

Law of 4 August 1996 and the Code on Well-being at Work

General

The provisions of Belgian legislation relating to the Code on Well-being at Work require all employers to implement a prevention policy. To this end, they are required to analyse the risks present and take the necessary preventive measures to ensure that workers are not exposed to risks to their physical and mental health, in order to prevent accidents at work and occupational diseases. It is the employer's responsibility to take into account all the risks present in the company or organisation. For example: fire risks, working positions, noise, lighting, thermal environments, but also the organisation of work, the content of work, interpersonal relationships at work, etc.

To assist them, Belgian law requires employers to appoint an internal prevention adviser. This person must be appointed from among the members of the Embassy and their appointment must be agreed upon by the employees. In a diplomatic mission with fewer than 20 employees, the internal prevention adviser may be the Ambassador.

Its tasks are:

- Participating in risk analysis;
- Giving opinions on projects and measures that have an impact on the well-being of workers;
- Answering any questions relating to the application of legislation;
- Participating in the development of internal emergency procedures;
- Ensuring coordination with the external occupational health and safety service to which the employer is affiliated.

In order to carry out their duties, they must have sufficient knowledge of Belgian legislation and be accessible to their colleagues. To acquire this knowledge, they can take a 40-hour basic course or a level 2 training course (200 hours).

- ✓ List of institutions offering the basic course
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/erkenningenDefault.aspx?id=11460>
- ✓ List of institutions offering Level 2 training
[Agrément : Cours de formation complémentaire pour conseillers en prévention \(niveau I et niveau II\) | SPF Emploi - Travail et Concertation sociale](#)

In addition to the internal prevention adviser, the diplomatic mission is responsible for affiliating with an external occupational health and safety service (SEPPT).

This service will support it in its general prevention policy. It will also enable the embassy to have access to a prevention advisor specialising in the psychosocial aspects of work and a prevention advisor/occupational physician, both of which are also mandatory.

Please note! The occupational physician practises preventive medicine and should not be confused with the medical examiner who, at the employer's request, checks whether the person is actually ill during their absence from work, or with the medical adviser of the mutual insurance company.

- ✓ List of SEPPT: [Agrément : Services Externes pour la Prévention et la Protection au travail \(SEPPT\) | SPF Emploi - Travail et Concertation sociale](#)
- ✓ Explanation of the basic services that must be provided by the external service in exchange for the flat-rate contribution:
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=41980>

Psychosocial risks in particular

Among the range of risks to workers' health are psychosocial risks at work, which mainly impact workers' mental health (loss of motivation, self-confidence, anxiety, distress, depression, suicidal thoughts, etc.), which may be accompanied by damage to physical health (sleep disorders, heart problems, digestive disorders, skin problems, high blood pressure, etc.).

These risks can manifest themselves in several ways: threats, public humiliation, excessive surveillance, lack of respect, conflicts with management or other workers, physical or psychological violence at work, moral and/or sexual harassment at work, stress, and burnout.

These risks stem in particular from hazards found in the organisation of work (the distribution of tasks , collaboration between departments, management tools, management style, work procedures ,etc.), in the content of the work (the complexity of tasks, the variation in tasks, the intensity of the work, contact with third parties, the emotional and mental strain, , etc.) and in interpersonal relationships at work (quality of relationships, communication, conflict management, working atmosphere, opportunities for interaction in the workplace, etc.).

It is for these risks that the embassy may call upon the advisor on psychosocial aspects of work. This advisor is a specialist, available to the embassy for any specific questions relating to these risks. He or she is a key player in the internal procedure available to workers who believe they are suffering harm as a result of psychosocial risks. He or she acts both within the informal procedure and within the formal procedure.

To enable workers to discuss their psychosocial issues in complete confidentiality, the diplomatic mission may also appoint a trusted person: this person may be internal or external to the diplomatic mission. They only intervene as part of the

informal procedure for psychosocial risks. The trusted person may not be part of the two highest levels of management. They must undergo training to carry out this role.

- ✓ Exemplary list of institutions providing training :
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/erkenningenDefault.aspx?id=41942>

Risk analysis

In order to determine the preventive measures to be taken, the employer is required to analyse the existence of risks in advance, even before an incident occurs.

To do this, the embassy may request the assistance of the external occupational health and safety service . However, it may also carry out this risk analysis itself, using a participatory approach.

- ✓ Participatory risk screening method (Déparis)
[Stratégie d'analyse des risques SOBANE | Beswic](#)

This method has the advantage of reviewing all the risks to which workers are exposed (and not just psychosocial risks).

For psychosocial risks, specific risk analysis methods are also available free of charge (in addition to the option of requesting a paid analysis by the SEPPT):

- ✓ Specific RPS questionnaire (SPF ETCS)
[Risques psychosociaux - Dépistage et analyse des risques - Outils | Beswic](#)
- ✓ OIRA RPS
[Risques psychosociaux - Dépistage et analyse des risques - Outils | Beswic](#)

Information for workers

The diplomatic mission is responsible for providing, in a location easily accessible to workers, the names and contact details of the internal prevention adviser, the psychosocial prevention adviser, the occupational physician, the SEPPT and any trusted person.

This information must also be included in the work regulations, a mandatory social document for all employers who employ staff in Belgium, including diplomatic missions and consular posts.

For further information

The Good Offices Commission invites diplomatic missions and consular posts to consult the website of the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue:

General principles relating to workplace wellbeing policy

EN [General principles for welfare policy | Federal Public Service Employment - Labour and Social Dialogue](#)

FR [Principes généraux relatifs à la politique du bien-être | SPF Emploi - Travail et Concertation sociale](#)

NL [Algemene principes betreffende het welzijnsbeleid | Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid - Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg](#)

She also invites you to view the presentation given on the morning of 28 November 2025

[Microsoft PowerPoint - RPS ambassade 2025 - Copie](#)

Conclusion

Legal provisions require all employers who employ local staff in Belgium to take the necessary measures to prevent any work-related risks, including psychosocial risks, and to designate the persons mentioned above. This obligation applies to diplomatic missions and consular posts established in Belgium.

Finally, the Protocol Directorate informs that the Good Offices Commission responsible for locally employed staff in embassies and diplomatic missions is available to answer any questions on this subject at the following address:

commissiondesbonsoffices@emploi.belgique.be