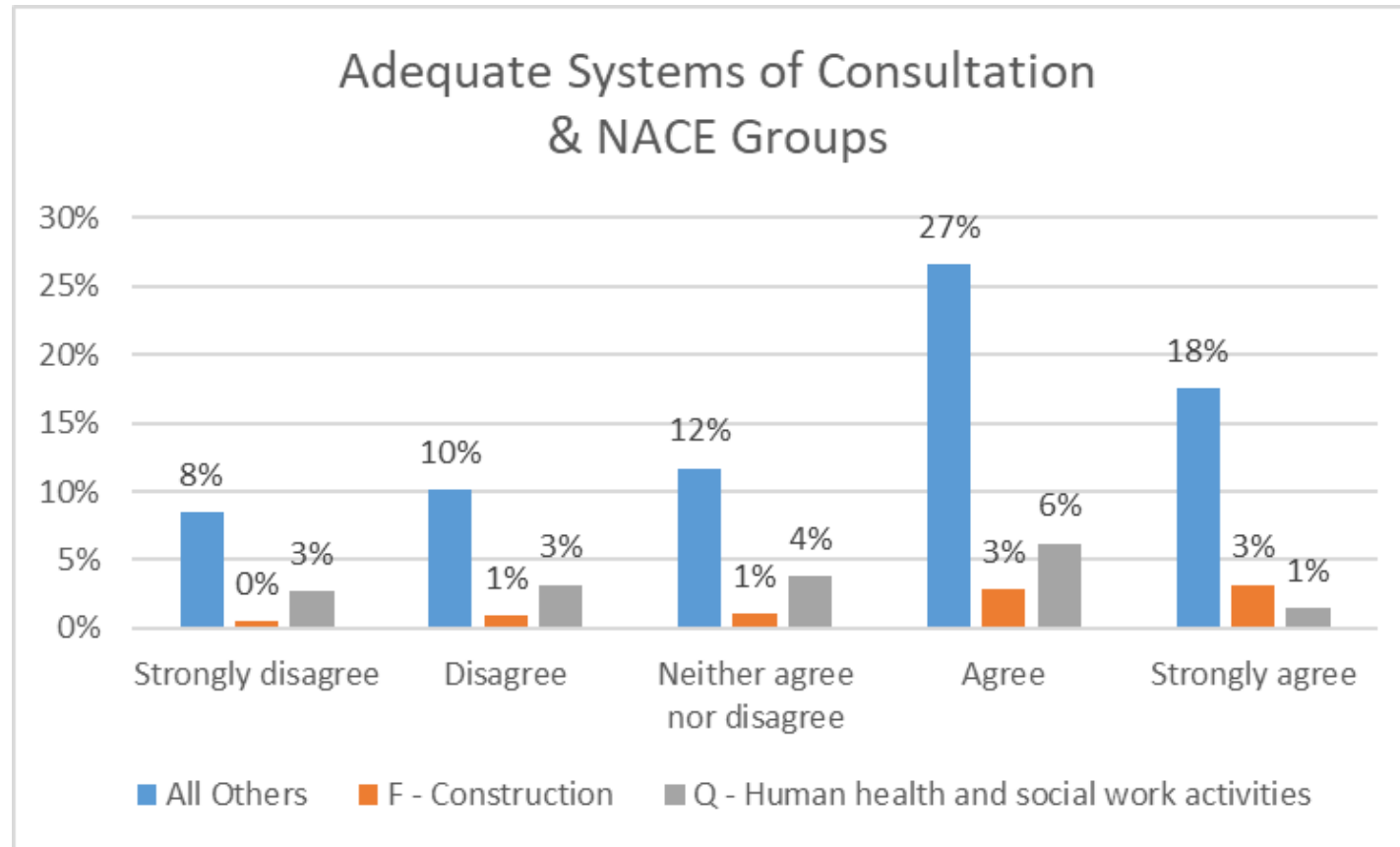




# Adequate Systems of Consultation (Sector, 3 Points)



# Consultation Rating and NACE Group



## 3 groups

- Construction (n=72/8%)
- Health and social care (n=147/17%)
- All others (n=635/75%)

# Statistical Tests: Consultation Rating

## Predictor/Independent Variable (IV)

1. Safety Representative at Company
2. Health and Safety Committee at Company
3. Trade Union Recognition at Company
4. ISO 45100 Accreditation at Company
5. NACE Group (construction, health and social care, all others) - Chi<sup>2</sup> only

## Response/Dependent Variable (DV)

- Consultation Rating  
5 Point Likert Scale  
Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Agree (5)

There are adequate systems of consultation about occupational safety and health issues at my company .

(strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree)

# Statistical Tests: Consultation Rating

## 1. Chi-squared test

Assess if statistically significant relationship between two variables – X [if SR] and Y {consultation rating]

Differences in ratings for groups are statistically significant

## 2. Linear Regression

Test if X/predictor variable [if SR] significantly predicts Y/response variable [agreement score]

Estimate the relationship - impact of X [if SR] on the agreement score

## 3. Binary Logistic Regression

Identify relationship between two variables/factors, use this relationship to predict the value of one of those factors based on the other (odds ratio)

If presence of X, the odds of agreeing with statement is higher/lower, as compared with others  
2 groups - SR yes, SR no

Success = agreeing with statement, Failure = not agreeing

# Overall Summary

## CHI Squared

Predictor	Chi^2	P Value	
Safety Representative	84.4472	1.987158e-17	Yes
Health and Safety Committee	107.1203	2.99219e-22	Yes
Trade Union Recognition	.830061	0.1451459 (Not SS)	No
ISO 45001	68.98958	7.807254e-12	Yes
NACE Groups/Simplified	31.64632	0.0001077505	Yes

## Linear Regression

Predictor /IV	Response/Outcome	P Value Coef/ b1	
Safety Representative	1.0378	<2e-16, SS	2
Health and Safety Committee	1.10322	<2e-16, SS	1
Trade Union Recognition	-0.1682	0.134 (Not SS)	
ISO 45001	0.52164	4.74e-09	3

## Logistic Regression

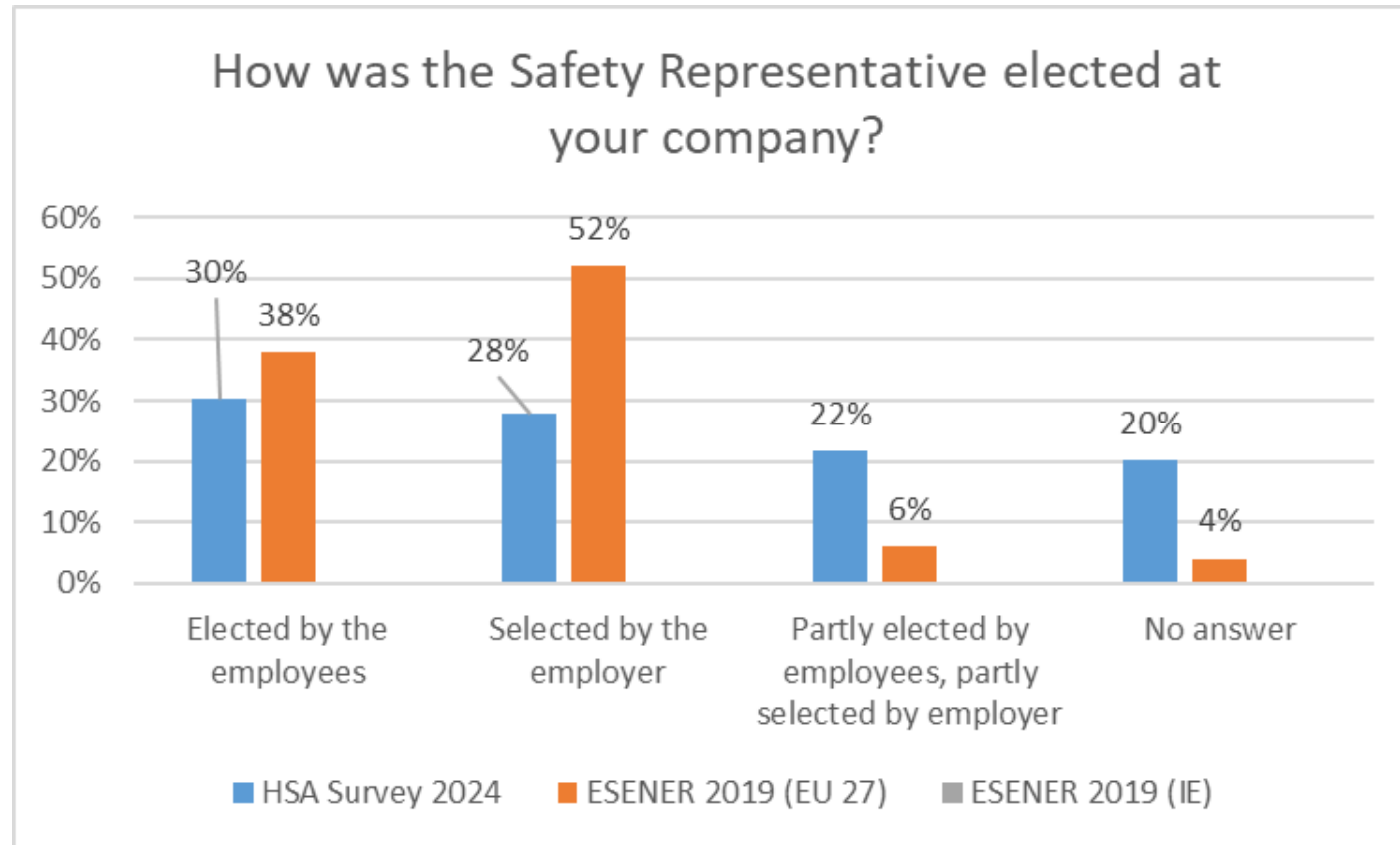
Predictor/IV	P-Value	β/Log Odds	Odds Ratio	
Safety Representative	< 2.20e-15	1.7221	5.59	1
Health and Safety Committee	< 2e-16	1.6993	5.47	2
Trade Union Recognition	0.3493 (Not SS)	-0.1662	0.85	
ISO 45001	0.93591	2.55	2.55	3

# Interpretation

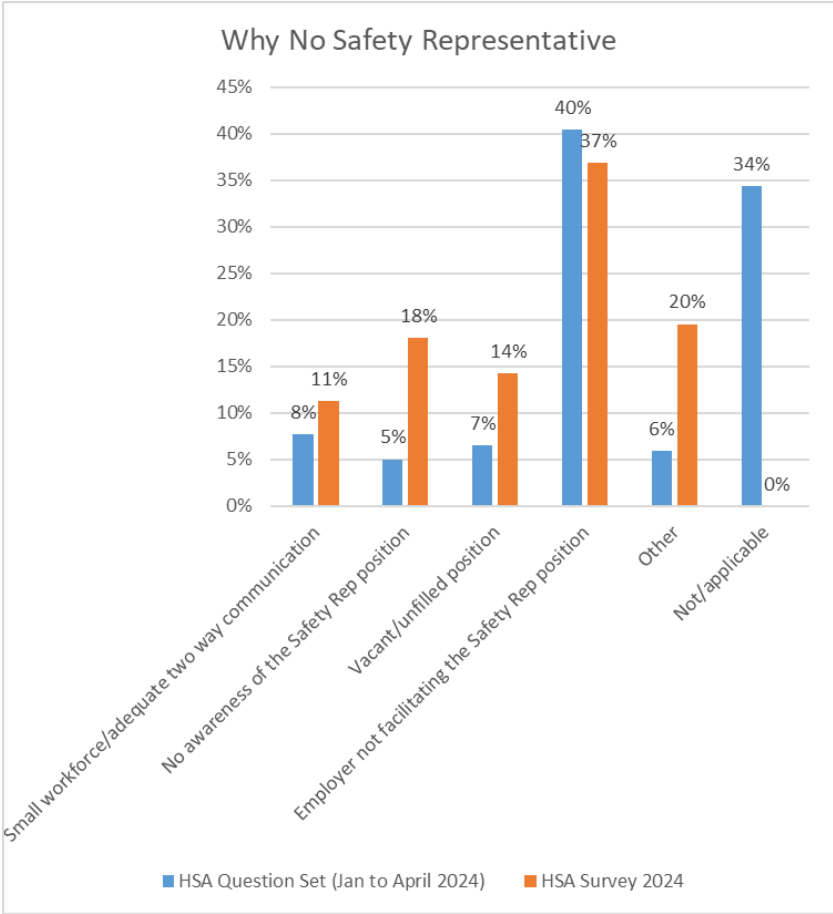
- Good evidence on importance/value of SR role in relation to impact on perception of systems of consultation (rating).
- Health and Safety Committee also important, as is ISO 45001 accreditation.
- Cannot draw conclusions on impact of TU Recognition.
- There is a link between TU Recognition and SR role.
- Statistically significant differences between groups/NACE sectors – construction, health and social care, all others.
- Caveats around tests (single variable, units).



# How was the Safety Representative Elected

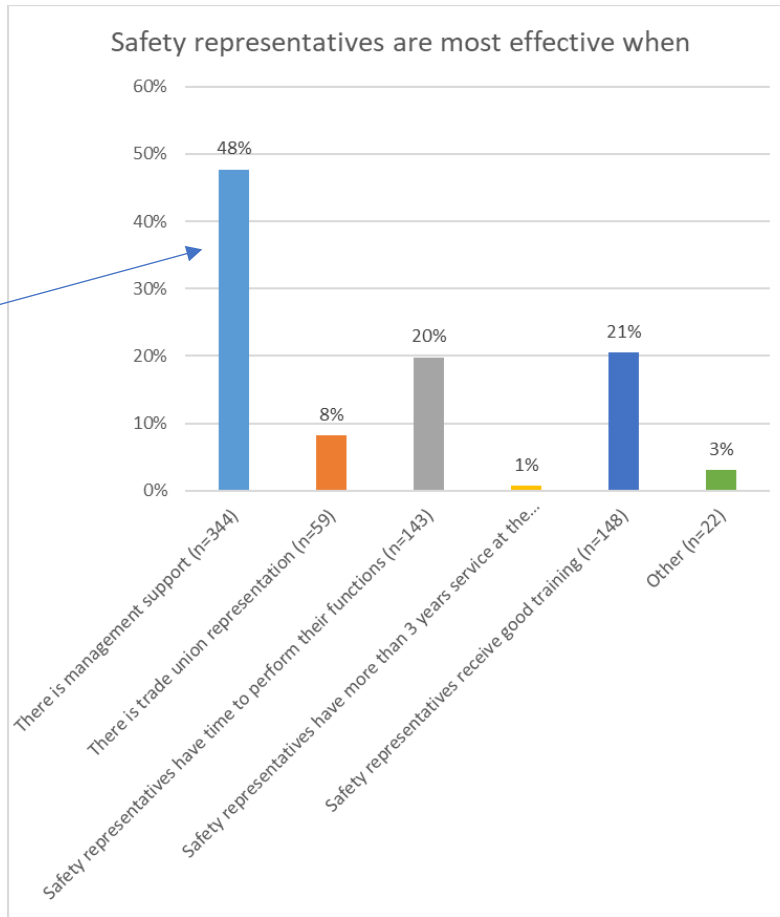


# Why No Safety Representative

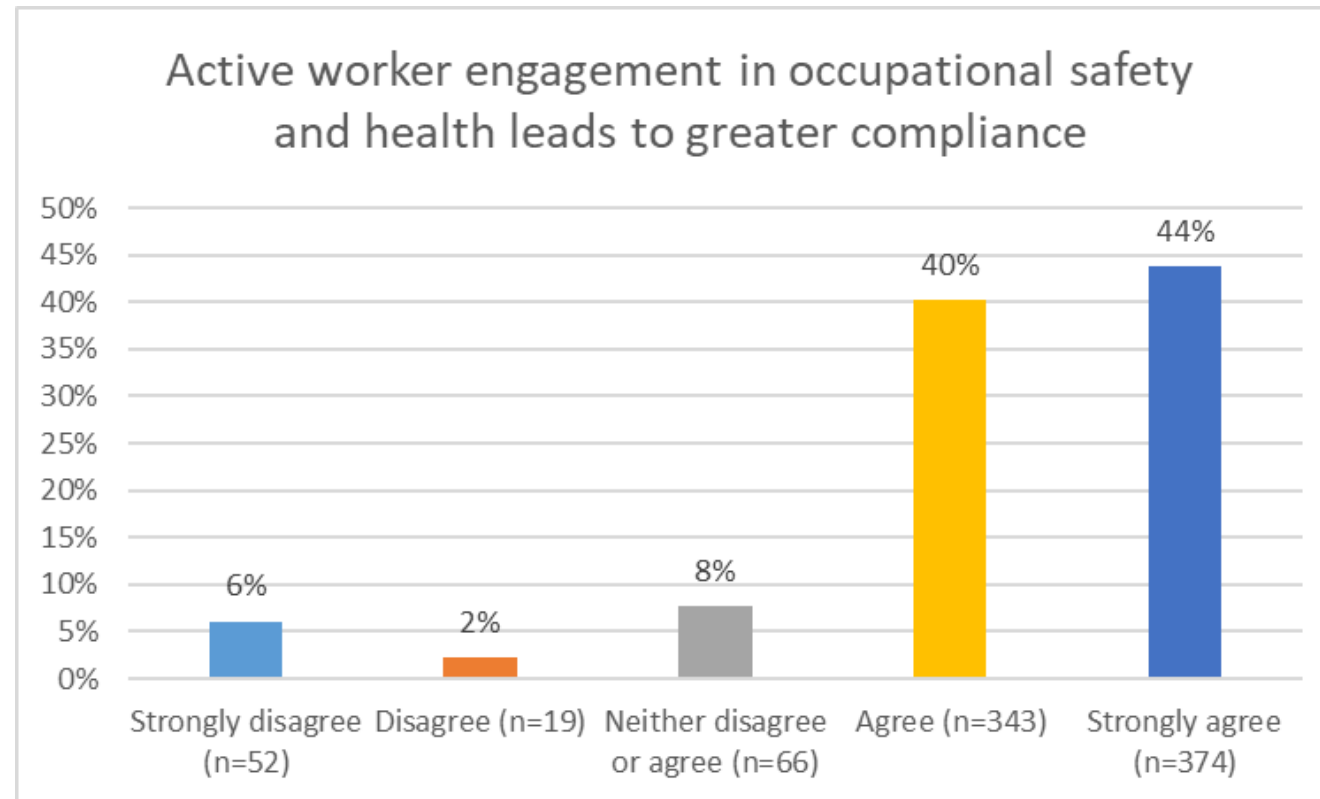




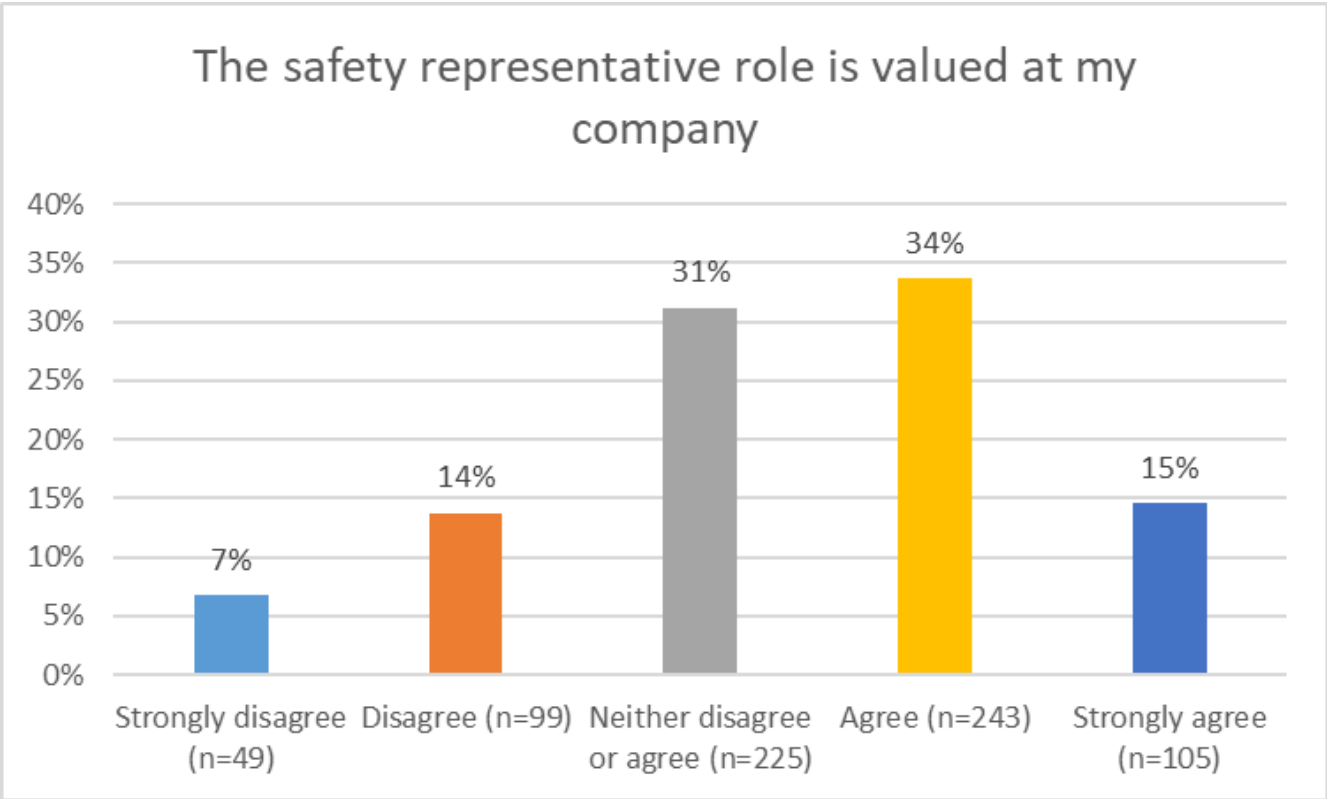
# Safety representatives are most effective when



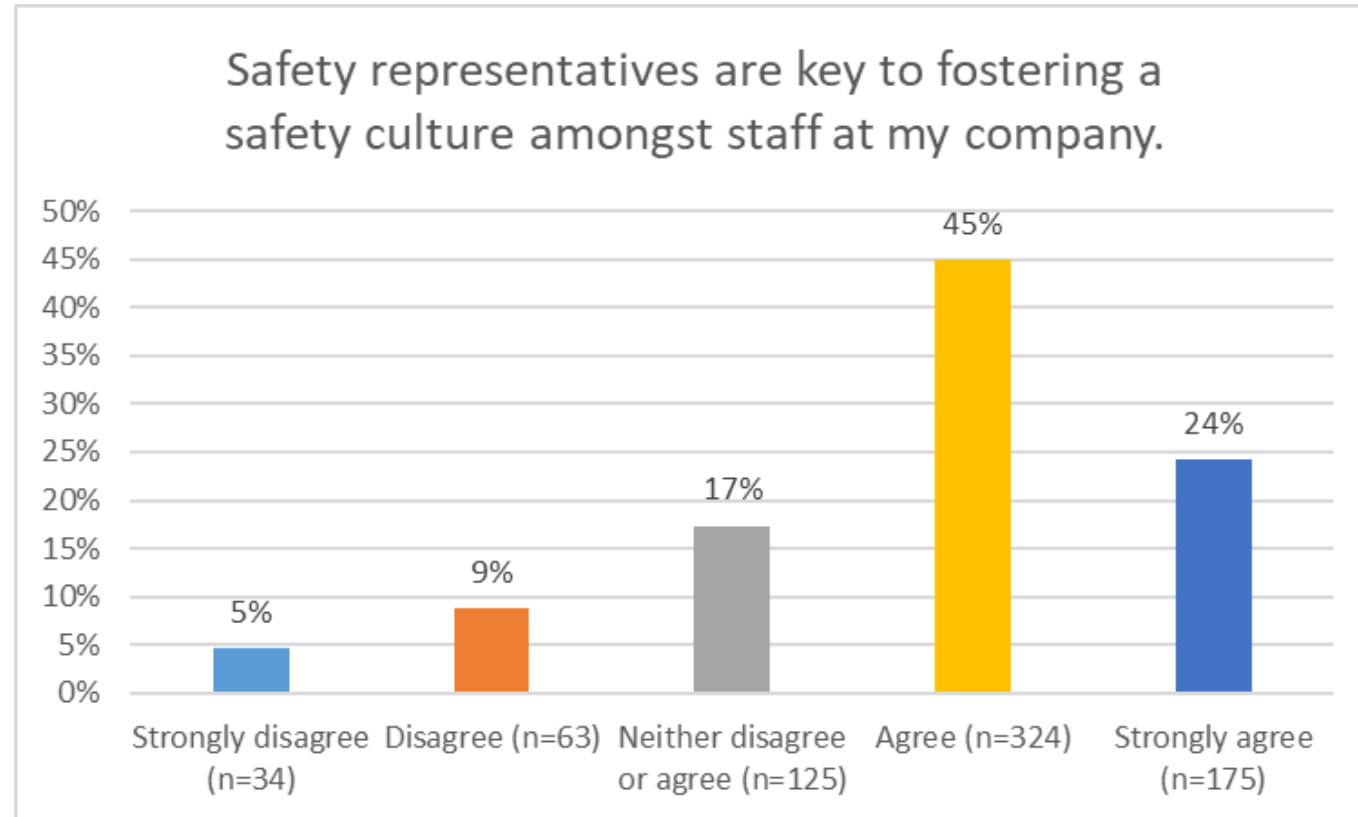
# Active worker engagement in occupational safety and health leads to greater compliance



# The safety representative role is valued at my company

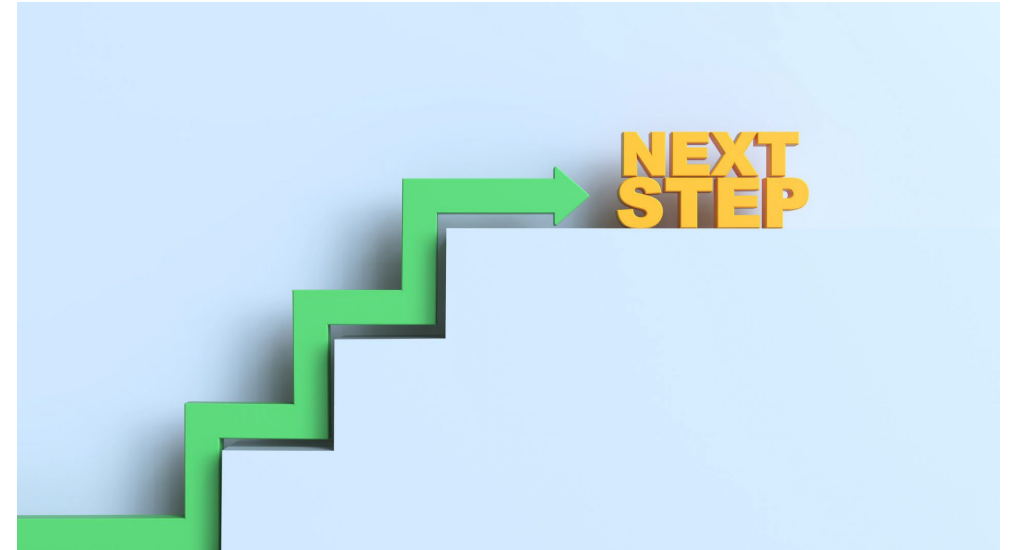


# Safety representatives are key to fostering a safety culture amongst staff at my company.



# Next Steps

- **Looking at overall story**
  - **Similar findings? Ring true?**
  - **Triangulating evidence**
- Further analysis of findings in collaboration with stakeholders
- Action based research to address insights from survey
- Working with HSA advisory committees
  - Health and social care advisory committee
  - Construction safety partnership advisory committee



# Thank you and Questions

- Thank you
- Any questions

**HSA**

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority



# HSA

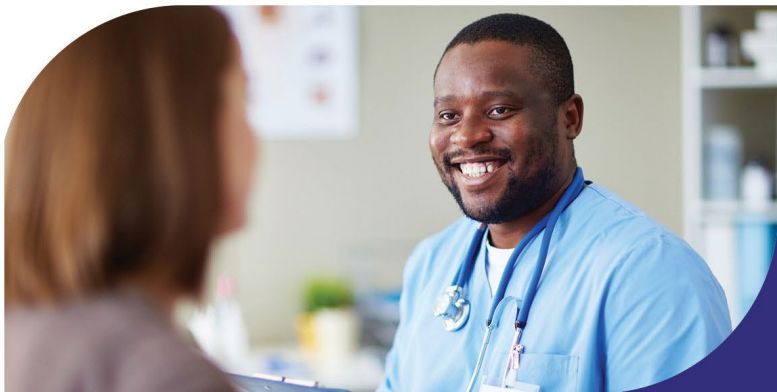
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Health and Safety Authority

Go raibh maith agaibh  
Thank you

T: 0818 289 389

E: [contactus@hsa.ie](mailto:contactus@hsa.ie)

W: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

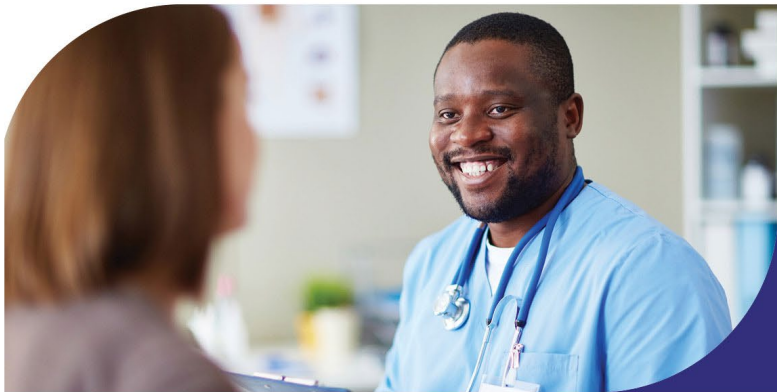




# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## Union Perspective



Dublin Castle

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024



# Representation and Consultation

## Legal rights, not privileges

Pat Kenny, ICTU Chair of OSH subcommittee

And

David Hughes, HSA Board Member and member of ICTU  
Health and Safety Committee

# Safety Representatives

## Section 25

- \* Employees may select and appoint
- \* Have rights but not duties
- \* Employer has no veto
- \* Number of safety reps is matter for agreement
- \* Right to make representations to employer
- \* Employer must consider and take appropriate action
- \* Make written or oral representations to inspectors
- \* Inspectors should advise and inform on matters relating to safety, health and welfare at the place of work

# Inspection rights

- \* The right to inspect the whole or any part of the place of work
- \* Subject to giving reasonable notice to the employer
- \* Immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger
- \* Frequency of inspections may be agreed with the employer
- \* We suggest at least four per annum

# Consultation

## Section 26

- \* Consultation with employees is provided for under Section 26
- \* This can and should include the Safety Rep
- \* It must be made in advance and in good time to allow employees time to consider, discuss and give an opinion on matters before Management decide.
- \* It needs to take place at a time which will allow employees an opportunity to prepare a response and to be engaged in meaningful dialogue
- \* Employers who decide on Health and Safety and then inform employees what they are doing are not engaged in consultation

# Safety Committees

## Schedule 4

- \* Safety Committees are key to ensuring effective consultation and representation
- \* They should be employee led with the majority of members employees including Safety Reps Ex. in a committee of four, three should be employee nominees
- \* Safety Committees are vital in ensuring effective consultation and representation thereby ensuring health and safety is managed effectively
- \* They help to promote a positive health and safety culture ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to influence health and safety
- \* Lack of consultation can affect everyone as it increases the chances of something going wrong and can lead to serious accidents

# Enforcement

- \* The rights afforded in respect of consultation, representation and information are as enforceable and important as every other section and regulation
- \* Workers must insist on having a voice on safety, health and welfare issues and inspectors are obliged to enforce that right
- \* The act provides protection against victimisation

# ICTU Health and Safety Committee

- \* All affiliated unions in the Republic of Ireland are represented
- \* Aims
  - \* Keep unions informed of developments
  - \* Campaign for improvement in workplace safety
  - \* Advise the Executive Council of Congress on matters relating to Health and Safety
  - \* Coordinate activity to support health and safety representatives
  - \* Provide guidance for Trade Unions

# Importance of Health and Safety

- \* A safe and health working environment is a fundamental principle and right at work
  - \* 2.93 million workers die each year as a result of work-related factors
  - \* 395 million workers sustain an injury every year as a result of work
- \* The most effective tool that we have in ensuring good health and safety at work is properly Selected Safety Representatives
- \* Employers with Safety Committees have a lower injury rate than those who operate without consultation
- \* Enterprises that operate without consultation have higher injury rates which will inevitably lead to higher costs



# Consultation with Workers – Good for Business

- \* Ensure enterprises are compliant with legislation
- \* Financial Benefits – reduces accidents and injuries making it a financially sound investment
- \* Promotes a positive work culture by showing workers that their well-being is a priority
- \* Informed decision making - Well trained Safety Representatives provide valuable insights when introducing new machinery or altering work processes
- \* Emergency Preparedness: Safety Representatives are key to assisting in creating and preparing emergency responses
- \* Facilitates Communication: Safety Representatives act as a bridge between the workforce and management on safety-related concerns ensuring that safety concerns are escalated, and safety matters are effectively communicated and implemented.

# Safety Reps – the issues

- \* Precarious Employment
- \* Lack of Management Support
- \* Perception and Portrayal of Health and Safety
- \* No consistency in the training provided
- \* Confusion regarding the role
- \* Time required to undertake the role
- \* Fear of being victimised

# Promoting the Safety Rep Role

- \* Covid Lead Worker Representative heightened awareness of the value of workers voice, employer acceptance, and state recognition of the role.
- \* Managers need to have a greater understanding of their responsibilities regarding consultation which should include the active encouragement of Safety Reps
- \* Consistency in relation to training including refresher training
- \* Joint Promotion of the Role by Employers, Trade Unions and HSA

# Information and Resources

- \* Information

- \* Safety Representatives need the facilities to be able to access information while in work
- \* Job / Sector Specific information and training should be provided e.g. Retail
- \* Toolkit should be developed
- \* Details should be provided on who the Safety Inspectors are

- \* Resources

- \* Need to have the facilities to do the job
- \* Time off to undertake the role

# Summary

- \* Employers are required to consult with their employees
- \* Having a properly trained and resourced Safety Representative is good for business
- \* The confusion between the roles of Employer Safety Officers and employee elected safety representatives needs to be corrected
- \* Inspectors must ask for Safety Representatives in every workplace
- \* Inspectors must ensure that Safety Representatives are given inspection reports

# Properly resourced and employee selected Safety Representatives are good for everyone

Let`s maximise their potential

ORGANISED WORKPLACES = SAFER WORKPLACES

Health and Safety at work is a trade union Right.

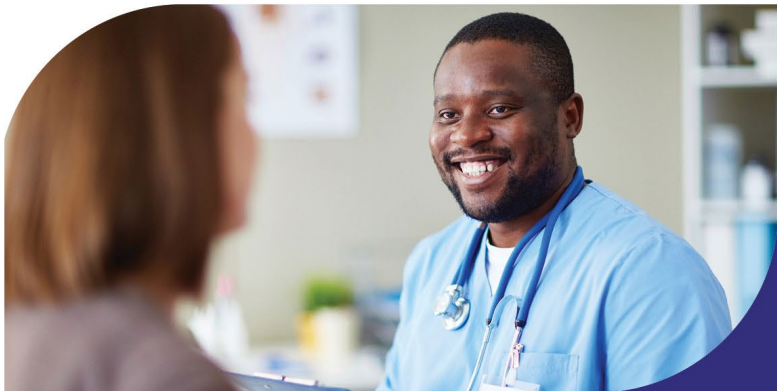
Thank you.



# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## Employer Perspective



Dublin Castle

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024

# Safety Representation – an employers' perspective

---

Dr. Michael Gillen

Head of OSH, Member Services, Ibec





## A personal perspective

**Good communication is the key to effective consultation, which leads to strong culture**

# Consultation – legal basis

- The employer must consult with staff in advance and good time regarding:
  - Any measure to be taken which may substantially affect the SHW of employees
  - Prevention of risks
  - Hazard ID and RA
  - Preparation of safety statements
- Safety Representative
- Safety Committees

# Safety Representative

- ‘employees may, from time to time, select and appoint from amongst their number at their place of work a representative (safety representative).....to represent them at the place of work in consultation with their employer on matters related to safety, health and welfare at the place of work’

# Safety Reps. Rights

- After giving reasonable notice
  - Inspect workplace
  - Investigate complaints and potential hazards
- Immediately
  - Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences
- To receive H&S advice and information
- To make representations

# Safety Committee

- Balance
- Activities
  - Progress report statement
  - Accident and dangerous incident data
  - Identification of unsafe conditions and practices
  - Reports on action taken
  - The provision and use of ppe
  - Practical safety and health suggestions
  - Special activities (i.e. safety week)
  - Safety and health training needs
  - Development of rules/procedures/systems

# Different types of employers

- Unionised v non-unionised
- Public v private
- Large v medium v small
- Manufacturing v construction v services
- High risk activities v low risk activities

# Consultation – good practice tips

- Recognise the role
- Agree the number of representative(s)
- Involve the representative
- Plan a programme of inspections
  - Co-ordinate inspections
  - Inspect together
  - Break down tasks

# Communications within organisation

- Visible Behaviour
  - lead by example – walkabout & talkabout
- Written and Electronic Communications
  - Policy, safety statement, risk assessments, etc.
- Face-to-face Discussion
  - Safety committees, 1-to-1, etc.



# Resources

- Consultation
  - [short online course for safety representatives](#)
  - [Safety representatives resource book](#)
  - [Safety reps and consultation – FAQ](#)
  - [Good Practice tips from the HSE \(UK\)](#)

# An employers' perspective

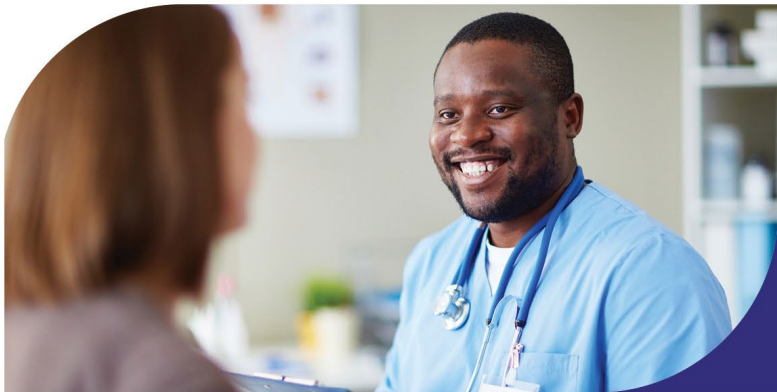
**Good communication is the key to  
effective consultation, which leads to  
strong culture**



# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## Safety Representatives Lightning Round



Dublin Castle

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024

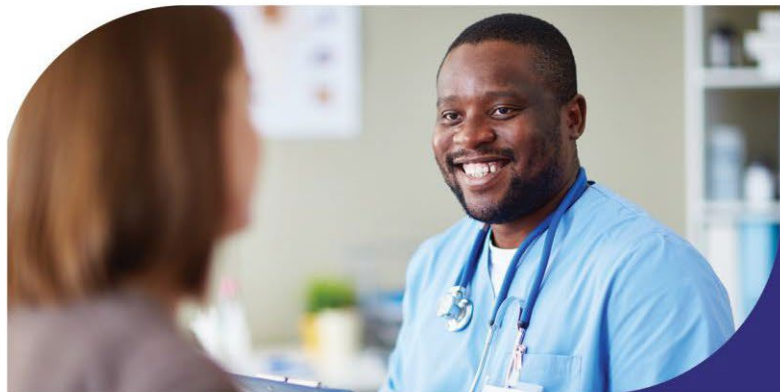


# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## Safety Representative, Health and Safety Authority

Pádraig Allen, Inspector



12 November 2024

# Introduction and overview

## Topics of discussion

1. Making representations
2. Inspection of the workplace
3. To consult and liaise with other safety representatives
4. Making an impact

# Overview of the Safety Representations at the Health and Safety Authority

- Safety committee of 10
- Meet at least four times per year

## Safety Representatives

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • Cork/Limerick          | 1 Representative  |
| • Kilkenny/Waterford     | 1 Representative  |
| • Galway /Sligo /Athlone | 2 Representatives |
| • Dublin                 | 3 Representatives |

# Inspection of the workplace

## **Section 25 (2) (a) of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005**

Safety representatives are entitled, after giving reasonable notice to their employer, to inspect the whole or any part of a workplace.

- Agreed beforehand
- Tour of the workplace with the safety officer
- Discuss and record observations of interest
- Follow up with safety officer or discuss update at next safety committee meeting

# To make representations to the employer

## **Section 25 (2) (g) of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005**

A safety representative has the right to make representations to the employer on any matter relating to safety, health and welfare at the workplace.

- Make representation to the employer on behalf of the staff member
- Provide feedback for e.g. employee has advised no training was provided or equipment requires servicing



# Making representations

- Assemble the facts
- Check the facts
- Decide on the action to be taken

# Making representations

- Local level – word with the supervisor or manager
- Local level – email line manager or safety officer
- Trade unions advise (local branch)
- Provide a written proposal by email to be discussed at the next safety committee meeting.

**Keep a written record of your communication of issues relating to safety, health and welfare.**

**In larger companies, it is often the case where the safety representative will work closely with the safety officer**



# To consult and liaise with other safety representatives

## **Section 25 (2) (j) of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005**

Safety representatives have the right to consult and liaise on matters relating to safety, health and welfare at work with other safety representatives in the undertaking concerned, whether or not those safety representatives work in the same workplace, in different workplaces under the control of the employer or at different times at the place of work

- Work closely with safety representatives, communication and knowledge sharing
- Collaborate on issues of similar nature
- Making joint proposal to safety committee
- Being a voice for employees

# Making an impact

- Working with colleagues
- Working with the health and safety team
- Working with the trade union
- Making representations to the safety committee
- Recommendation to the safety committee





# HSA

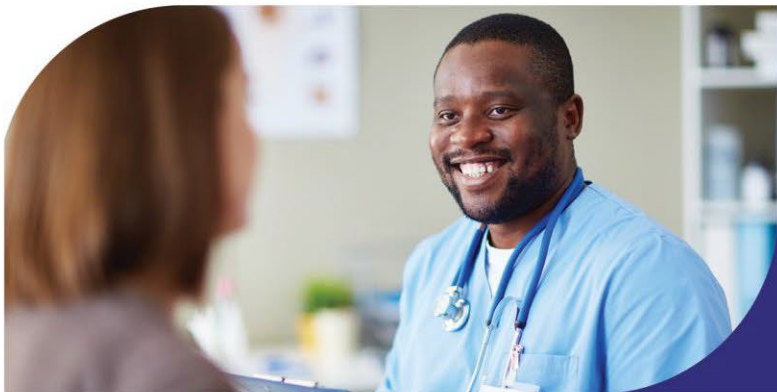
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

Go raibh maith agaibh  
Thank you

T: 0818 289 389

E: [contactus@hsa.ie](mailto:contactus@hsa.ie)

W: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)



Safety Rep  
CME Dept  
Iarnród Éireann



November 2024

Alan Jordan



# Safety Representative

- Why I became a Safety Rep.....
- How I became a Safety Rep.....





# What is involved with the role?



- Bridge between management and workers and communicating with both. One Team.
- Involvement with all elements of Safety within the Workplace, including:
  - Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
  - Safety Tours and Workplace inspections
  - Accident investigation
  - Promoting a positive safety culture
  - Involved with Safety Briefings and Inductions
  - Making suggestions to improve work practice





# Barriers and Enablers

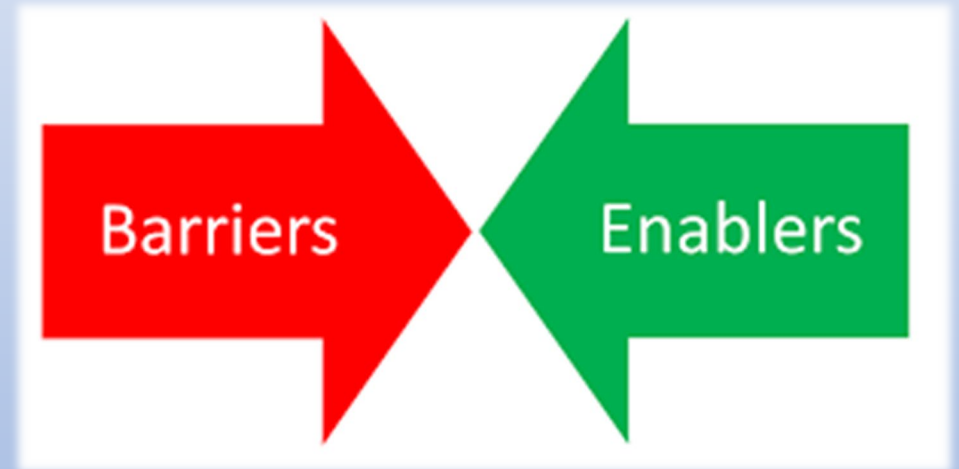


## Barriers –

- Stigma (seen as a trouble maker).
- Staff buy in.
- Time.

## Enablers –

- Management who want to improve Safety
- Workers who want a safer workplace
- Training Provided
- Time.





# Specific Challenges I Faced



- Coming out of my own shell and learning new skills.

- Risk assessment
- SSOW's
- Safety tours
- Hazard reporting
- Staff and contractor inductions
- Accident investigation.



- Result- Safety Representative of the year



# What We have improved



- Some of the particular things I have done to improve safety!





# Advice for other Safety reps



Advice I would give or things I would have liked to know before hand or done differently.

- Be open to new challenges.
- Don't be afraid.
- Listen and learn.
- Use all resources available, Internal and external e.g. Safety Department and the HSA website





**Thank you for listening....**

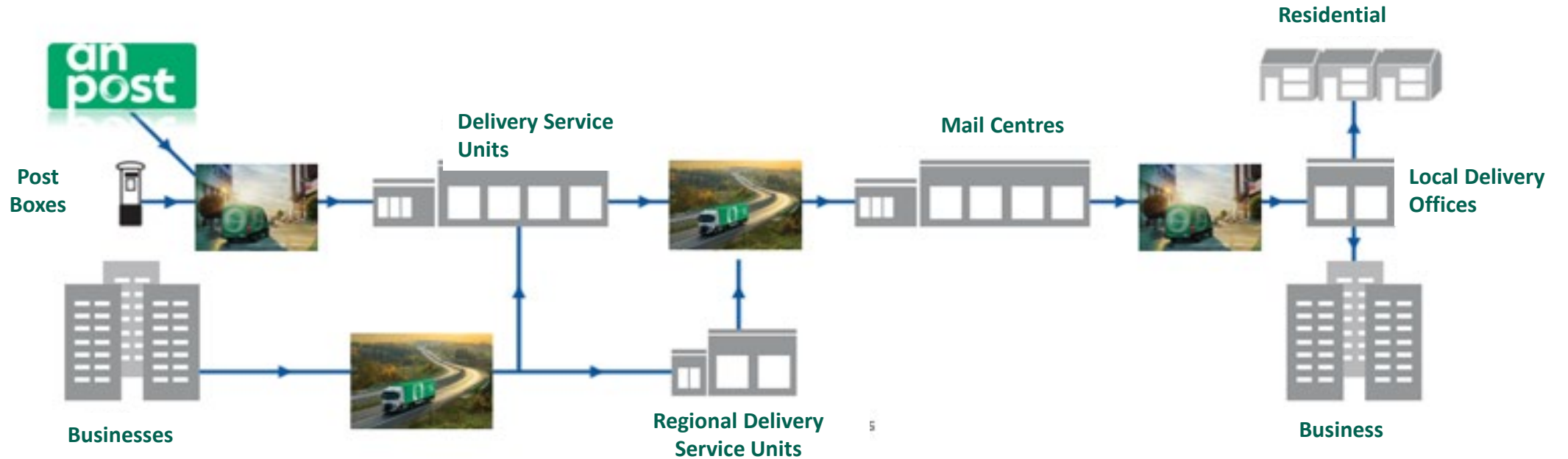
# Safety Representatives: An Post

Tony Finn  
H & S Training  
Coordinator

**an  
post**

For your world

# Fast Facts



Every working day, over 9,500 An Post staff:

- Collect, process and deliver 2.5 million items of mail
- To 2.2 million business and residential addresses
- Using a road fleet of over 3,200 vehicles
- Serving 1.7 million customers every week

# Current An Post Representation of Safety Representatives

2024 – audit was completed on current status of Safety Representatives within An Post

157 sites – (3 x Mail Centres, 110 x Delivery Service Units, 44 x Retails offices)

- 139 trained and qualified Safety Representatives
- 37 locations with no Safety Representative
- 14 locations waiting for Safety Representative training in 2025
- Mail Centres average 4 Safety Representative per site
- 4 Safety Committees, including HQ
- 4 DSUs with more than 1 Safety Representative

Training numbers past 4 years - QQI level 5

- 2024 – 24 trained
- 2023 – 19 trained
- 2022 – 22 trained
- 2021 – 6 trained (online)



# Current Challenges

- Concerns over who is responsible for Health & Safety at a location
- Barriers for those who have not attended education in recent years
- Those requiring additional needs while attending training
- Travel to training locations
- Staff release to attend training

In 2025 An Post are introducing –

- Poster campaign for new Safety Representatives
- Launching Safety Representative role profile stories on the An Post internal employee app
- Further Safety Representative regional forums
- Presentation day for those who completed Safety Representative training in 2024

Acknowledge the cooperation and input of our Union Stakeholders (CWU, AHCPS & Fórsa) in our Safety Rep process



## Safety & Environment

Help build a safe and healthy workplace for you and your colleagues.

Section 25 of the 2005 Health Safety & Welfare at Work Act entitles employees to decide on, select and appoint a safety representative.



### What are the benefits of becoming a Safety Representative?

- **Assist An Post and your line Manager in promoting** health and safety in the workplace
- **Be the voice of your colleagues on Health & Safety issues**
  - raise concerns with your line Manager
- **Assist your line Manager in ensuring safe work procedures are** adhered to and implemented

If you are interested in becoming a Safety Representative for your office, please speak with your line Manager or contact; the Safety & Environment Team.  
Contact [safety.matters@anpost.ie](mailto:safety.matters@anpost.ie)

To learn more about the role of Safety Representatives, flyers are available in the office.

**an  
post**  
For our world

**an  
post**



Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation  
Working Together



www.inmo.ie | inmo@inmo.ie | 01 6640600

# INMO National Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Strategy



**Karen Eccles**  
**INMO National Safety, Health and Welfare at Work  
Representative**

# Rationale



- In recognition of the occupational health and safety risks presented because of the crisis in overcrowding in our emergency departments and recruitment and retention in the workplace, the INMO negotiated the following agreements with the Health and Safety Executive through the Work Relations Commission to specifically facilitate nurses and midwives in their safety representative structures.

# INMO-HSE Agreements



- 2016- Emergency Department agreement facilitating an INMO Safety Representative in all Emergency Departments.
- 2017- Recruitment and Retention agreement, making provision for an additional 2 INMO Safety Representatives in all workplaces.

# The INMO's Strategy



- **Leadership at Organisation level**
  - The Director of Industrial Relations carries organizational portfolio for Occupational Health and Safety
  - Establishment of both a Health and Safety Group and National Safety Health and Welfare at Work Representative

# The INMO's Strategy



- **Delivery in the workplace.**
  - Branch Health and Safety Liaison Officers who liaise directly with the national safety representative

## The role of the INMO National Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Rep



- Operates in accordance with Section 25 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- Establishes, develops, and delivers a comprehensive Safety Representative education and training program in conjunction with the INMO.
- Informs members about occupational health and safety legislation that supports them in the workplace.
- Establishes and maintains a current register of all trained safety representatives and their locations.
- Communicates and liaises with necessary agencies and stakeholders to promote occupational workplace safety, health and welfare, and the role of Safety Representatives.
- Nominated by the INMO to the ICTU Health and Safety Committee.



## Assaults at work



- Over 4,106 nurses and midwives were physically, verbally or sexually assaulted at work between January 2023 and February 2024. We know this is an under-reporting as voluntary hospitals and private healthcare facilities are not included. The reporting process can be long.
- **Of the 8,707 non-fatal injuries reported to the H.S.A in 2022, the highest number was reported in the economic sector of Human Health and Social Work Activities which accounted for 22.8% (n=2070) of all incidents (HSA, 2023).**

## How have safety agreements impacted occupational health & safety in the workplace?



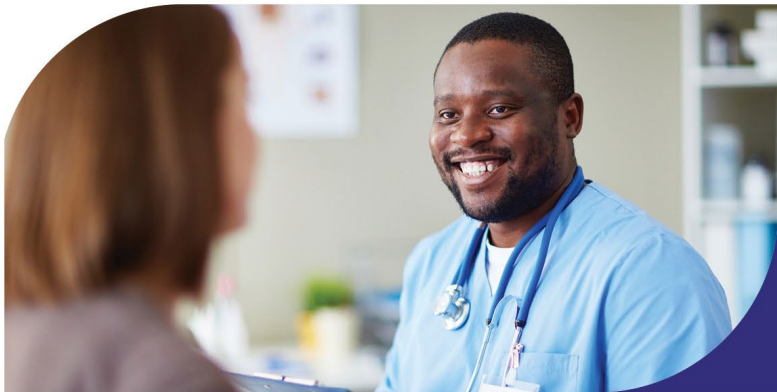
- It has significantly increased awareness and knowledge among nurses and midwives of the occupational health and safety legislation governing our workplaces
- It has increased awareness of the importance of prevention through occupational health and safety risk assessments in the workplace
- The appointment of INMO safety representatives in each emergency department and workplaces has helped address and monitor safety concerns more effectively, supported compliance and, contributed to a safer working environment for employees
- We now have an additional 120 trained nurse midwife Safety Representatives in our workplaces and consistent interest in the role demonstrated by our current numbers registered for training



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Health and Safety Authority

## Panel Discussion



Dublin Castle

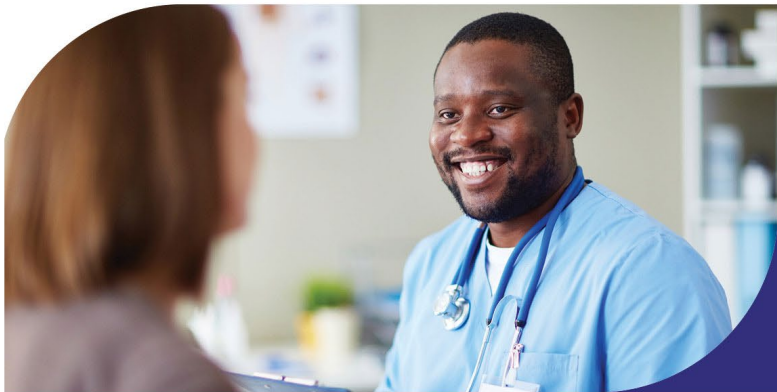
12<sup>th</sup> November 2024



# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## Safety Representatives New Resources



Dublin Castle

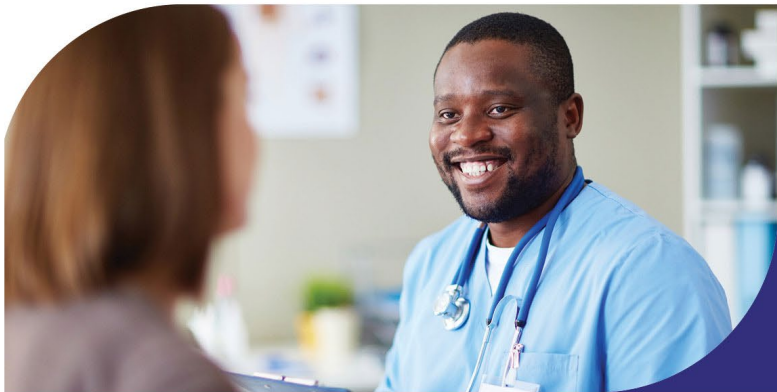
12<sup>th</sup> November 2024



# HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

## New Safety Representatives eBook and HSA Resources (Edition 4)



NAME Dr Joan Cahill, Edel Guckian.  
DATE 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**HSA**

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority



## Safety Representatives

Resource Book

hsa.ie

2024

**HSA**

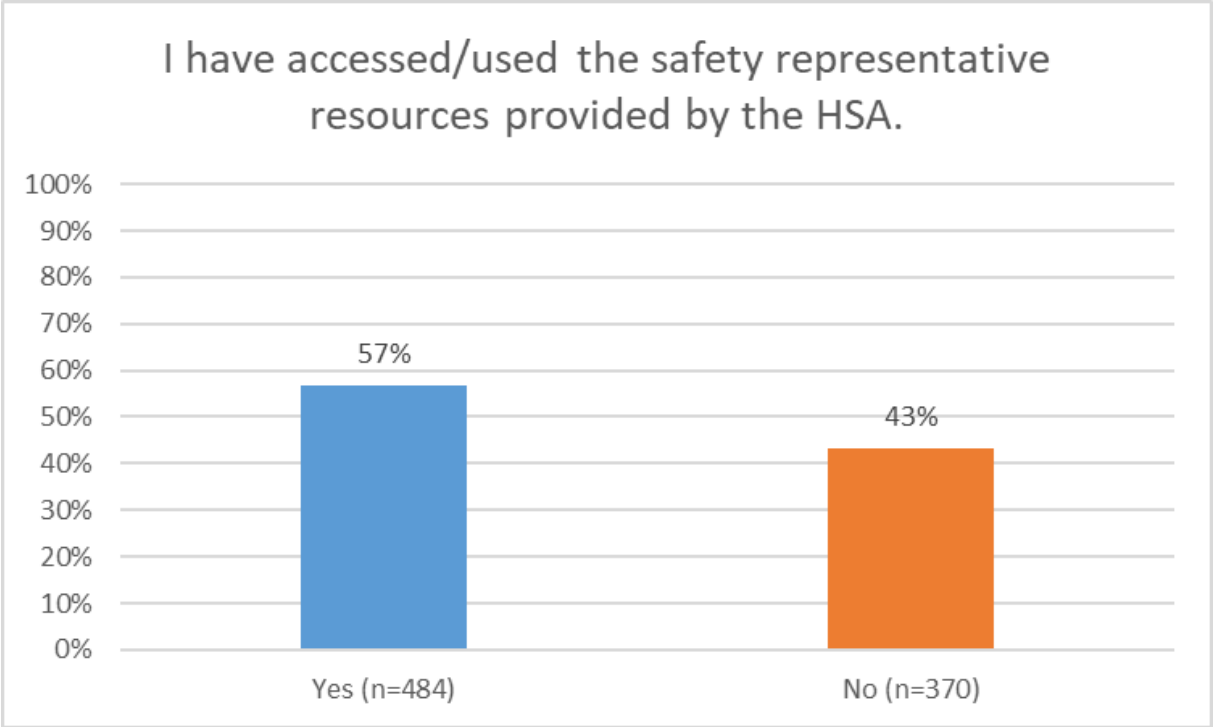
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

**Updated Version (Edition 4)**

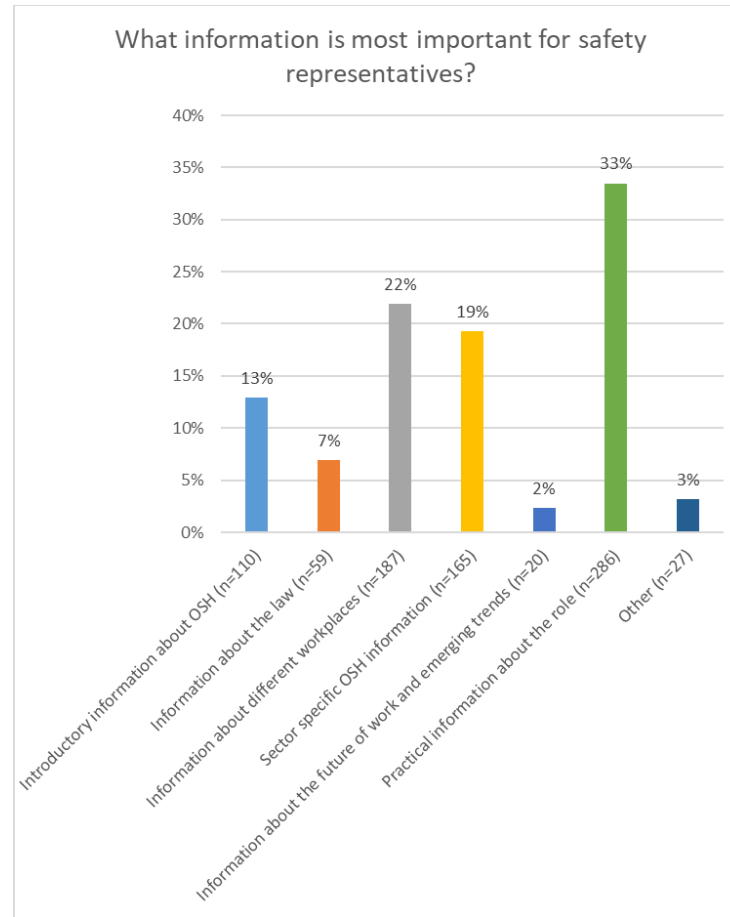
## Safety Representatives Resource Book

**To be launched in 2025**

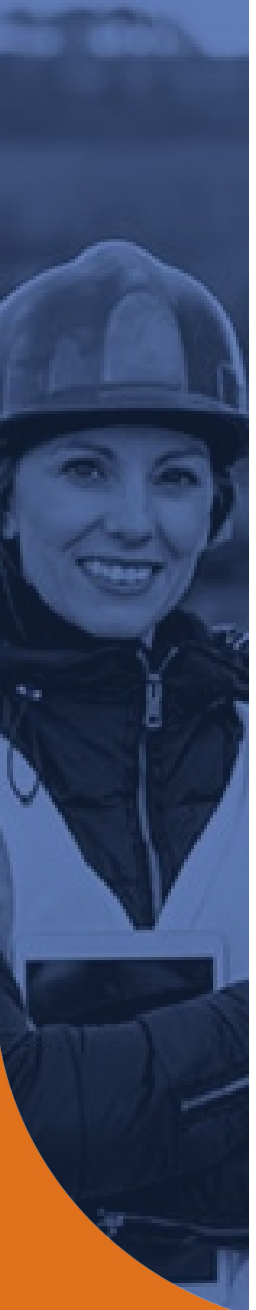
# Accessed/Used HSA Resources



# Information Needs & Resources





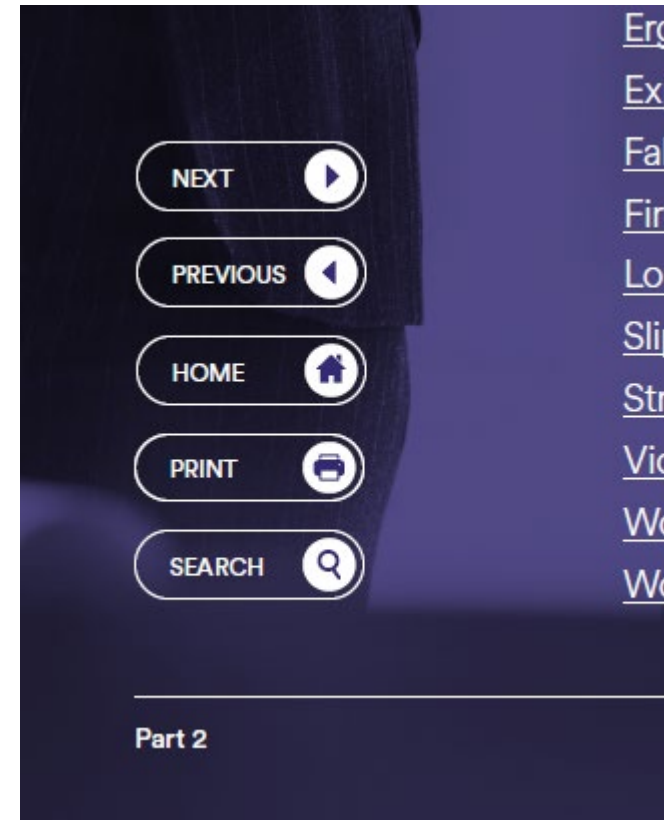


- Divided into Parts i.e.
  - Information on Safety Reps Role
  - Vulnerable Workers and Sensitive Risk Groups
  - Hazards in the Workplace
  - Workplaces
- Parts divided into Chapters i.e.
  - Asbestos
  - Violence and Aggression
  - Education
  - Healthcare
- New Content i.e.
  - Emerging Themes/Topics & Challenges

The screenshot shows a navigation menu for 'PART 2: INTRODUCTION TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY'. At the top, there is a horizontal menu with links for PART 1 through PART 10, REFERENCES, and APPENDICES. The main content area lists various topics with underlined links: Asbestos, Asthma, Biological Hazards, Bullying and harassment, Chemicals & Hazardous Substances, Occupational diseases and illnesses, Electricity, Electromagnetic Fields, Ergonomics to include manual handling and Display Screen Equipment, Explosive Atmospheres, Falls from Heights, Work at Height and Falling Objects, Fire, Lone Working, Slips/Trips/Falls on the same level, Stress (Work Related) & Psychosocial Hazards, Violence and aggression, Work-related vehicle safety: in the workplace and on the road, and Work Equipment/machinery. On the left side of the content area, there are five circular navigation buttons: NEXT (right arrow), PREVIOUS (left arrow), HOME (house icon), PRINT (printer icon), and SEARCH (magnifying glass icon). At the bottom left, it says 'Part 2' and at the bottom right, it says '8'.

# eBook Features

- Living document
- Accessible online and can be printed
- Interactive PDF
- Hyperlinked
- Searchable
- Active links/signposting



# What will be included in the Chapters

- Key Points
- Definitions
- Questions / Actions Points



## Key Point

If a new hazard is brought to the attention of a safety representative, you can consider conducting a preliminary risk assessment and/or bring it to the attention of the Safety Officer and/or Safety Committee at your company.



## Questions / Action Points

- Have risk assessments been undertaken at my place of work and are they suitable/fit for purpose?
- Is the safety statement up to date?
- Are there any new hazards to consider?
- Are employees happy with the existing control measures?
- Do the risk assessments consider vulnerable workers?
- Have employees been consulted about hazards and controls?

- HSA Resources
- Other Resources
- Statistics & practical information included (from survey)



## Other Resources

- [European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. \(2024\). Hierarchy of prevention and control measures.](#)



## HSA Resources

For further information, please see:

- [Safety Statement and Risk Assessment](#)
- [BeSMART.ie](#)
- [Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#)
- [Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](#)
- [Managing hazards in the workplace.](#)



# HSA

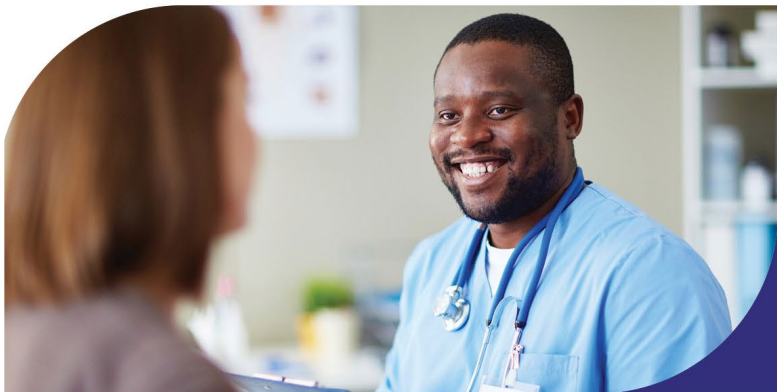
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

Go raibh maith agaibh  
Thank you

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