

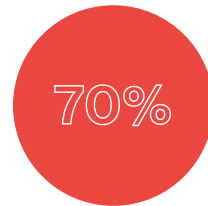
# *Work* and health-environment: what are the challenges to address in the face of *climate change*?

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The question of work in the ecological transition is crucial. Employment, combatting unemployment, the desire for free time, and the financing of periods of life outside of work are all themes that, for the past forty years or so, have pushed work into the background, even though it is one of the conditions of human life that is now being disrupted by climate change. The ESEC has taken up the work on health issues against a backdrop of accelerating climate change and ecosystem degradation. To that end, it is responding to current concerns in the world of work and warns of the future worsening of certain occupational risk factors, in particular rising temperatures.

The concepts of health-environment and exposome are at the heart of this work. The growing significance of environmental risks calls for a comprehensive and preventive approach in the design and implementation of health policies. Today, preventive healthcare cannot be separated from environmental concerns and the overlap of factors calls for decompartmentalization between occupational health and public health.

Climate change is reflected not only in an increase in physical risks at work (occupational accidents and diseases) but also in the emergence of psychosocial risks, eco-anxiety risks and ethical conflicts experienced by many workers. The meaning of work and commitment to work can be affected. For this reason, actors in the world of work must act both to adapt work to global warming and to mitigate the impact of human activities on the climate.



**respondents consider that climate change and, more generally, environmental degradation can affect the health of employees.**

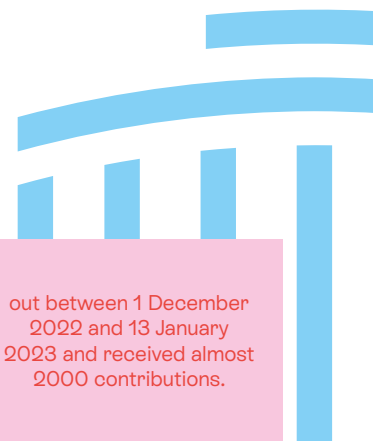
Source: ESEC 2022 Survey

## AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

This opinion is based on a public consultation carried out by the ESEC. This major consultation of employee representatives

in the public and private sectors, employers in small and large companies and the civil service (see below) was carried

out between 1 December 2022 and 13 January 2023 and received almost 2000 contributions.



Occupational health and health-environment policies must be rethought together in several areas: greater coherence between the various occupational health professionals and all primary prevention actors in order to improve knowledge and identify risks; organisation of social dialogue to raise awareness of a preventive culture in respect of health and the environment within companies, professional industries and the public sector; strengthened social and environmental democracy.

## 1 KNOW THE RISKS AND DECOMPARTMENTALISE HEALTH POLICIES

- **Improve knowledge based on epidemiology:** develop research, and prevention by 'tracing' data. Health data is a governance issue, and the small signs detected by the DUERP (Single Occupational Risk Assessment Document) will enable us to anticipate and remain vigilant.
- **Reinforce and expand the training of health professionals and primary prevention actors on occupational health and health-environment,** from undergraduate studies as well as in continuous training: broaden the audiences concerned by this training and increase the number of hours provided.
- **Appoint an inter-ministerial representative,** reporting to the Prime Minister, to strengthen coherence between the various health plans at national level (work, environment, adaptation to climate change) by aligning their timetables and ensuring regular monitoring of their rollout with the public authorities, social partners and all stakeholders.

## 2 INVOLVE COMPANIES AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE ACTORS

- **Carry out a national campaign on the Single Occupational Risk Assessment Document (DUERP). The implementation of this obligation by employers must be a condition for the allocation and continuation of public aid.** For very small enterprises (VSE), such a system will require **support** adapted to their organisation in order to ensure compliance.
- **Make the environmental consequences of a company's strategic directions a topic for mandatory recurring consultation of the Social and Economic Committee (CSE) and plan for discussions to be held within public services in order to develop an equivalent measure.**
- **To limit workers' exposure to high outdoor temperatures,** after a framework negotiation between the social partners in the construction and public works sector, consider heatwaves as adverse weather entitling workers to the leave provided for in this case, and contemplate extending this system through negotiation with other activities concerned, including in the civil service.

## 3 ESTABLISH EMPLOYEE LISTENING AS A PRINCIPLE OF PREVENTION

- **Include employee listening among the general prevention principles of the French Labour Code.** Without listening to and understanding 'those who do', change will not be possible.

### THE RAPPORTEUR

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