



Valsts darba inspekcija

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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 2022 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, Shadow Economy Restriction Plan 2021-2022, 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 2022 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 2022, 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. of the construction undertakings;
 - 2.2. of the undertakings where several accidents at work have occurred;
 - 2.3. as part of the SLIC Campaign for Prevention Musculoskeletal Disorders;
 - 2.4. as part of the ELA information and awareness campaign #Road2FairTransport.

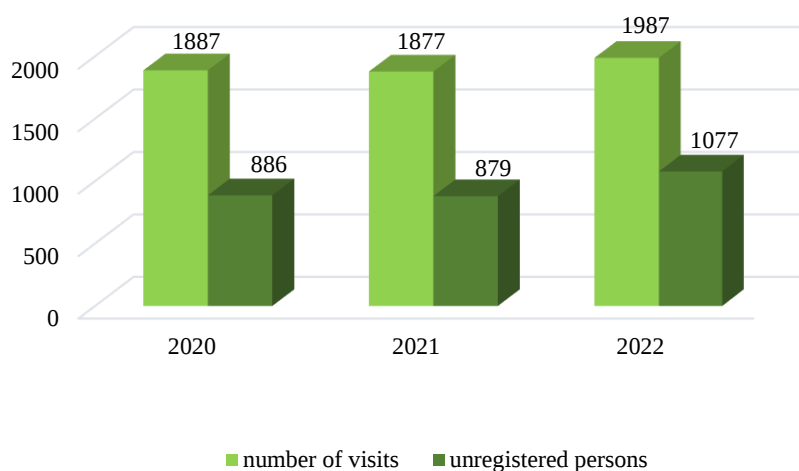
3. European healthy workplaces campaign „Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load”.

1. The implementation of priorities of the Labour Inspectorate in 2022

1.1. In 2022, as before, the implementation of measures to tackle undeclared work was the priority 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 unregistered employment, cooperation and exchange of information with other state and local government institutions, and public information and communication on the negative consequences of unregistered employment.

The Labour Inspectorate carried out 1 987 inspections (planned – 2 000) aimed at the reduction of unregistered employment, of which 33.0 % inspections were successful. This means that in every third inspection, persons were found who had not signed a written employment contract and / or whose employer had not registered them as workers with the State Revenue Service (SRS).

Labour inspectors carried out 307 repeated inspections (i.e. 15.5% 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 unregistered workers were found 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 unregistered persons (2020 – 2022)

In 2022, 1 077 persons were found to be in unregistered employment, including 552 persons without a written employment contract and without declaring to the SRS; 411 persons with a written employment contract but without declaring to the SRS and 114 persons without a written employment contract but declaring to the SRS. In 2022, the number of undeclared workers detected increased by 23.0 % compared to 2021, partly due to an increase in labour market activity following the lifting of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions in the first half of 2022.

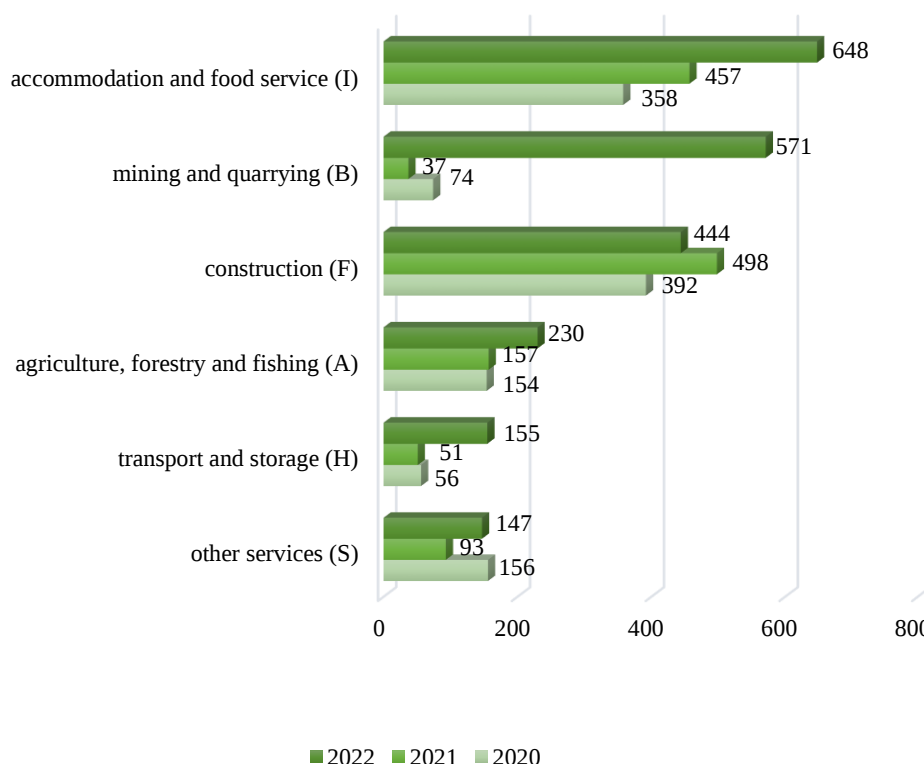
It should be noted that the number of legalized undeclared workers decreased significantly in 2022 compared to the previous two years. This is the number of undeclared workers detected by the Labour Inspectorate with whom the employer, following an inspection by the Labour Inspectorate, concluded an employment contract and / or registered with the SRS. 478 detected undeclared workers or 44.0 % were legalized in 2022. One of the reasons for this decrease in the legalization of undeclared workers

was the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which had a significant negative impact on the financial situation of a large number of undertakings and also on their ability to attract workers.

In 2022, detecting the employment without a written employment contract and / or declaration to the SRS, the officials of the Labour Inspectorate imposed 942¹ fines, the amount of EUR 402 310.00.

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 unregistered employment ratio was observed in the construction sector. The number of unregistered persons in construction in 2022 was 30.0 % of the total number of unregistered persons were detected by the Labour Inspectorate. The number of undeclared workers detected in the transport and storage sector has tripled compared to 2021. This is due to the successful cooperation between the Labour Inspectorate and the Transport Department of Riga City Council in monitoring and controlling taxi service providers. The number of undeclared workers detected in the accommodation and food services sector also increased significantly by 47.0 %, mainly due to the resumption of economic activity in the sector after the lifting of the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2022, the highest number of unregistered persons per 100 000 persons employed in the sector was found in the accommodation and food services sector. Mining and quarrying, the smallest sector in terms of number of workers (2 800), showed a significant increase in the number of unregistered persons per 100 000 employed compared with the three previous years. The mining and quarrying sector, when analyzed in terms of its risk profile (physically demanding work, relatively low wages, work in very isolated locations (e.g. swamps) and employment of migrant workers), is considered to be a high-risk sector in terms of possible undeclared employment, human trafficking and exploitation of workers (see *Graph 2*).



Graph 2: Dynamics of detected unregistered persons by branches per 100 000 workers (2020 – 2022)

¹ From 1 July 2020, data on violations for which an administrative penalty has been imposed was entered and stored in the Administrative Offence Proceedings Support System (APAS), which is maintained by the Information Centre of the Ministry of the Interior.

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 2022, the Labour Inspectorate carried out 40 inspections on undeclared work together with the State Border Guard.

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, as well as in the #Road2FairTransport campaign organized by the ELA.

The Shadow Economy Restriction Plan for 2021-2022 was examined and action directions for reducing the shadow economy were approved. The plan envisaged continuing the cooperation of the public administration authorities, taking targeted measures to reduce the specific problem of the shadow economy and limiting the shadow economy in general. The plan also defined tasks for the Labour Inspectorate. In 2022, the Labour Inspectorate carried out 119 inspections to monitor and control the employment of seasonal agricultural workers in the fruit and vegetable sector, during which 40 people were found to be employed without a written employment contract.

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.

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. Four thematic inspection campaigns in OSH were organised with this aim, 3 594 preventive visits carried out, other public awareness and educational measures took place.

In 2022, 621 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.

1.3. The European information campaign "Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load" in Europe was launched in autumn 2020, but it was ended in the autumn 2022.

Similar to previous years, the central campaign activities were the "Golden Helmet" good practice award competition and the annual conference. The "Golden Helmet" competition sought examples of good practice from undertakings, state and local government institutions that demonstrate the positive impact of OSH measures on employee productivity and business.

The "Golden Helmet" good practice award competition was held for the 18th time in Latvia, and 10 undertakings shared their examples of good practices examples. The competition ended on 4 November 2022 with the on-line conference "Working in a Productive Way" organized by the Labour Inspectorate. The winners of the "Golden Helmet" good practice awards were honoured and awarded during the conference. The Golden Helmet good practice award in OSH went to Trelleborg Wheel

Systems Liepaja Ltd. for the example "The positive impact of automation on occupational health and safety and employee efficiency".

It is important to note that the good practice example of Silkeborg Spaantagning Baltic Ltd, which won the Golden Helmet in the small business category at national level in 2021, was submitted to the European Good Practice Award. In 2022, it was recognised as one of the eight best European examples and awarded at the closing event of the pan-European "Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load" campaign.

There were also online discussions and workshops as part of the "Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load" campaign.

In 2022, two experience exchange visits were also organised to good practice undertakings - Trelleborg Wheel Systems Liepaja Ltd and Silkeborg Spaantagning Baltic Ltd.

In 2022, the Labour Inspectorate continued the European Social Fund (ESF) project "Improving the practical implementation and monitoring of occupational safety and health legislation". The aim of the project was to improve occupational health and safety at undertakings, particularly those operating in high-risk industries.

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 2022:

No amendments.

2.2. Laws, rules, regulations enforced by the Labour Inspectorate came into force in 2022:

√ Important amendments to the Labour Law came into force on 1 August. They related to a number of changes in the employment of workers, including:

- the content of the employment contract;
- the terms of the agreed working time and the probationary period;
- the conditions for informing workers about collective agreements and amendments to them;
- changes and additions to the various leave arrangements.

√ Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 219 "Procedures for Performance of Mandatory Health Examinations" was supplemented with an Annex containing contraindications to working with ionising radiation sources and came into force on 5 May;

√ New Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 44 "Regulations on Occupational Safety Requirements and Medical Care on Board Ships" has been adopted and came into force on 21 January.

3. The personnel of the Labour Inspectorate

3.1. In 2022, 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 – 41.5;

√ inspectors – 69.5.

3.3. Number of women inspectors in 2022 – 84 (66.1 % of total number of inspectors), of whom:

√ chief inspectors – 11 (68.8 % of total number of chief inspectors);

√ senior inspectors – 29 (69.9 % of total number of senior inspectors);

√ inspectors – 44 (63.3 % 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 2022, changes were made to the structure of the Labour Inspectorate in order to make optimal and targeted use financial and human resources and to promote the implementation of the objectives of the Labour Inspectorate:

✓ The post of the Strategic Communications Manager was abolished from 27 June 2022, and the functions of the post being delegated to all Heads of Unit.

RSLIs operated within the country:

- **Kurzeme RSLI** – the centre – in Liepāja, a sector – in Ventspils, office – in Saldus;
- **Latgale RSLI** – the centre – in Daugavpils, a sector – in Rēzekne, office – in Jēkabpils;
- **Rīga RSLI** – the centre – in Rīga, 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, Consultation Centre in Bauska.

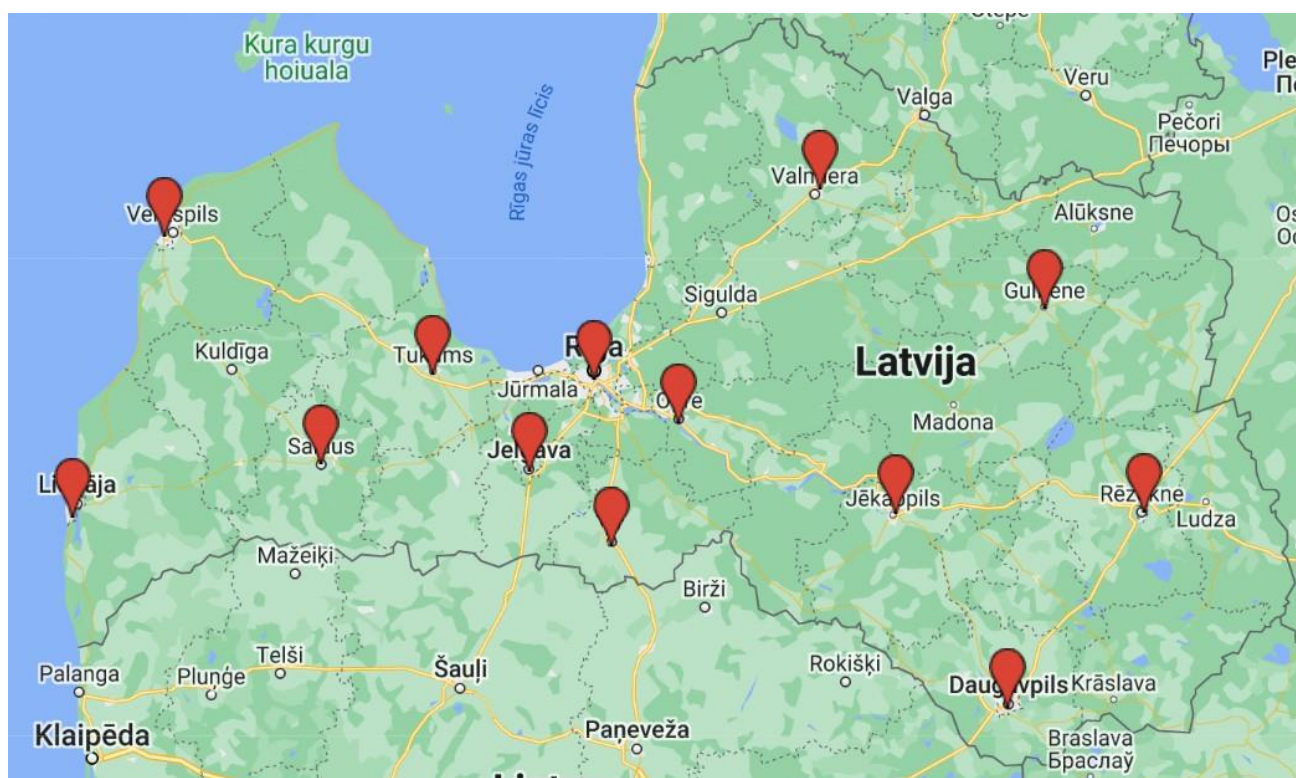


Figure 1: Geographical location of the structural divisions of the Labour Inspectorate

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 – **119 736**, including in agriculture – 6 512 (5.4 % of the total number of the undertakings under the control of the Labour Inspectorate, data of the Central Statistical Bureau for the 2022).

Number of workers in the undertakings under the Labour Inspectorate's supervision – **767 800**, including in agriculture – 29 544 (3.9 % of the total number of workers), of whom women – 400 100, including in agriculture – 9 093 (2.3 % of the total number of women, data of the Central Statistical Bureau for the 2022).

5. Statistics of inspection visits

Number of undertakings inspected by the Labour Inspectorate in 2022 – **6 688**, including in agriculture – 744 (11.1 %) out of which: more than once a year – **1 455**, including in agriculture – 110 (7.6 %).

The Labour Inspectorate carried out **9 897** visits to undertakings, including in agriculture – 905 (9.1 %) in 2022.

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

6.1. In 2022, inspectors of the Labour Inspectorate issued to employers **960 orders** (in 2021 – 1 141), including in agriculture – 87 (9.1 %, in 2021 – 130) due to violations of labour legal relations and OSH legislative enactments. In these orders in total **2 738² violations** (in 2021 – 3 336) were detected, including in agriculture – 254 (9.3 %, in 2021 – 433) of which:

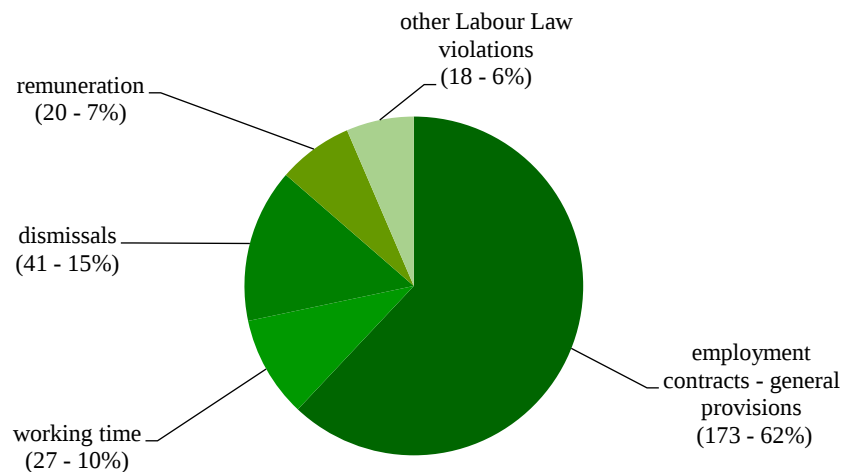
- 2 409 (in 2021 – 2 941), including in agriculture – 207 (8.6 %, in 2021 – 390), on OSH violations;
- 329 (in 2021 – 395), including in agriculture – 47 (14.3 %, in 2021 - 43), on labour legal relations.

The number of orders has been declining for several years in a row. Over a three-year period, it has fallen by 31.5%. The ratio of the number of orders issued to the number of inspections carried out has also been on a downward trend, reflecting the active and effective application of the "Consult First" principle in practice. The Labour Inspectorate's order specified the particular violation to be eliminated and the deadline for the compliance. 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 12.0 % of all violations detected by the officials of the Labour Inspectorate in 2022. 82.0 % of violations of the labour legal relations were violations of the Labour Law, but 18.0% were violations of other regulatory enactments on labour relations.

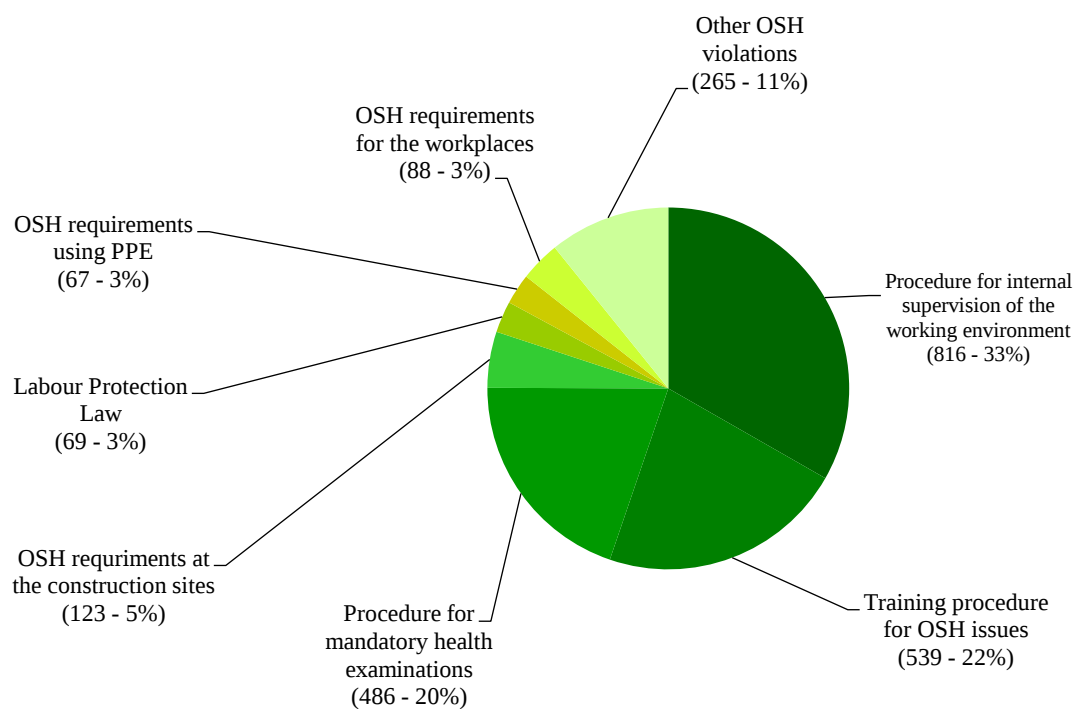
In 2022, as in previous years, most employers did not comply with requirements of the Labour Law, Section 40 regarding employment contract, which were 60.0 % of all labour relations violations. The violations found were related to the content of the employment contract, for example, were not specified: 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 work remuneration (21.0 %), including all amount of money was not paid to the worker on the day of dismissal (see *Graph 3*).

² The statistical information on detected violations did not include violations for which an administrative penalty was imposed in 2022, as all information on them was entered into the APAS. Therefore, it was not possible to collect and rank data on the detected violations for which an administrative penalty was imposed in 2022 in the databases of the Labour Inspectorate Information System.



Graph 3: Distribution of violations on labour legal relations in 2022

Violations of regulatory enactments on **OSH** made up 88.0 % of all violations detected by the officials of the Labour Inspectorate in 2022 (see Graph 4).



Graph 4: Distribution of violations on OSH in 2022

6.3. The applied penalties and their type

The officials of the Labour Inspectorate imposed on the employers **1 820³ administrative penalties** for violations of labour legal relations, OSH regulatory enactments and the State Labour Inspectorate Law in 2022 (see *Graph 5*), including:

- **285 - warnings** (2021 – 272);
- **1 535 - fines** (2021 – 1 301), in total for **EUR 562 865.00³**.



Graph 5: Structure and number of the imposed administrative penalties (2020 – 2022)

Upon discovering violations, which pose a direct threat to the life and health of workers, the Labour Inspectorate officials issued 11 orders and seven warnings on the person's / object's suspension.

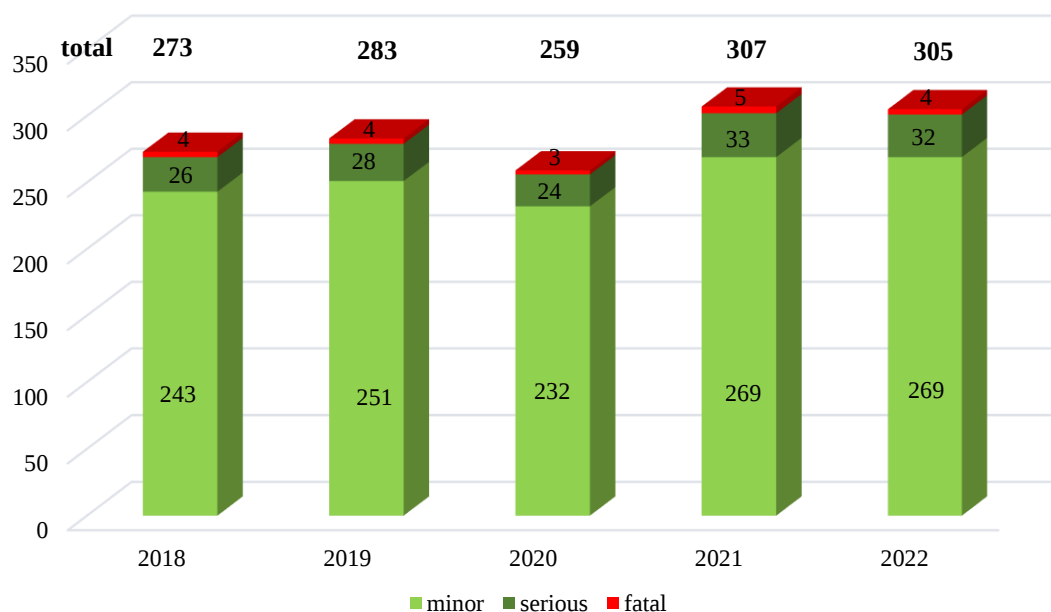
Out of 18 orders / warnings on suspension of the activity of a person / object 14 (77.8 %) were issued at the construction sites. Most frequently, activities were suspended or a warning on suspension was issued due to unsafe work at a height, *inter alia* on unsafe or incompletely erected scaffoldings, unsafe work on the roof without anti-fall systems, unbounded openings in the floor, etc., two - for work in the trenches without fixed side edges, one – for unsafe working environment at the construction site that threatened the health and life of workers, one – for unsafe pruning of tree branches and one – for using of the saws without adequate guards.

7. The statistical data on accidents at work

According to the information available at the Labour Inspectorate, 2 341 workers were involved in accidents at work in Latvia in 2022. There were 29 fatal accidents and 243 accidents with serious injuries.

The number of serious injuries per 100 000 workers in 2022 was 3.0 % lower than in 2021 and the number of fatalities was 20.0 % lower (see *Graph 6*).

³ Data on the number and amount of administrative sanctions imposed by the Labour Inspectorate were from the APAS



Graph 6. The accidents rates per 100 000 workers (2018 – 2022)

Analysis of the number of persons injured in accidents at work by sectors (see *Table 1*) showed that the industries with the largest number of injured persons have not changed. In 2022, as well in previous year, it was manufacturing industry, wholesale and retail trade, transport and storage industry.

Manufacturing industry had the most persons (734) injured in accidents at work (31.0 %) in 2022.

The second highest number of accidents at work was in wholesale and retail trade (335 - 14.0 %).

Transport and storage industry had the third highest number of accidents at work (300 - 13.0 %).

In 2022, the most common sectors for fatal accidents at work were construction (7 - 24.1 %), transport and storage (7 - 24.1 %) and agriculture (6 - 20.7 %). These sectors accounted for 69.0 % of all fatal accidents at work.

The number of fatalities in the construction sector remained at the same level as in 2021. The main causes of fatal accidents in construction were related both to unsafe and reckless behaviour by the fatalities themselves (failure to follow safety rules or instructions; use of improper working methods in the performance of work duties) and shortcomings in the management of the work by the employer (lack of instruction and training of the workers in the use of safe working methods). Fatal accidents at work in the construction sector are mainly related to falls from height, exposure to falling objects, etc.

The number of fatalities in the transport and storage sector in 2022 has decreased by 53.0 % compared to 2021. In the transport and storage sector, of the 7 fatal accidents at work, 4 were due to road traffic accidents while performing their duties abroad or to a rapid deterioration of health. The causes of the other fatal accidents were related to the impact of various working conditions that led to the death of the workers. The causes of these fatal accidents at work were mainly related to unsatisfactory instruction and training of the workers, as well as non-observance of safety instructions by the workers.

In the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector, the number of fatalities was six times higher than in 2021 (2021 - 1; 2022 - 6). The causes of fatal accidents at work were mostly related to unsatisfactory working conditions, insufficient and unsatisfactory measures taken by the employer to ensure a safe work process, such as insufficient instruction and training of workers, unsatisfactory organisation of the workplace, etc., while 2 workers died as a result of road traffic accidents.

Table 1

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

	Sectors	Total		Including			
				Serious		Fatal	
		2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
A	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	88	113	15	11	1	6
01	CROP AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING AND RELATED SERVICE ACTIVITIES	55	66	10	5	0	2
02	FORESTRY AND LOGGING	32	42	5	5	1	3
03	FISHING AND AQUACULTURE	1	5	0	1	0	1
B	MINING AND QUARRYING	10	4	2	0	1	0
C	MANUFACTURING	755	734	55	63	4	4
D	ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	12	13	4	3	0	0
E	WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	35	53	4	9	0	0
F	CONSTRUCTION	225	199	45	32	7	7
G	WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	341	335	26	21	6	1
H	TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	292	300	45	43	15	7
I	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	45	46	0	8	1	0
J	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	17	20	0	1	0	0
K	FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	4	4	0	0	0	0
L	REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	26	38	7	6	1	0
M	PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	21	15	1	1	0	1
N	ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	84	78	9	8	0	1
O	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL INSURANCE	103	115	10	12	0	1
P	EDUCATION	44	64	7	8	0	0
Q	HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	181	187	14	15	0	1
R	ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	21	14	3	2	0	0
S	OTHER SERVICES	6	9	0	1	2	0
	Total	2310	2341	248	243	38	29

Analysis of the causes of fatal accidents at work in 2022 (see Table 2) showed that:

- ✓ 35.0 % of fatalities related to work organisation and employer shortcomings (insufficient instruction and training of workers, shortcomings in work management and unsatisfactory control of the work to be done);
- ✓ 30.0 % were caused by unsafe human actions (workers did not follow safety rules or instructions when performing their duties or performed their duties under the influence of alcohol);
- ✓ 22.0 % were caused by road traffic accidents (such accidents are virtually impossible to predict and prevent).

Table 2

Breakdown of accidents by accident causes

	Causes of accidents at work	Total		Including			
				Serious		Fatal	
		2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
1	UNSATISFACTORY CONDITIONS AT WORKPLACE	145	162	29	33	4	0
2	UNSAFE HUMAN ACTION (ACTION/PERSON)	1913	1714	186	158	16	11
3	WORK ORGANIZATION AND RELATED SHORTCOMINGS	302	438	61	79	10	13
4	VIOLATION OF ROAD TRAFFIC RULES	97	87	18	16	13	8
5	VIOLENCE (ATTACKS)	83	89	4	2	1	0
6	OTHERS	121	135	17	21	7	5
	Total	2661	2625	315	309	51	37

Analyzing occupations of the injured persons, it may be concluded, that qualified workers and craftsmen (23.0 % - metalworking, mechanical engineering and builders etc.) and ordinary professions workers (23.0 % - construction, production and transport industries' workers), as well as equipment and machine operators and article assemblers (20.0 % - self-propelled vehicle and equipment operators, lifting machine and equipment operators, industrial equipment operators) suffered primarily in accidents at work in 2022 (see Table 3).

Table 3

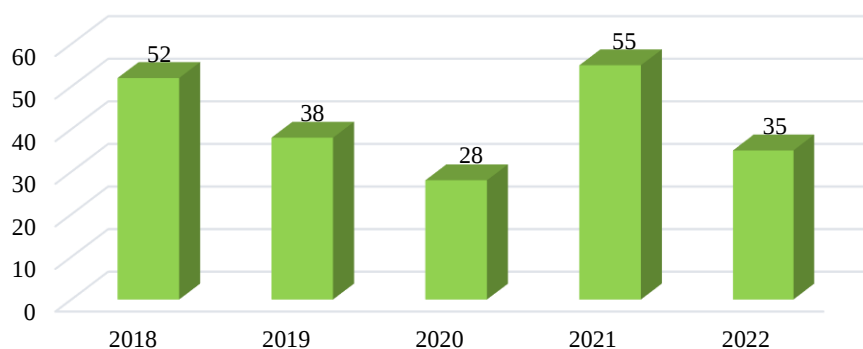
Breakdown of injured persons by occupations classification

	Occupations	Total		Including			
				Serious		Fatal	
		2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
1	MANAGERS	32	37	10	7	1	1
2	SENIOR SPECIALISTS	102	139	11	14	1	1
3	SPECIALISTS	197	174	17	16	3	2
4	OFFICE WORKERS	127	114	11	8	0	0
5	SERVICE AND TRADE EMPLOYEES	279	302	10	22	0	0
6	QUALIFIED AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERY WORKERS	23	37	3	2	0	3
7	QUALIFIED WORKERS AND CRAFTSMEN	534	541	59	51	9	7
8	EQUIPMENT AND MACHINE OPERATORS AND ARTICLE ASSEMBLERS	452	458	67	65	17	11
9	ORDINARY PROFESSIONS	564	539	60	58	7	4
	Total	2310	2341	248	243	38	29

Analysis of the statistics on accidents at work showed that in 2022 the average age of a worker seriously injured or fatally injured was 52 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, operators of various machines or

lines, etc.), workers in ordinary occupations (auxiliary workers, street sweepers, kitchen workers, etc.), qualified workers and craftsmen (mechanics, fitters, carpenters, builders, etc.).

In 2022, the Labour Inspectorate investigated 42 fatal accidents at work that were not related to the working conditions and environmental factors, 35 (83.0 %) of which were so-called “natural deaths”⁴. Meanwhile the remaining seven 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, committed a suicide or the death was caused by using alcohol, drugs, psychotropic substances or other harmful substances (see *Graph 7*).



Graph 7. Dynamics of “natural deaths” (2018 – 2022)

Analysing the data on “natural deaths” at work by sex and age, men (32 - 91.0 %) and workers aged 55 - 64 (20 - 57.0 %) were most likely to die.

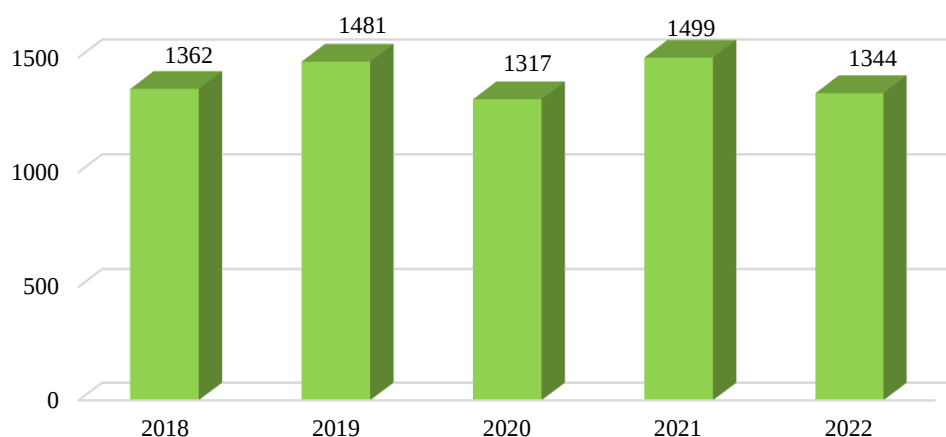
In 2022, 51.0 % of “natural deaths” cases at workplaces were registered in three industries: manufacturing industry (9), agriculture, forestry and fishing (5), transport and storage (4). The most common (37.0 %) “natural deaths” at work were among equipment and machine operators (drivers of various vehicles).

21.0 % of those who died of natural causes at work did not have a mandatory health examination suggesting that employers did not pay enough attention to the individual worker's ability to perform the tasks assigned. The Labour Inspectorate was of the opinion that employers should evaluate the health and safety measures in place in the undertaking, paying particular attention to the working conditions of older workers, as the same preventive measures cannot be applied to all workers. It should be noted that the doctor of occupational diseases may prescribe additional health examination for older workers during mandatory health examinations in order to assess and verify their suitability for the work to be performed.

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 2022, the Labour Inspectorate's officials have prepared 1 344 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 2022, in comparison with 2021, the number of requests for WHD has decreased by 10.0 % (see *Graph 8*).

⁴ 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.



Graph 8: Prepared hygienic descriptions of workplaces (2018 – 2022)

According to the information provided by the Occupational and Radiation Medicine Centre, 1 661 of the first-time patients of an occupational disease were confirmed in 2022. It was by 7.0 % less than in 2021.

In 2022, compared to the data of 2021, the number of the first-time patients of an occupational disease per 100 000 employed persons decreased by 9.0 % (see *Graph 9*).



Graph 9: Dynamics of the first-time approved occupational disease patients per 100 000 workers (2018 - 2022)

In 2022 like in 2021, the first-time confirmed occupational disease patients most often suffered from diseases of nervous system (64.0 %) – carpal tunnel syndrome (caused by compression of a nerve at the base of the hand). Carpal tunnel syndrome also accounted for 99 % of all diagnosed nervous system diseases. The second most common occupational diseases were musculoskeletal system and connective tissue diseases – 34.0 %, the most common of which being spinal diseases – spondylosis, arthrosis, radiculitis, shoulder joint diseases, 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	2021	2022
C00-D48	NEOPLASMS (MALIGNANT AND PRE-CANCER DISEASES)	1	0
F00 - F99	MENTAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS	6	6
G00 - G99	DISEASES OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM	1195	1074
I00 - I99	DISEASES OF THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM	3	2
J00 - J99	DISEASES OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM	3	2
L00 - L99	DISEASES OF THE SKIN AND SUBCUTANEOUS TISSUE	1	0
M00 - M99	DISEASES OF THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM AND CONNECTIVE TISSUE	580	576
S00 - T98	INJURY, POISONING AND CERTAIN OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF EXTERNAL CAUSES	2	1
	Total	1791	1661

In 2022, like in 2021 most of the first-time patients of an occupational disease were confirmed in the manufacturing industry (19.0 %), transport and storage (19.0 %) and wholesale and retail trade (12.0 %). 50.0 % 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 (woodworking machine operators, fish processors, seamstresses, confectioners, locksmiths, welders, etc), operators of various equipment and machines (drivers, dairy equipment operators, candle equipment operators, paper equipment operators, assemblers, etc.), as well as for simple profession workers (cleaners, sorters, site supervisors, etc.), in the transport and storage sector - drivers of various vehicles (45.0 %), in sales - shop assistants, confectioners, cooks, shop floor staff, etc.

Table 5

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

	Sectors	2021	2022
A	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	68	76
01	CROP AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION, HUNTING AND RELATED SERVICE ACTIVITIES	44	39
02	FORESTRY AND LOGGING	22	33
03	FISHING AND AQUACULTURE	2	4
B	MINING AND QUARRYING	11	9
C	MANUFACTURING	315	312
D	ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	20	24
E	WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	16	21
F	CONSTRUCTION	99	114

	Sectors	2021	2022
G	WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	229	198
H	TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	406	310
I	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	99	65
J	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	6	6
K	FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	7	6
L	REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	24	34
M	PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	10	13
N	ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	40	16
O	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL INSURANCE	113	141
P	EDUCATION	86	90
Q	HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	203	196
R	ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	16	14
S	OTHER SERVICES	23	16
	Total	1791	1661

In 2022, women comprised 62.0 % 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, 54.0 % (896) of the new cases of occupational diseases were detected among workers in the 55 - 64 age group and 36.0 % (605) of the new cases were detected among workers in the 45 - 54 age group.

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

- ✓ equipment and machine operators – 22.0 %
- ✓ qualified workers and craftsmen – 17.0 %
- ✓ services and trade workers – 14.0 %
- ✓ workers of ordinary professions – 13.0 %
- ✓ specialists – 12.0 %.

Table 6

Breakdown of occupational patients by occupations classification

	Occupations	2021	2022
1	MANAGERS	45	48
2	SENIOR SPECIALISTS	161	186
3	SPECIALISTS	215	204
4	OFFICE WORKERS	98	93
5	SERVICE AND TRADE EMPLOYEES	282	231
6	QUALIFIED AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERY WORKERS	26	25
7	QUALIFIED WORKERS AND CRAFTSMEN	292	285
8	EQUIPMENT AND MACHINE OPERATORS AND ARTICLE ASSEMBLERS	421	368
9	ORDINARY PROFESSIONS	250	221

	Occupations	2021	2022
10	NATIONAL ARMED FORCES OCCUPATIONS	1	0
	Total	1791	1661

In 2022, 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 working in the forced posture; moving various weights; incorrect or uniform movements; physical overload, etc. The main and most frequent recommendations of occupational disease doctors to the employers for improving the working conditions of the employed or reducing the risk factors were to reduce the load in the static positions, reduce the load at work with frequent, repeated and uniform movements, as well as to ensure proper ergonomics of the workplace and equipment.