

**Alison van Keulen**

Deputy Chair, ENSHPO / Stakeholder  
Engagement, IOSH



## Recap: GISHW Symposium Session – “Present and Future of OSH Professionals: Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing World”

At the GISHW Symposium on July 19<sup>th</sup> 2025, a thought-provoking session hosted by ENSHPO explored how Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) professionals are navigating one of the most transformative periods in their history. Titled *Present and*

*Future of OSH Professionals: Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing World*, the hour-long discussion drew attention to the increasing complexity, visibility, and strategic relevance of the Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) role in today's workplace.



Moderated by ENSHPO and AIAS President Francesco Santi, the session brought together leading voices from the fields of safety, sustainability, and corporate governance to reflect on how the OSH profession is shifting in response to rapid technological advancement, regulatory changes, and rising sustainability demands. Across all contributions, one thing was clear: the role of the EHS professional is no longer confined to compliance and operational oversight – it is expanding into areas like ESG leadership, digital transformation and climate risk strategy.

The first speaker, Anar Malikov of TCS Azerbaijan, examined the double disruption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the European Green Deal. He emphasised that AI technologies are transforming workplace safety by enhancing hazard prediction, enabling real-time monitoring, and automating risk analysis. However, he also cautioned that these in-

novations come with new challenges, particularly in terms of data privacy, ethical use, and workforce displacement. Anar underscored the importance of continuous learning and digital upskilling, suggesting that EHS professionals must not only adapt to new tools but also play an active role in guiding their responsible implementation. At the same time, the Green Deal's push for greener industry practices is redefining the scope of environmental health and safety, forcing organisations – and their safety leaders – to rethink long-held norms and develop new strategies for compliance and sustainability.

From there, the focus turned towards integration, as Katerina Marozava of AIAS explored the value of embedding OSH data into broader sustainability initiatives. She argued that incorporating safety and health metrics into corporate sustainability reporting isn't just good practice – it's increasingly essential





for credibility, stakeholder trust and long-term business value. Katerina highlighted that models like Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), which prioritise operational efficiency and proactive risk reduction, offer a useful framework for this kind of integration. Through examples and practical steps, she illustrated how organisations can align OSH efforts with environmental and social goals, positioning safety as both a core operational priority and a driver of ESG performance. As she put it, strong social performance – including workplace safety – reduces risk exposure and can significantly enhance a company’s valuation and reputation, particularly during mergers or major strategic shifts.

Katerina also emphasised the importance of **international collaboration** in advancing OSH management globally. She stated: “International cooperation and knowledge exchange play a vital role in advancing OSH management globally. Sharing

best practices, research findings, and innovative solutions across borders at international conferences like GISHW can significantly improve workplace safety standards. Collaborative efforts also help address emerging OSH challenges, such as climate-related risks, and promote a culture of prevention, ultimately benefiting workers and employers worldwide.” This sentiment echoed the collaborative spirit of the event and reinforced the idea that global cooperation is essential in tackling the evolving landscape of workplace safety and sustainability.



EXPO 2025 That one step will shift the future. In Partnership with Events at Expo 2025

Days on Safety, Health and Well-being for All

Workshop 7:  
How is the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)  
profession transforming?

inshpo  
International Network of  
Safety and Health Professional  
Organisations (INSHPO)

ENSHPO  
European Network of Safety and  
Health Professional Organisations  
(ENSHPO)



Rounding out the presentations, Alfredo Tommasone, of Hitachi Rail and on behalf of AIAS, reflected on how large companies are redefining the role of the EHS manager. Drawing on insights from the professional community within CPGO and AIAS, he discussed how EHS leaders are increasingly responsible for shaping corporate sustainability strategy, managing climate risks, and contributing to non-financial reporting. He pointed out that many EHS professionals already manage systems that align closely with ESG topics – making them natural candidates to lead in this area. However, he noted that new skills are required, particularly in sustainability reporting, stakeholder engagement, and the assessment of long-term environmental risks. His message was clear: today's HSE professional must evolve from a compliance enforcer into a strategic advisor, capable of guiding organisations through a period of unprecedented environmental and technological change.

The session highlighted a common thread in the tension between rapid innovation and workplace safety – how to embrace new technologies without compromising protection. All agreed that success in this new landscape will require more than technical knowledge; it will demand agility, collaboration and a willingness to lead from the front.

In closing, moderator Francesco summed up the key message: the profession is changing, but with change comes opportunity. EHS professionals are increasingly at the heart of strategic decisions – guiding businesses not only in protecting people but also in building resilient, sustainable futures. For those prepared to grow and adapt, the future of OSH is not a challenge to be feared but a critical opportunity to shape the world of work for the better.

Photographs: courtesy of ENSHPO





