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Editorial

Virtual Special Issue: Staying safe in the workplace: A special issue on understanding safety  
for migrant workers

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## Editorial

### Introduction

In a globalised labour market, the migrant workforce is increasing. The ILO estimates that there are 164 million migrant workers worldwide (International Labour Organisation, 2017). This increased migration phenomenon has attracted the attention of researchers interested in understanding the safety issues of the migrant workforce. Many studies highlighted how migrant workers are more at risk compared to national workers (Moyce & Schenker, 2018), as they face more challenges such as language, cultural barriers and physically demanding jobs. Research showed that compared to native workers, migrant workers are a vulnerable working group reporting higher rates of accident and fatalities (Peiró et al., 2020).

In this scenario, we developed this special issue specifically dedicated to further our understanding of migrant workers' safety in high-risk jobs. More specifically, the special issue aimed to a) raise awareness about this important topic; b) collect recent studies to develop our scientific knowledge on the topic.

Overall, five studies have been accepted for this special issue, which offer different perspectives on migrant workers' safety. Table 1 provides an overview of the main characteristics of the studies. Three of the studies were empirical while two were theoretical. Among the empirical studies, Fialkowska & Matuszczyk (2021) focused on structural vulnerability highlighting how this is related to health and safety for migrant farmworkers in Germany and Poland. Ramos and colleagues (2021) presented an empirical study conducted in the United States, which sheds a light on the relationships between safety context, risk perception and stress and health outcomes. Furthermore, Shepherd et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study in three European countries, Italy, Spain and the UK, investigating challenges to safety training effectively improving migrant workers' safety behaviours.

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Lastly, Vignoli et al. (2021) and Nielsen et al. (2021) presented two theoretical studies. Vignoli et al. (2021) presented the development of a novel safety training package for construction workers based on the second and third generation training principles. These principles are based on a constructivist and social constructivist approach, meaning that the trainees learn in an active way and that learning occur in a social and cultural context (Kraiger, 2008). Complementary to this, based on a lack in the literature of considering training transfer in the evaluation of safety training for migrant workers, Nielsen and colleagues (2021) developed a safety training evaluation model called IMSTEM (Integrated Migrant Worker Safety Training Evaluation Model), based on the realist evaluation approach (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Despite the special issue only covering a few of the issues that migrant workers can face in the workplace, we believe that the findings presented are relevant for three main reasons. First, the results presented an advancement of our knowledge on the migrant workers' safety topic. Second, the study presented (both the theoretical and empirical ones) can inspire future studies in the field in order to address unexplored safety processes and provide relevant information also for occupational safety and health practitioners involved that deal with a migrant workforce. Last, but not least, we hope that this special issue will contribute to the dissemination and awareness of this important topic.

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Table 1 – Studies overview

	Fialkowska, & Matuszczyk, 2021	Ramos et al., 2021	Shepherd et al., 2021	Vignoli et al., 2021	Nielsen et al., 2021
Type of paper	Empirical	Empirical	Empirical	Theoretical	Theoretical
Methods	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	-	-
Participants	Workers and employers	Workers	Workers, supervisors, safety trainers, safety experts	-	-
Sector	Agriculture	Agriculture	Construction	Construction	-
Country	Germany and Poland	US	UK, Italy and Spain	-	-
Topic	Safety challenges of migrant workers	Relationship between safety issues and mental health	Migrant workers training	Safety training	Evaluation of safety training