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OHS Guidance Document for Migrant Workers in Various Languages

Starting a new job or career is always challenging; doing this in a foreign country is by far more daunting. Migrant workers are not always aware of the ways of doing things in the country which they visit, the rules and regulations to which they have to abide and may not even understand the language. This, together with other issues, makes migrant workers a vulnerable group in society.

According to Maltese legislation, the obligation to safeguard occupational health and safety extends to all workers, irrespective of their employment relationship or their country of origin. In fact, the duties of an employer become more onerous when they engage the services of foreign workers, since these have to be informed of the risks and the measures required to be taken – this should be in a language which the worker understands.

In a bid to safeguard the health and safety of ALL workers at work, the Occupational Health and Safety Authority (OHSA) issued a guidance document targeting migrant workers. This document covers issues such as the duties of employers, what workers should do and what legal rights are involved.

Originally issued in English, this document has now been translated by UNHCR Malta into Arabic, Bangla, French, Somali and Tigrinya.

“In Malta, 22% of all fatal accidents and 37% of all construction fatalities involve foreign workers. This document includes a comprehensive set of rights and obligations pertaining to health and safety at work which should serve as a basic guidance to migrant workers. In less than 24 hours, these documents were accessed more than 250 times while the English version more than 500 times. This also highlights the need for action in this vulnerable sector of society. We urge all social partners to support such initiatives and ensure that these legal obligations are acted upon,” said Dr Mark Gauci, OHSA’s CEO.

All documents can be accessed free of charge through OHSA’s FB page @ohsamalta or by scanning the attached codes.

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