



Valsts darba inspekcija

LATVIA ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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Introduction

The State Labour Inspectorate (hereinafter – Labour Inspectorate) is the direct management authority, which is subordinated to the Minister of Welfare. Employers, businessmen, their authorized persons and enterprises, construction objects, including the construction objects belonging to a private individual during the time of construction works, as well as working areas and work equipment – all this is a subject to the supervision and control of the Labour Inspectorate.

Law on the State Labour Inspection, which has been adopted on 19 June 2008 and came into force on 10 July 2008, defines the legal status, function and tasks of the Labour Inspectorate.

The function of the Labour Inspectorate is to maintain the effective implementation, supervision and control of the state policy in the area of labour relations and occupational safety and health (OSH).

The Labour Inspectorate has set up two main activities directions:

1. Effective inspection and supervision of the labour legal relations and OSH area;
2. Services providing to customers, including public information on the current labour legal relations and OSH issues.

The main objectives of the Labour Inspectorate in 2023 were:

1. An effective and preventive process of undertakings inspections and compliance ensuring;
2. Customer-oriented counselling, ensuring of accessible and convenient the Labour Inspectorate services;
3. Targeted public information;
4. Development of the Labor Inspectorate human resources and modernization and improvement of internal processes.

The planning of the Labour Inspectorate activities was based on the principle of priority. Priorities were set based on analyzing the current situation in the area of labour law and OSH, as well as taking into consideration the European Union (EU) policy planning documents (EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021–2027, the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC) operational program), national policy planning documents (National Development Plan 2021–2027, OSH Development Plan 2021–2023, Social Protection and Labour Market Policy Guidelines for 2021-2027, the Ministry of Welfare Operational Strategy 2020-2023), Guidelines on application of the “Consult First” principle in the work of the state authorities and the resources available to the Labour Inspectorate.

The Labour Inspectorate's priorities in 2023 were identified as:

- √ Implementation of the unregistered employment reduction policy through inspections of undertakings whose economic activities showed an increased risk of unregistered employment;
- √ Reduction the number of fatal accidents at work and accidents at work that led to the injured person's serious health disorders;
- √ Implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) project "Improving the practical implementation and monitoring of occupational safety and health legislation".

Implementation of the “Consult First” principle in practice in 2023, as in the past, was the horizontal priority of the Labour Inspectorate penetrating completely all activity areas of the Labour Inspectorate, both when carrying inspections of undertakings and when performing a broad public information and education work.

The following activities were implemented in the framework of the priorities:

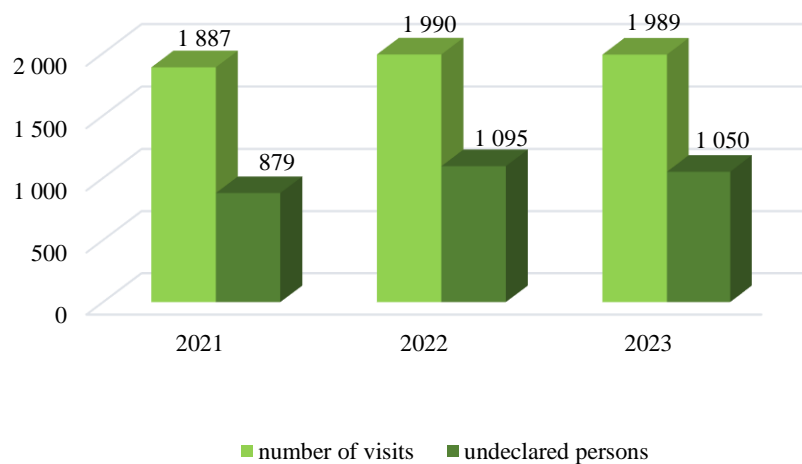
1. Visits to the undertakings where high risk of unregistered employment existed;
2. Preventive inspections on OSH, including thematic inspections:
 - 2.1. in undertakings, where accidents at work have occurred due to falls, trips, slips;
 - 2.2. the safe use of work equipment in the high-risk sector of industry;
 - 2.3. in undertakings where the cause of accidents at work was insufficient training;
 - 2.4. of the construction undertakings.

1. The implementation of priorities of the Labour Inspectorate in 2023

1.1. In 2023, as in the past, the implementation of measures to tackle undeclared work was one of the priorities of the Labour Inspectorate in order to continue combating shadow economy and to ensure fair competition within the competence of the authority. The main activities of the Labour Inspectorate in combating the shadow economy were the implementation of effective control measures to reduce undeclared work, cooperation and exchange of information with other state and local government institutions, and public information and communication on the negative consequences of undeclared work.

The Labour Inspectorate carried out 1 989 inspections (planned – 2 000) aimed at the reduction of unregistered employment, of which 34.0 % inspections were successful. This means that in every third inspection, persons were detected who had not signed a written employment contract and / or whose employer had not registered them as workers with the State Revenue Service (SRS).

The officials of the Labour Inspectorate carried out 323 repeated inspections (i.e. 16.0% of the total number of inspections in the context of reducing undeclared work) after assessing the situation in the undertaking as a whole, where there were reasonable grounds to suspect that the employer might be employing workers in an undeclared manner, as well as in the cases where undeclared workers were detected during the first inspection and there were reasonable grounds to suspect that the employer might continue to employ them in an undeclared manner (see *Graph 1*).



Graph 1: Dynamics of the number visited enterprises and undeclared persons (2021 – 2023)

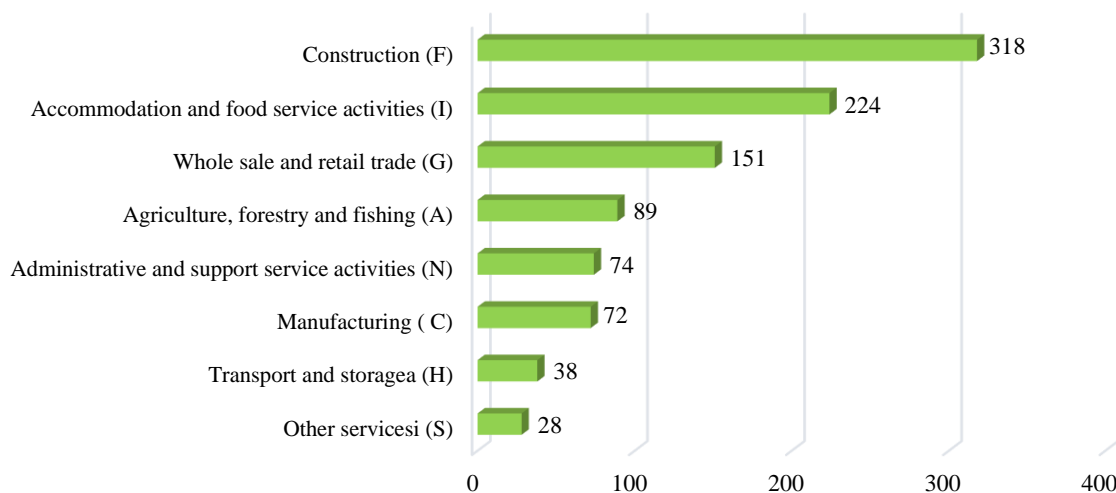
In 2023, 1 050 persons were detected to be in undeclared work, including 530 persons without a written employment contract and without declaring to the SRS; 335 persons with a written employment contract but without declaring to the SRS and 185 persons without a written employment contract but declaring to the SRS.

In 2023, 826 detected undeclared workers were legalised, or 79.0 %. This means that the employer concluded an employment contract and / or registered the employee with the SRS as an employee. The dynamics of the legalisation of undeclared workers over the last three years was positive (2021 – 71.0 %; 2022 – 75.0%; 2023 – 79.0 %).

The officials of the Labour Inspectorate imposed 801 fines, the amount of EUR 380 755.00 for detecting the employment without a written employment contract and / or declaration to the SRS.

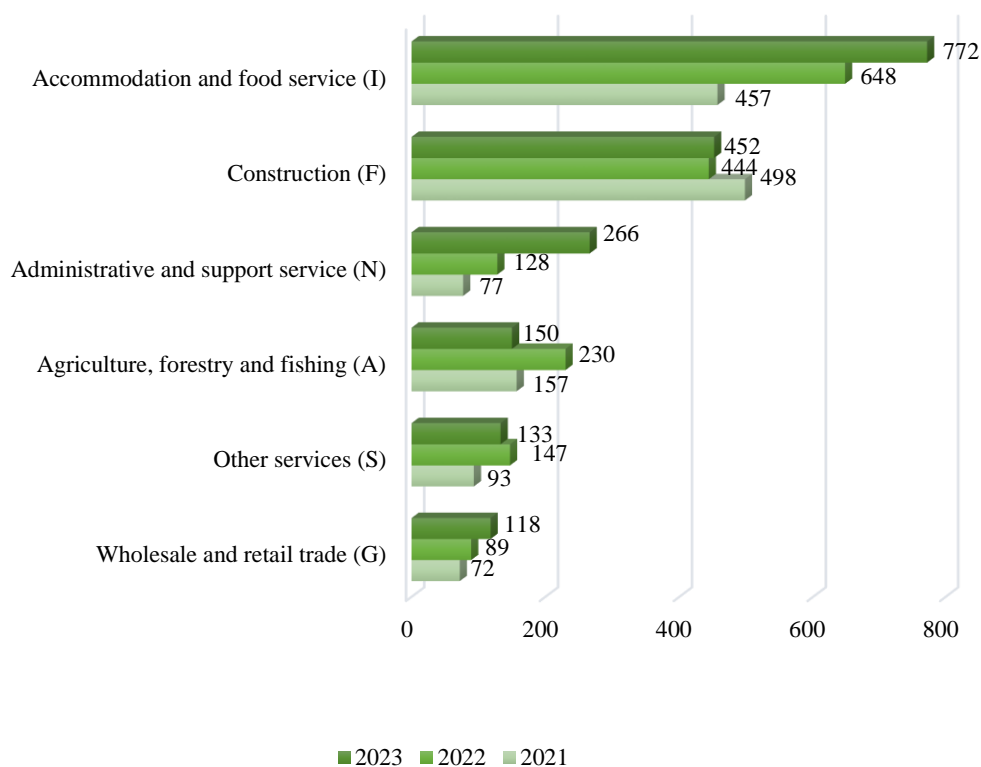
Analyzing unregistered employment detected in the course of inspections in specific sectors of the national economy, it should be concluded that, as in the previous years, the highest undeclared work was observed in the construction sector (see *Graph 2*). The percentage of undeclared persons in construction in 2023 was 30.0 % of the total number of undeclared persons were detected by the Labour Inspectorate. The number of undeclared workers detected in the administrative and support

services sector has doubled compared to 2022. This is due to successful cooperation with the State Police through joint inspections of undertakings providing security services. The number of undeclared workers detected in the accommodation and food services sector also increased by 29.0 %, mainly due to the gradual recovery of economic activity after the Covid-19 pandemic.



Graph 2: Dynamics of detected unregistered persons by sectors in 2023

In 2023, the highest number of undeclared persons per 100 000 persons employed was detected in the accommodation and food services sector (see Graph 3).



Graph 3: Dynamics of detected undeclared persons by branches per 100 000 workers (2021 – 2023)

The practice of the Labour Inspectorate showed that one of the most effective approaches to combating undeclared work was closer and more targeted cooperation between different state and local authorities, both in the exchange of information and in joint inspections of undertakings. In 2023, the Labour Inspectorate carried out 66 inspections on undeclared work together with the State Border Guard and detected 34 undeclared persons.

The Labour Inspectorate was actively participating in activities organized at the European and national level in the field of tackling undeclared work, improving skills and knowledge, sharing experience and gaining international experience.

The European Labour Authority (ELA) made a significant contribution to reducing undeclared work. The Labour Inspectorate actively participated in capacity building activities for inspectorates organised by the ELA, various training seminars, exchange visits and cross-border training on practical inspections, mainly on cross-border cooperation and monitoring of posted workers.

The Labour Inspectorate participated in the Cooperation Platform established by the Ministry of the Interior with the aim of improving cooperation in the security sector and reducing the informal economy in the sector. The working group considered proposals from the relevant institutions and organisations in the security sector to improve cooperation, regulate the activities of the security sector and reduce the shadow economy, as well as proposals for the development of legislation in the security sector.

1.2. The other priority of the Labour Inspectorate was reducing the number of fatal accidents at work and those accidents at work due to which the injured person had serious health disorders. To this end, four thematic inspection campaigns in OSH were organised, 3 088 preventive visits were carried out. The European Social Fund (ESF) project "Improving the practical implementation and monitoring of occupational safety and health legislation" is being implemented through seminars, conferences and other public awareness-raising and training events, with special attention being paid to undertakings in high-risk sectors.

In 2023, 618 visits within the thematic inspections of undertakings on OSH were carried out with the aim of:

- √ to assess the compliance of the working conditions in the undertaking with OSH requirements;
- √ to assess the actual performance of employers in terms of creating a safe working environment, with a particular focus on the undertaking with a history of accidents at work;
- √ to draw the employers' attention to OSH issues;
- √ to reduce the risk of occupational diseases and accidents at work.

Simultaneously with the survey of undertakings, various information events were organized during the thematic inspections. The form and content of which was specially adapted to each thematic inspection and sector, so that cooperation with entrepreneurs putting in order the working environment would be constructive and purposeful.

2. Laws and decisions, which relate to the activities of the Labour Inspectorate

2.1. Laws regulating the activities of the Labour Inspectorate came into force in 2023:

No amendments.

2.2. Laws, rules, regulations enforced by the Labour Inspectorate came into force in 2023:

√ Amendments to the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 656 of 24 November 2015 "Regulations on the Amount of the Minimum Monthly Wage during Normal Working Hours and the Calculation of the Minimum Hourly Rate" entered into force on 1 January 2023 (the minimum monthly wage during normal working hours was EUR 620.00).

√ Amendments to Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 723 of 8 September 2008 "Regulations Regarding the Requirements for Competent Authorities and Competent Specialists in Labour Protection Issues and the Procedures for Assessing Competence", which came into force on 1 April 2023. The most important changes were as follows:

- The amount of civil liability insurance for competent professionals has been set at 25 minimum monthly wages, so it will depend on the economic situation of the country;
- The competent authority will be able to choose whether it wants to employ a doctor of occupational health and occupational diseases or a specialist in public health;
- The amount of civil liability insurance for competent authorities has been set up at 50 minimum monthly wages.

3. The personnel of the Labour Inspectorate

3.1. In 2023, the Labour Inspectorate had 195 posts.

3.2. Total number of inspectors – 127, including:

√ chief inspectors – 16, including 5 heads of the Regional SLIs and 4 heads of the Sectors whose did not carry out inspections of the undertakings;

√ senior inspectors – 46;

√ inspectors – 65.

3.3. Number of women inspectors in 2023 – 82 (65.0 % of total number of inspectors), of whom:

√ chief inspectors – 10 (63.0 % of total number of chief inspectors);

√ senior inspectors – 34 (74.0 % of total number of senior inspectors);

√ inspectors – 38 (59.0 % of total number inspectors).

3.4. Data on the geographical location of the structural units of the Labour Inspectorate (see *Figure 1*).

The Labour Inspectorate structure comprised of the Labour Inspectorate Headquarters and five Regional State Labour Inspectorates (RSLIs). In 2023, the structure of the Labour Inspectorate underwent major changes in order to optimise and target the use of the financial and human resources of the Labour Inspectorate and to facilitate the implementation of the objectives of the Labour Inspectorate:

√ Consultative Centre in Bauska of the Zemgale RSLI has been closed.

The following units were abolished:

√ Labour Law Unit;

√ Labour Protection Unit;

√ Cooperation and Development Unit;

The following new units were set up:

√ Methodological Management and Competence Development Unit;

√ Strategic Planning and Data Analysis Unit;

√ Information Technology Unit.

RSLIs operated within the country:

- **Kurzeme RSLI** – the centre – in Liepaja, a sector – in Ventspils, office – in Saldus;
- **Latgale RSLI** – the centre – in Daugavpils, a sector – in Rezekne, office – in Jekabpils;
- **Riga RSLI** – the centre – in Riga, 4 sectors – Labour Protection Supervision Sector, Mediation and Compliance Sector, Labour Rights Supervision Sector and Prevention and Operational Activities Sector;
- **Vidzeme RSLI** – the centre – in Valmiera, a sector – in Gulbene;
- **Zemgale RSLI** – the centre – in Jelgava, a sector in Ogre, office – in Tukums.

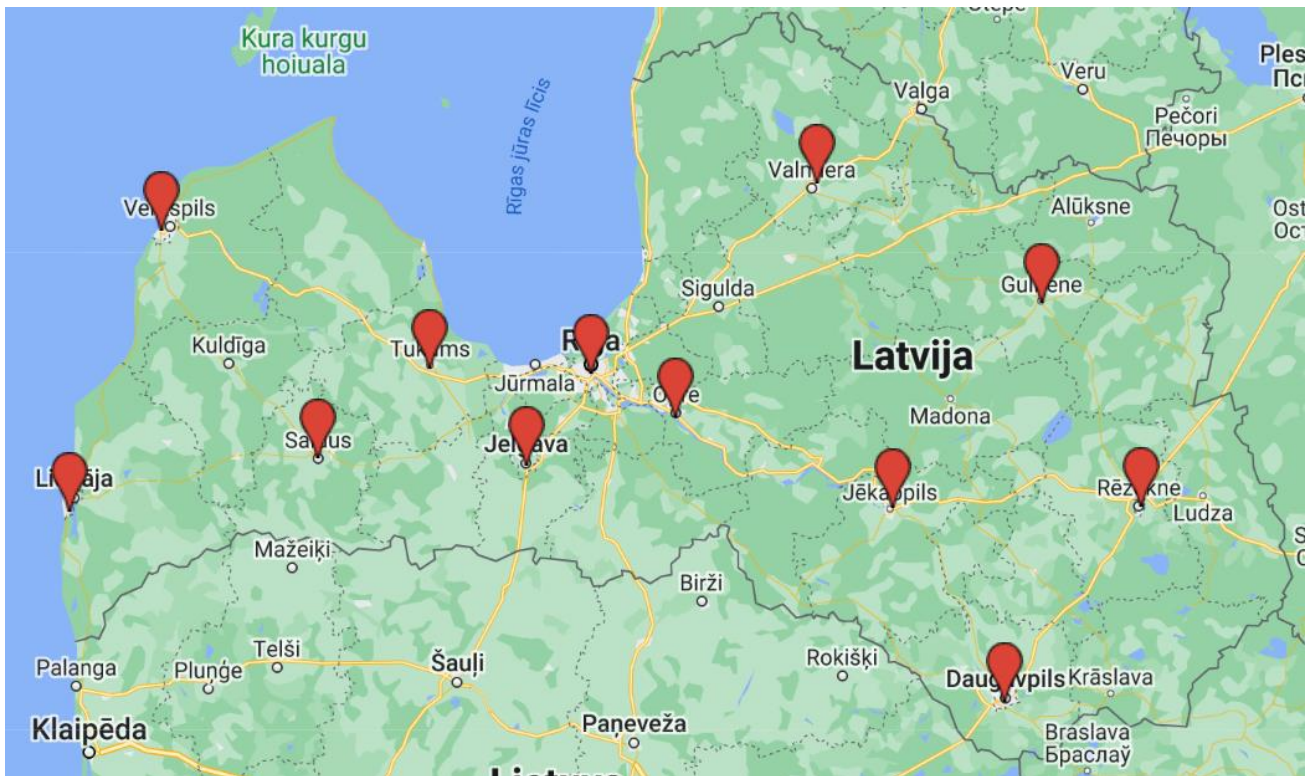


Figure 1: Geographical location of the structural divisions of the Labour Inspectorate

4. Data on undertakings under the control of the Labour Inspectorate and number of workers working in these undertakings

Number of undertakings under the control of the Labour Inspectorate – **114 799**, including in agriculture – 6 022 (5.3 % of the total number of the undertakings under the control of the Labour Inspectorate, data of the Central Statistical Bureau for the 2023).

Number of workers in the undertakings under the Labour Inspectorate’s supervision – **765 800**, including in agriculture – 28 876 (3.8 % of the total number of workers), of whom women – 398 500, including in agriculture – 8 556 (2.2 % of the total number of women, data of the Central Statistical Bureau for the 2023).

5. Statistics of inspection visits

Number of undertakings inspected by the Labour Inspectorate in 2023 – **6 608**, including in agriculture – 503 (7.6 %) out of which: more than once a year – **1 723**, including in agriculture – 58 (3.4 %).

The Labour Inspectorate carried out **10 363** visits to undertakings, including in agriculture – 580 (5.6 %) in 2023.

6. The statistical data on the established violations and imposed sanctions

6.1. In 2023, inspectors of the Labour Inspectorate issued to employers **1 189 orders** (in 2022 – 960), including in agriculture – 86 (7.2 %, in 2022 – 87) due to violations of labour legal relations and OSH legislative enactments. In these orders in total **5 121 violations** (in 2022 – 2 738) were detected, including in agriculture – 336 (6.6 %, in 2022 – 254) of which:

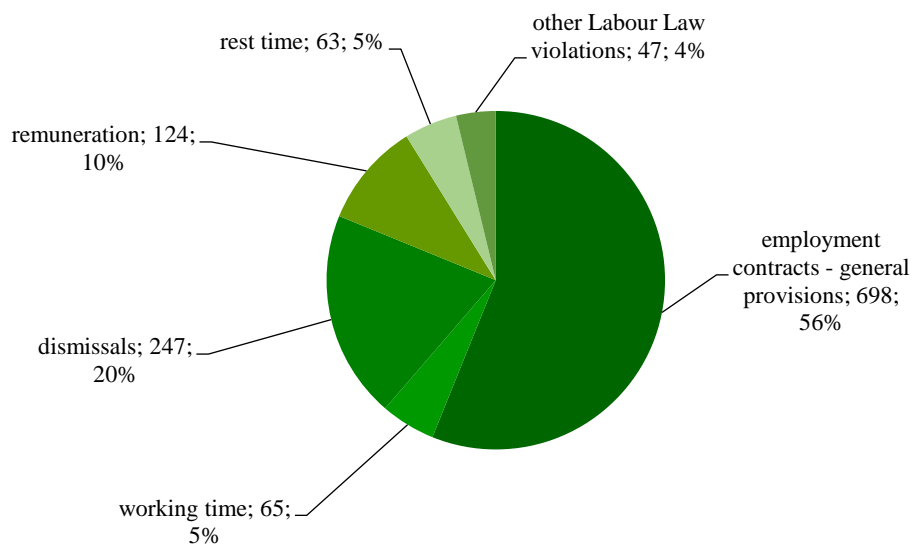
- 2 978 (in 2022 – 2 409), including in agriculture – 211 (7.1 %, in 2022 – 207), on OSH violations;
- 1 791 (in 2022 – 329), including in agriculture – 113 (6.3 %, in 2022 - 47), on labour legal relations.
- 352, including in agriculture - 12 (3.4 %) for breaches of the State Labour Inspection Law.

The number of orders issued in 2023 increased by 24.0 % compared to 2022. The number of orders issued since 2017 has undoubtedly been significantly influenced by the active implementation of the “Consult First” principle. In practice, however, there were more and more situations in which the application of the “Consult First” principle was neither productive, nor useful, nor even possible.

Enforcement of the order does not impose any additional financial, administrative or other burden on the employer, as it essentially provides only for the minimum enforcement of labour relations and OSH requirements to ensure that the undertaking's activities do not violate the requirements of the legislation.

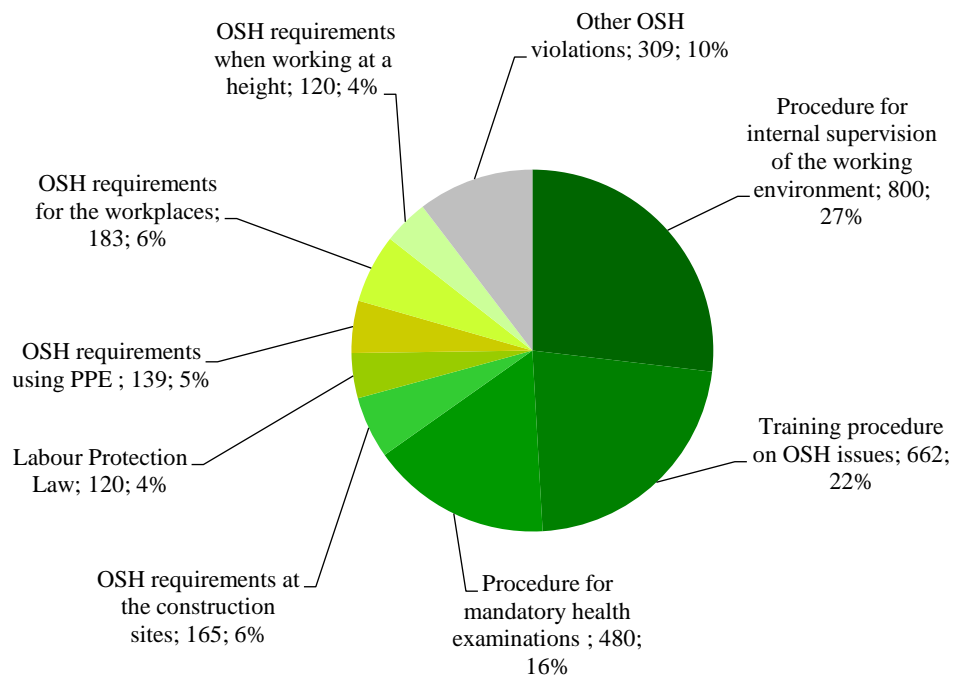
6.2. Violations of regulatory enactments on the labour legal relations made up 35.0 % of all violations detected by the officials of the Labour Inspectorate in 2023. 69.0 % of violations of the labour legal relations were violations of the Labour Law, but 31.0 % were violations of other regulatory enactments on labour relations.

In 2023, as in previous years, most employers did not comply with requirements of the Labour Law, Section 40 regarding employment contract, which were 36.0 % of all labour relations violations. The violations found related to the requirement that the employment contract be concluded in writing before the start of work and to its content - it did not contain all the information required by the Labour Law for example, were not specified: the agreed daily or weekly working hours, the amount of remuneration and time of payment, the duration of the annual paid leave, profession etc. The employers committed mentioned labour violations both due to ignorance or a desire to manipulate workers' working hours and its record-keeping. A significant part of the Labour Law violations was on dismissal of the worker (20.0 %) (see *Graph 4*).



Graph 4: Distribution of violations on labour legal relations in 2023

Violations of regulatory enactments on **OSH** made up 58.0 % of all violations detected by the officials of the Labour Inspectorate in 2023 (see *Graph 5*).

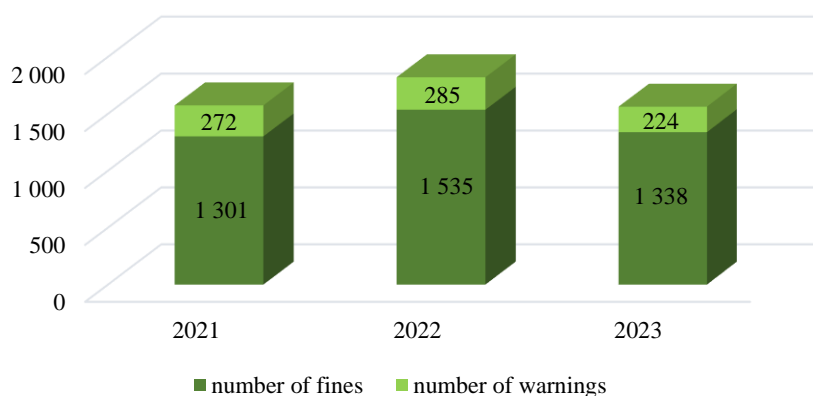


Graph 5: Distribution of violations on OSH in 2023

6.3. The applied penalties and their type

The officials of the Labour Inspectorate imposed on the employers **1 562 administrative penalties**, including in agriculture – 74 (4.7 %) for violations of labour legal relations, OSH regulatory enactments and the State Labour Inspectorate Law in 2023 (see Graph 6), including:

- **224 - warnings** (2022 – 285), including in agriculture - 9 (4.0 %);
- **1 338 - fines** (2022 – 1 535), including in agriculture – 65 (4.9 %), in total for **EUR 528 950.00**, including in agriculture – 22 085.00 (4.2 %).



Graph 6: Structure and number of the imposed administrative penalties (2021 – 2023)

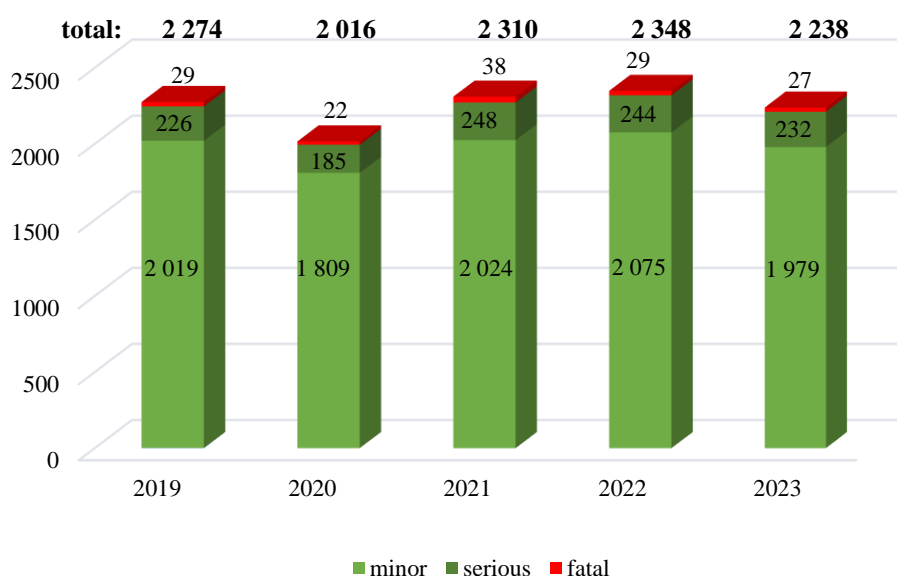
Upon discovering violations, which pose a direct threat to the life and health of workers, the Labour Inspectorate officials issued 19 orders and 36 warnings on the person's / object's suspension.

Out of 55 orders / warnings on suspension of the activity of a person / object 46 (84.0 %) were issued to unsafe work at a height, *inter alia* on unsafe or incompletely erected scaffoldings, unsafe

work on the roof without anti-fall systems, unbounded openings in the floor, etc., eight - for work in the trenches without fixed side edges and one – for not having safety signs on the saw. The number of suspension orders / warnings issued in 2023 tripled compared to 2021 and 2022 due to the return of active business following the lifting of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. As mentioned above, labour protection in crisis and post-crisis periods was an area where undertakings did not pay primary attention and where violations often endanger workers' health and lives.

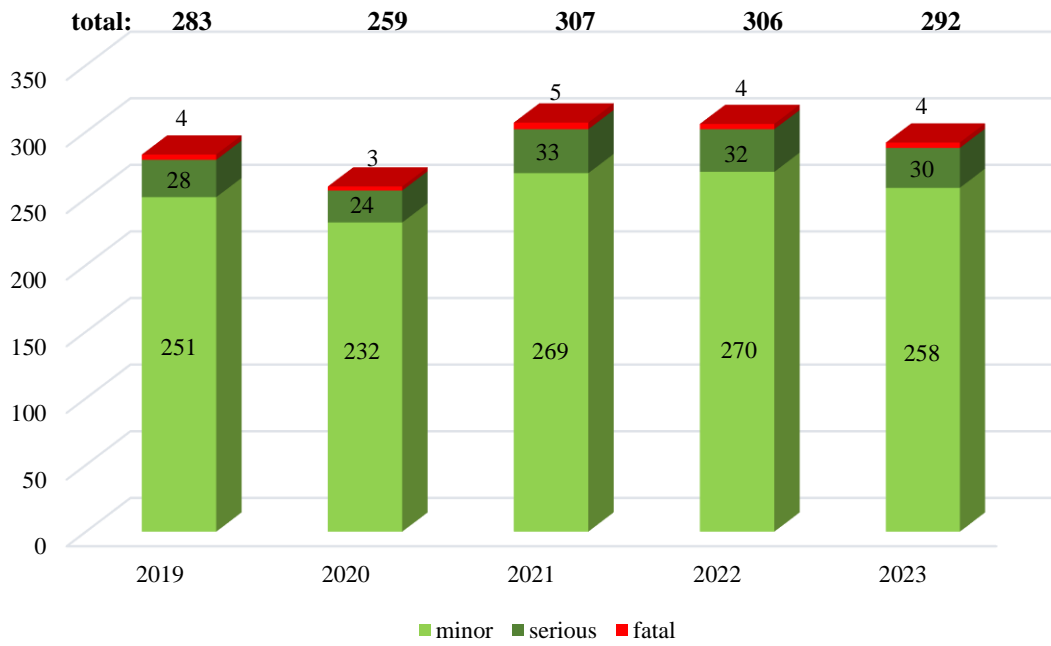
7. The statistical data on accidents at work

According to the information available at the Labour Inspectorate, 2 238 workers were involved in accidents at work in Latvia in 2023. There were 27 fatal accidents and 232 accidents with serious injuries. In 2023, compared to 2022, the total number of victims of accidents at work has decreased by 5.0 %, the number of seriously injured persons has also decreased by 5.0 % and the number of fatalities at work has decreased by 7.0 % (see *Graph 7*).



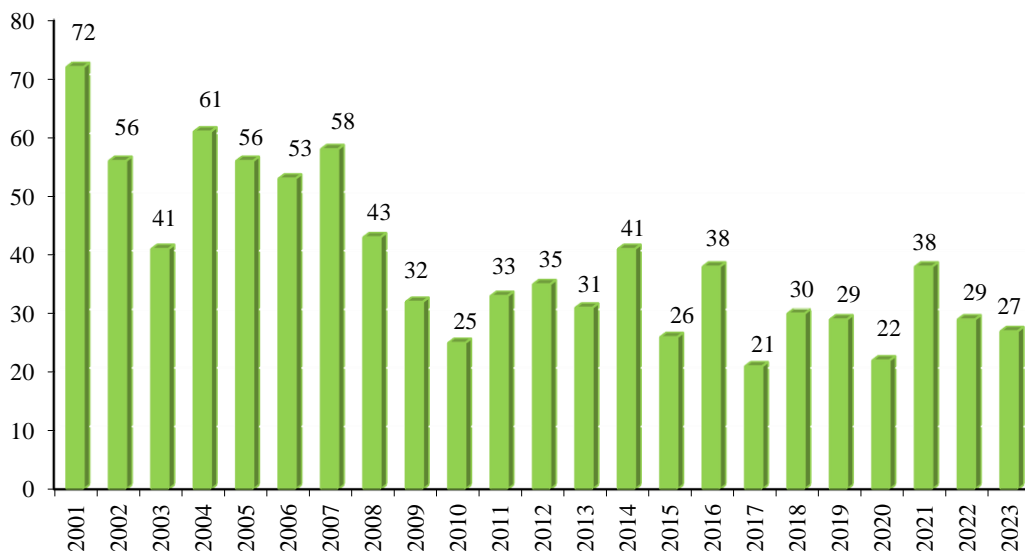
Graph 7: Dynamics of the number of persons injured in accidents at work (2019 - 2023)

The total number of accidents at work per 100 000 employees in 2023 was 5.0 % lower than in 2022, and the number of serious injuries was 6.0 % lower (see *Graph 8*).



Graph 8: The accidents rates per 100 000 workers (2019 – 2023)

An analysis and summary of the data available to the Labour Inspectorate since 2001 shows that the number of fatal accidents at work has fallen by more than half (see Graph 9). This shows that the extensive and targeted preventive work carried out by the Labour Inspectorate (implementation of the “Consult First” principle, verbal warnings to employers and discussion of the seriousness of the infringements found and the potential risks to workers' safety and health, thus making employers aware of the importance of detecting and eliminating shortcomings in the working environment in good time) gave results.



Graph 9: Dynamics of fatal accidents at work (2001-2023)

In 2023, the sectors with the highest number of work-related accidents were manufacturing, transport and storage, and trade. These sectors accounted for 58.0 % (1 297) of all victims of accidents at work in 2023 (see *Table 1*).

In 2023, the sectors with the highest number of fatal accidents at work were transport and storage, construction and manufacturing. These sectors accounted for 82.0 % (or 22) of all fatal accidents at work in 2023.

The number of fatalities in the transport and storage sector in 2023 has increased by 86.0 % compared to 2022 (2023 - 13; 2022 - 7). The main causes of fatal accidents in the transport and storage sector were related to unsatisfactory instruction and training of workers, as well as non-observance of safety instructions by workers. Of the 13 fatal accidents, 3 were caused by road accidents and 7 by sudden deterioration of health while on duty in Latvia and abroad.

In 2023, the number of fatal accidents in construction decreased by 14.0 % compared to 2022 (2023 - 6; 2022 - 7). The main causes of fatal accidents in the construction sector were related both to unsafe and reckless behaviour on the part of the fatalities themselves (failure to follow safety rules or instructions, use of unauthorised working methods) and to poor work management on the part of employers (unsatisfactory instruction and training of workers in safe working practices). The construction workers died as a result of falls from a height, being struck by a falling object, electrocution, sudden deterioration of health, falling under an excavator.

In the manufacturing industry, the number of fatalities has decreased by 25.0 % compared to 2022 (2023 - 3; 2022 - 4). The causes of fatal accidents at work were related to non-compliance with work safety instructions, non-compliance with road traffic rules, etc.

In 2023, the most common victims of accidents at work were:

- √ men (1 440 – 64.0 %);
- √ workers 45-54 years old (485 – 22.0 %) un 55 – 64 (465 – 21.0 %);
- √ workers with less than 3 years' service (1 440 – 64.0 %).

Injuries to the hands, feet and head were the most common injuries in accidents at work.

Table 1

Breakdown of accidents at work by sectors
(NACE Rev. 2 classification)

	Sectors	Total		Including			
				Serious		Fatal	
		2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
A	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	113	91	11	15	6	1
01	CROP AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING AND RELATED SERVICE ACTIVITIES	66	58	5	8	2	1
02	FORESTRY AND LOGGING	42	32	5	6	3	0
03	FISHING AND AQUACULTURE	5	1	1	1	1	0
B	MINING AND QUARRYING	4	12	0	4	0	0
C	MANUFACTURING	735	689	63	50	4	3
D	ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	13	11	3	3	0	0
E	WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	53	47	9	5	0	0
F	CONSTRUCTION	200	209	32	39	7	6
G	WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	336	284	22	14	1	1

H	TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	301	324	43	34	7	13
I	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	47	56	8	4	0	0
J	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	20	21	0	1	0	0
K	FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	4	5	0	2	0	0
L	REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	38	22	6	6	0	0
M	PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	15	13	1	2	1	0
N	ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	79	100	8	11	1	2
O	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL INSURANCE	115	113	12	16	1	0
P	EDUCATION	65	49	8	10	0	0
Q	HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	187	158	15	14	1	0
R	ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	14	20	2	1	0	1
S	OTHER SERVICES	9	14	1	1	0	0
	Total	2348	2238	244	232	29	27

The analysis of the causes of fatal accidents at work in 2023 (see *Table 2*) showed that there was:

- ✓ 39.0 % - a sudden deterioration in the worker's health;
- ✓ 25.0 % - violation of road traffic rules;
- ✓ 18.0 % - unsafe human action;
- ✓ 7.0 % - work organization and related shortcomings;
- ✓ 7.0 % - unsatisfactory conditions at workplace;
- ✓ 4.0 % - violence.

Table 2

Breakdown of accidents by accident causes

	Causes of accidents at work	Total		Including			
		Total		Serious		Fatal	
		2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
1	UNSATISFACTORY CONDITIONS AT WORKPLACE	164	141	33	32	0	2
2	UNSAFE HUMAN ACTION (ACTION/PERSON)	1717	1459	159	142	11	5
3	WORK ORGANIZATION AND RELATED SHORTCOMINGS	437	545	79	87	13	2
4	VIOLATION OF ROAD TRAFFIC RULES	87	83	16	13	8	7
5	VIOLENCE (ATTACKS)	91	81	2	3	0	1
6	OTHERS	136	138	21	17	5	11
	Total	2632	2447	310	294	37	28

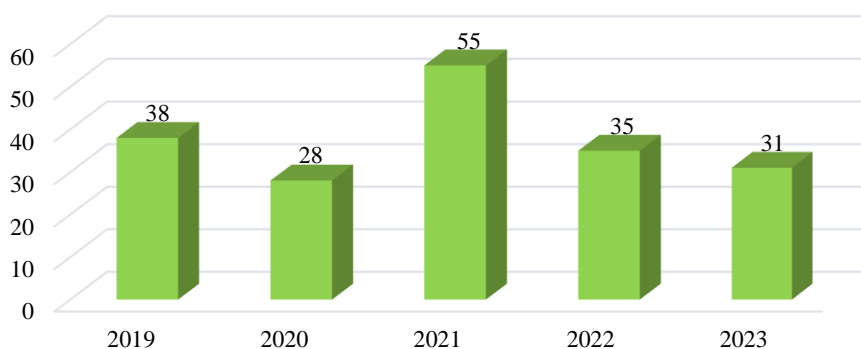
Analysis of the statistics on accidents at work showed that in 2023 the average age of a worker seriously injured and fatally injured was 50 years and the average length of service was 5 years. The most common occupational categories of workers fatally injured and seriously injured in accidents were equipment and machine operators (drivers of various vehicles, dockers, etc.), workers in ordinary occupations (construction workers, street sweepers, auxiliary workers, loaders, etc.), qualified workers and craftsmen (electricians, locksmiths, welders, roofers, etc.) (see *Table 3*).

Table 3

Breakdown of injured persons by occupations classification

Occupations		Total		Including			
				Serious		Fatal	
		2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
1	MANAGERS	37	32	7	9	1	0
2	SENIOR SPECIALISTS	140	117	14	15	1	1
3	SPECIALISTS	174	160	16	13	3	2
4	OFFICE WORKERS	114	124	8	11	0	0
5	SERVICE AND TRADE EMPLOYEES	304	292	22	15	0	2
6	QUALIFIED AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERY WORKERS	37	30	2	5	3	0
7	QUALIFIED WORKERS AND CRAFTSMEN	543	474	52	48	7	5
8	EQUIPMENT AND MACHINE OPERATORS AND ARTICLE ASSEMBLERS	459	465	65	57	11	15
9	ORDINARY PROFESSIONS	540	544	58	59	3	2
Total		2348	2238	244	232	29	27

In 2023, the Labour Inspectorate investigated 35 fatal accidents at work that were not related to the working conditions and environmental factors, 31 (93.0 %) of which were so-called “natural deaths”¹. Meanwhile the remaining four fatal accidents at work, which after investigation were declared non-associated with the working conditions, e.g. accidents occurred outside working hours or during the rest periods, as well as the death was caused by using drugs and psychotropic substances (see *Graph 10*).



Graph 10: Dynamics of “natural deaths” (2019 – 2023)

Analysing the data on “natural deaths” at work by sex and age, men (27 - 87.0 %) and workers aged 55 - 64 (15 - 48.0 %) were most likely to die.

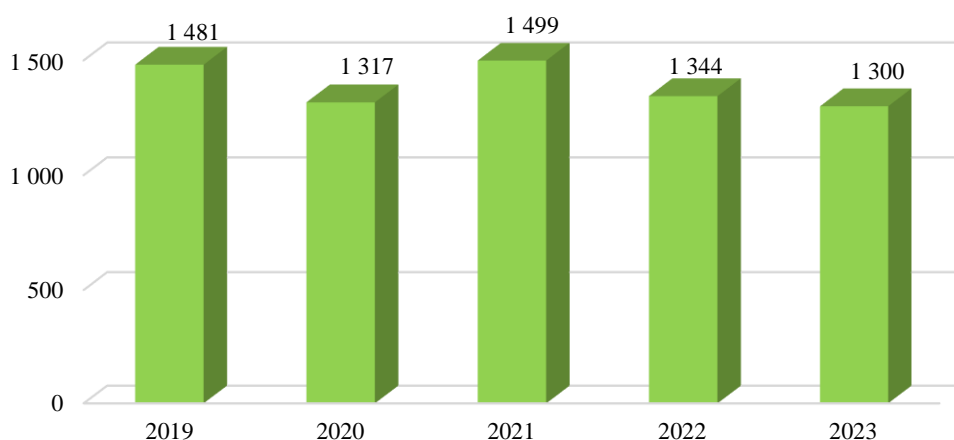
In 2023, 52.0 % of “natural deaths” cases at workplaces were registered in two sectors of industry: manufacturing (10) and transport and storage (16). The most common (32.0 %) “natural deaths” at work were among equipment and machine operators (drivers of various vehicles). 10.0 % of those who

¹ The Accident Report was prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Cabinet Regulations N. 950 “Procedures for the Investigation and Registration of Accidents at Work”, which stipulates that the Labour Inspectorate, taking into account the opinion provided by the Medical Commission on Occupational Diseases of the Occupational and Radiological Medicine Centre, has evaluated that the cause of death of the injured person in the workplace is not the result of the exposure to the working environment factors.

died of natural causes at work did not have a mandatory health examination. The Labour Inspectorate was of the opinion that employers should evaluate the health and safety measures in place in the undertaking, paying additional attention to the working conditions of older workers, as the same preventive measures cannot be applied to all workers.

8. The statistical data on occupational diseases

The Labour Inspectorate participated in the investigation of cases of occupational diseases by preparing workplace hygienic descriptions (WHD) at the undertakings. In 2023, the Labour Inspectorate's officials have prepared 1 300 WHD on the requests of the Occupational Disease Medical Commission of the Occupational and Radiological Medicine Centre of Pauls Stradins Clinical University Hospital (Occupational and Radiation Medicine Centre) and from occupational physicians. In 2023, in comparison with 2022, the number of requests for WHD has decreased by 3.0 % (see *Graph 11*).

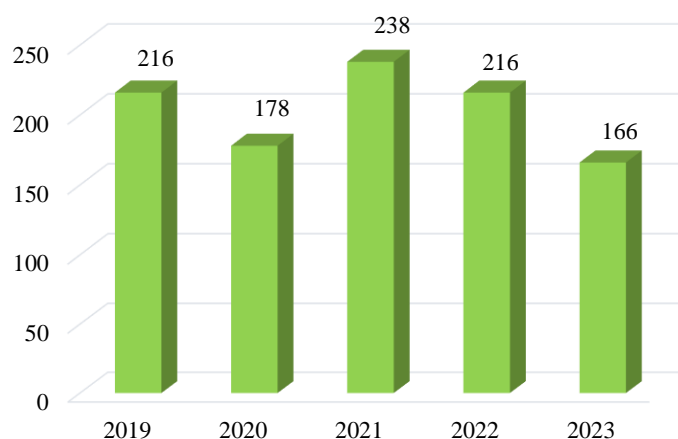


Graph 11: Prepared hygienic descriptions of workplaces (2019 – 2023)

According to the information provided by the Occupational and Radiation Medicine Centre, 1 272 of the first-time patients of an occupational disease were confirmed in 2023. It was by 23.0 % less than in 2022.

According to the Occupational and Radiation Medicine Centre, the decrease in the number of first-time confirmed occupational patients could be explained by the availability of medical examinations, i.e. a potential occupational patient could not get the examinations prescribed by doctors in time due to long queues after the Covid-19 pandemic, during which the availability of medical examinations was severely limited. Another important reason was the shortage of medical staff, which had already increased during the Covid-19 pandemic and is still continuing. These circumstances also had a significant impact on the work of occupational physicians at the Occupational and Radiation Medicine Centre, as insufficient medical staff limited the capacity to deal with the requests for diagnosis of first cases of occupational disease.

In 2023, compared to the data of 2022, the number of the first-time patients of an occupational disease per 100 000 employed persons also decreased by 23.0 % (see *Graph 12*).



Graph 12: Dynamics of the first-time approved occupational disease patients per 100 000 workers (2019 - 2023)

In 2023 like in 2022, the first-time confirmed occupational disease patients most often suffered from diseases of nervous system (67.0 %) – carpal tunnel syndrome (caused by compression of a nerve at the base of the hand). Carpal tunnel syndrome also accounted for 99.0 % of all diagnosed nervous system diseases. The second most common group of occupational diseases was musculoskeletal system and connective tissue diseases – 32.0 %, the most common of which being spinal diseases – spondylosis, radiculopathy, etc.

The mentioned diseases were the result of prolonged exposure to biomechanical risk factors (forced postures, uniform, monotonous movements, physical overload such as heavy lifting, etc.) (see *Table 4*).

Table 4

Groups of occupational diseases according to the 10th International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10)

Code	Group of occupational diseases	2022	2023
A00-B99	CERTAIN INFECTIOUS AND PARASITIC DISEASES	0	2
C00-D48	NEOPLASMS (MALIGNANT AND PRE-CANCER DISEASES)	0	1
F00 - F99	MENTAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS	6	2
G00 - G99	DISEASES OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM	1074	857
I00 - I99	DISEASES OF THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM	2	0
J00 - J99	DISEASES OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM	2	1
M00 - M99	DISEASES OF THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM AND CONNECTIVE TISSUE	576	409
S00 - T98	INJURY, POISONING AND CERTAIN OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF EXTERNAL CAUSES	1	0
	Total	1661	1272

In 2023, like in 2022 most of the first-time patients of an occupational disease were confirmed in the manufacturing industry (18.0 %), transport and storage (17.0 %) and health and social work activities (16.0 %). 51.0 % of the total number of occupational patients confirmed for the first time was in the mentioned industries (see *Table 5*).

In manufacturing, the most common first diagnosis of an occupational disease was among qualified workers (confectioners seamstresses, locksmiths, welders, etc), operators of various equipment and machines (drivers, different machine and equipment operators, etc.), as well as for simple profession workers (cleaners, shop floor workers, packers, ancillary workers, building and site supervisors, etc.). In the transport and storage sector - drivers of various vehicles. In the health and social care sector - for medical staff (doctors, nurses, dentists, physiotherapists, massage therapists), as well as for those working in the professions (cleaners, kitchen staff, laundry workers, etc.).

Table 5

**Breakdown of occupational disease patients by sectors
(NACE Rev. 2 classification)**

	Sectors	2022	2023
A	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	76	44
01	CROP AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING AND RELATED SERVICE ACTIVITIES	39	21
02	FORESTRY AND LOGGING	33	20
03	FISHING AND AQUACULTURE	4	3
B	MINING AND QUARRYING	9	9
C	MANUFACTURING	312	231
D	ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	24	10
E	WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	21	10
F	CONSTRUCTION	114	97
G	WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	198	155
H	TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	310	217
I	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	65	35
J	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	6	4
K	FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	6	10
L	REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	34	19
M	PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	13	9
N	ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	16	23
O	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL INSURANCE	141	112
P	EDUCATION	90	65
Q	HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	196	202
R	ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	14	8
S	OTHER SERVICES	16	12
	Total	1661	1272

In 2023, women comprised 64.0 % of the occupational patients confirmed for the first time. The largest number of cases of occupational disease confirmed for the first time remained in two age groups. In fact, 52.0 % (662) of the new cases of occupational diseases were detected among workers in the 55 - 64 age group and 37.0 % (472) of the new cases were detected among workers in the 45 - 54 age group.

The average age of a first confirmed occupational case in 2023 was 54 years, while the total length of service and the average length of service affected by harmful factors was 28 years.

The occupational groups with the most recognised occupational diseases were (*see Table 6*):

- √ equipment and machine operators – 22.0 %
- √ senior specialists – 16.0 %
- √ qualified workers and craftsmen – 15.0 %
- √ workers of ordinary professions – 14.0 %.

Table 6

Breakdown of occupational patients by occupations classification

	Occupations	2022	2023
1	MANAGERS	48	41
2	SENIOR SPECIALISTS	186	209
3	SPECIALISTS	204	126
4	OFFICE WORKERS	93	73
5	SERVICE AND TRADE EMPLOYEES	231	153
6	QUALIFIED AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERY WORKERS	25	19
7	QUALIFIED WORKERS AND CRAFTSMEN	285	194
8	EQUIPMENT AND MACHINE OPERATORS AND ARTICLE ASSEMBLERS	368	280
9	ORDINARY PROFESSIONS	221	177
	Total	1661	1272

In 2023, the Occupational Disease Medical Commission recognized that occupational diseases were most often with the employed during long-term work under the influence of biomechanical factors, which were in 99.0 % of cases. The main biomechanical factors were work in the forced posture; moving various weights involving incorrect or uniform movements; physical overload, etc. The main and most frequent recommendations of occupational disease doctors to the employers to improve working conditions of the employed or reduce the risk factors remained the same: to reduce the load in the static positions, reduce the load in work with frequent, repetitive and uniform movements, as well as to ensure proper ergonomics of the workplace and equipment.