Tööinspektsioon

2011

ANNUAL REPORT OF WORK ENVIRONMENT

March 2012

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**"With supervision and notification of the public
we help improve the quality of working life"**

Work environment in 2011

Inspection activities in the field of occupational health and safety are directly influenced both by the number of employed people and the number of enterprises in different fields of activity. We can say that the year 2011 was a good one after two years of recession, when the number of employed decreased drastically. As compared to the year 2010 about 40 000 employees are back at the labour market. The number of new enterprises is also an indicator of improvement of economic environment.

Employed aged 15-74

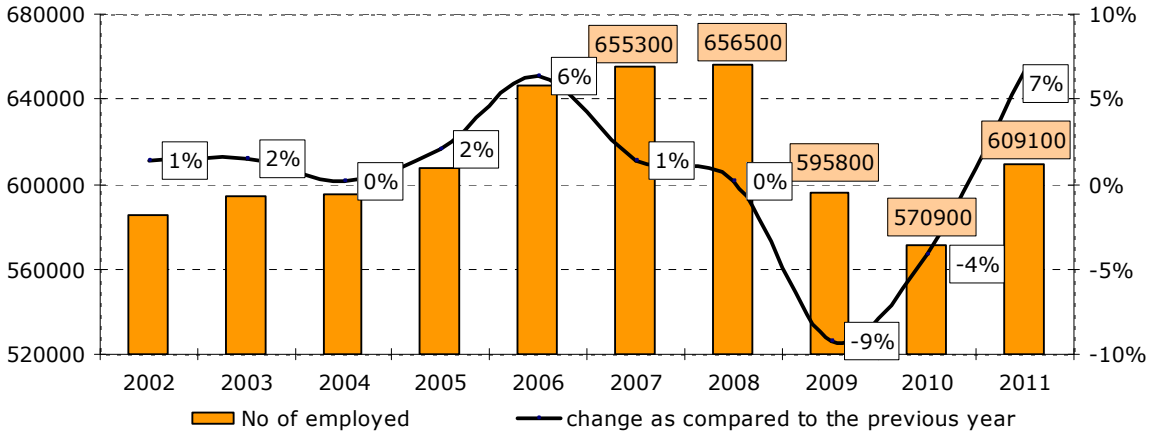
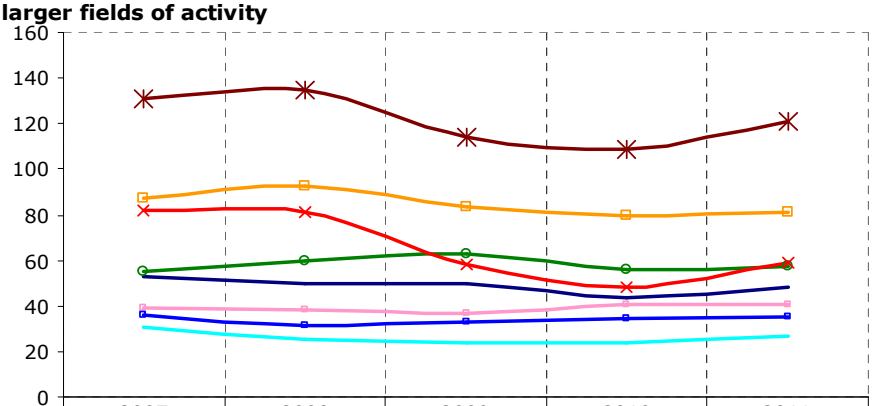


Figure 1

Increase in the number of employed persons is also confirmed by the data of the Statistics Estonia by fields of activity, on the basis of which the number of employed persons aged 15-74 has increased by 7% i.e. by ~40 000 employees. When during the years of economic recession the largest decline in the number of employed persons was (-18%) in the construction sector, then in 2011 it was the construction sector that recovered the fastest, where the number of employed persons increased by 23% i.e. by 11 000 employees as compared to the year 2010. Employment in processing industry has considerably improved (12%), mostly in metal industry, wood and food industry.

No of employed in larger fields of activity



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Manufacturing	131,2	135	113,8	108,4	121
Trade	86,9	92,5	83,2	80	81,3
Education	55	59,9	62,5	56,1	57,2
Construction	82,1	81	58,3	47,9	59
Transport, storage	52,9	49,9	49,7	43,6	48,3
Public administration, national defence	39,2	38,4	36,7	40,4	40,3
Health care	36,2	31,1	33	34,6	35,5
Agriculture	30,3	25,3	24	24,1	26,9

Figure 2

As can be seen from the Figure below the number of operating enterprises was the smallest in the second quarter of 2010 and a positive upward trend can be seen since February 2011.

The number of enterprises with at least 5 workers 2009-2011

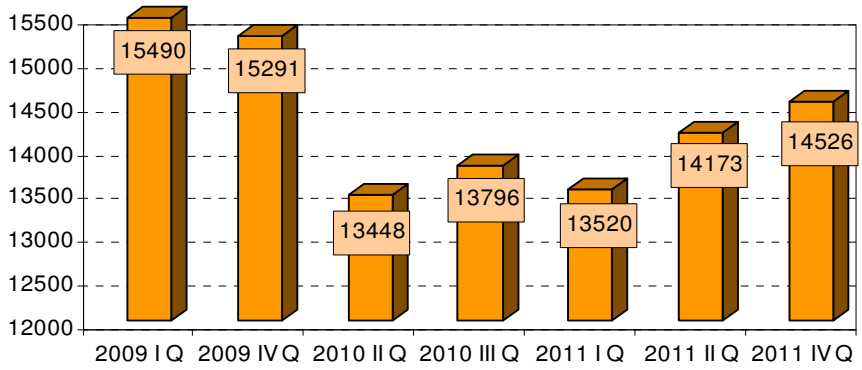


Figure 3

The number of accidents at work, an indicator of work environment, has somewhat increased in absolute numbers by 16,4% i.e. 526 accidents at work as compared to 2010. Also the ratio of accidents at work has increased per 100 000 employees up to 9% i.e. 614 accidents at work (in 2010 – 563).

The number of serious accidents at work increased about 11% i.e. by 79 accidents during the year. In 2010 there were 19 fatal accidents at work (in 2010 - 17).
The causes of accidents at work may result from the increased intensity of work and recruitment of new employees with limited work experience or who have not been sufficiently instructed and trained on safety measures. Each year reporting of accidents at work improves.

The number of labour disputes is continuously dropping. In 2011 the number of applications submitted to the Labour Dispute Committees was 2909 (in 2010 - 3803; in 2009 - 6371). Comparing to the year 2010 the number of labour disputes has decreased by 24%.

Based on the objective of the Labour Inspectorate to ensure more efficient and effective supervision, somewhat less inspection visits of enterprises were carried out in 2011 than in the previous years, but all the more thoroughly. The number of enterprises inspected has decreased mainly due to the decrease in the number of inspectors carrying out surveillance. Fewer infringements were detected and the level of timely elimination of infringements detected has considerably improved. Or in other words, supervision of enterprises has become more effective and it can be concluded that employers comply with safety requirements correctly. Inspectors are of the opinion that work environment and employers' activities have improved.

In the frames of communication activity the following activities can be brought out: information days on work environment and labour relations and training of work environment specialists and managers of SME were carried out in 2011 all over Estonia. The electronic newsletter of the Labour Inspectorate was delivered to 1780 subscribers by the end of 2011. Information on labour relations and work environment is regularly published in local press and city websites. Collection and recognition of best practices is an ongoing activity, more information is available on the website of the Labour Inspectorate.

There was another essential change in December 2011, when it was decided that the National Coordination Centre of the European Occupational Safety and Health Agency *(EU-OSHA)* would be coordinated by the Labour Inspectorate starting from 2012. Until the end of 2011 it was the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Agency has three main fields of activity: collection and dissemination of information and improvement of knowledge. Its mission is to make European workplaces safer, healthier and more productive. The role of the National Coordination Centre is to be the representative of the Agency in a Member State and

intermediary between the Agency and the Member State in the above-mentioned activity, also coordinator of the activity on the Member State level.

Occupational Health and Safety

Inspection of occupational health and safety

During inspection of occupational health and safety 3359 enterprises were visited in all in 2011, covering 23% of enterprises with 5 or more employees in Estonia.

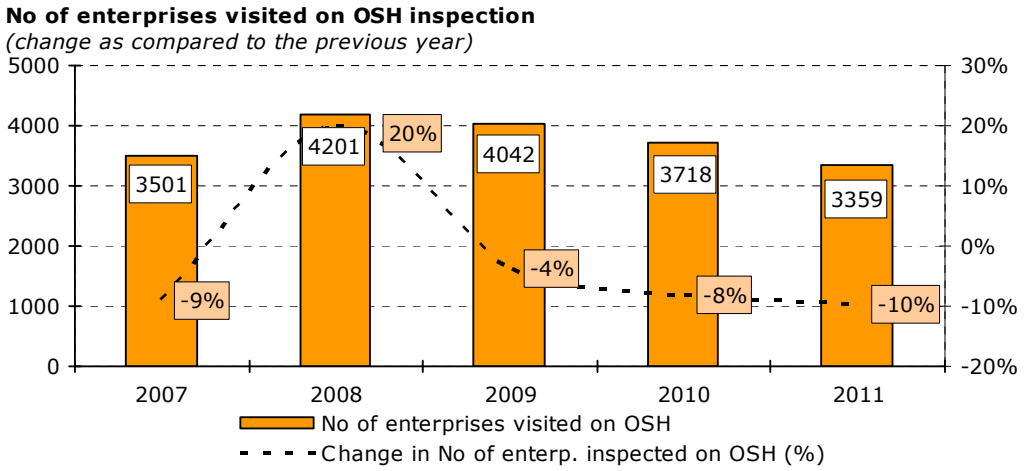


Figure 4

As compared with previous years, the number of enterprises, visited with the aim of inspection of work environment, has somewhat decreased, but in the light of results, inspection visits have become more comprehensive. In addition to inspection of work environment, also 1572 target inspection visits were conducted, the aim of which was to find out more problematic fields of activity in the work environment and to make employees and employers aware of them. It is a good sign that the relative importance of such topical target inspection visits has increased.

In 2011 the topics of national target inspections were:

- Compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in vocational training centres;
- Target inspection of PPE;
- Target inspection of risk factors causing occupational diseases;

The topics of target inspections of local inspectorates were:

In the work area of the Põhja (North Estonian) Inspectorate:

- Target inspection of accidents at work;
- Target inspection of safety signs;

In the work area of the Lõuna (South Estonian) Inspectorate:

- Occupational safety at nursing homes;
- Conditions of work at cash registers "Cash-and-carry";

In the work area of the Ida (East Estonian) Inspectorate:

- Office work places;
- Compliance of non-work rooms and organisation of first aid;
- Target inspection on reduction of health hazards caused by physiological risk factors;

In the work area of the Lääne (West Estonian) Inspectorate:

- Target inspection on safety of work equipment;
- Target inspection of accidents at work;
- Target inspection of physiological risk factors of cleaners and chambermaids.

Conclusions of target inspection results can be found in the Annex to the Annual Report.

Inspection of new premises and market control of PPE–s are also the responsibility of the Labour Inspectorate, and were performed at 196 and 39 enterprises respectively. Based on complaints enterprises were visited in 87 cases (in 2010 – in 77 cases), due to cases of occupational diseases or investigation of accidents at work 370 times in all.

Inspection results of work environment

Enterprises with such fields of activity where workers had the highest risk of health damage were more focused on. Assessment of risk levels of fields of activity in 2011, based on calculation of the total number of each field of activity and the number of accidents at work, occupational and work-related diseases, was taken for the basis for planning inspection activities.

Work environment inspections were performed at 1749 i.e. 12% of enterprises with more than 5 employees[1] (in 2010 – 2208 e. 14%). In 2011 enterprises of the following fields of activity were inspected most:

- wholesale and retail trade (9% of enterprises in the field of activity);
- construction (13%);
- metal industry (19%);
- agriculture and hunting (33%);
- wood industry (28%);
- transport and storage (9%);
- accommodation and catering (13%)

No of enterprises in field of activity covered by work environment inspection 2011

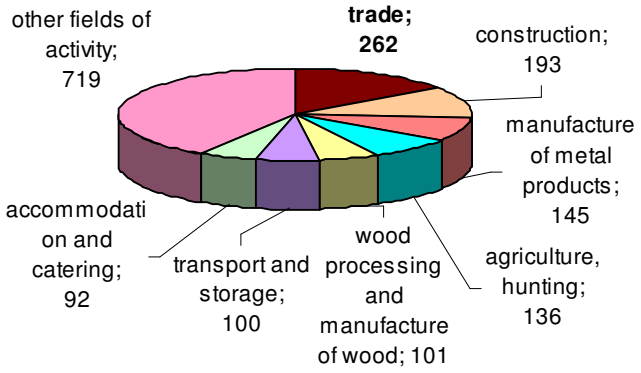


Figure 5

Assessments given on risk factors of work environment at enterprises and employer`s activity

Considering all factors in general, inspectors assessed work environment as:

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Good	34%	39%	53%	59%
Rather good	48%	43%	26%	22%

Thus, in **81%** of enterprises positive assessment was given to management of risk factors and work environment activities (in 2010 -79% and in 2009 – 82%). When comparing the results with the ones of four years back, we can say that the number of enterprises with good work environment has considerably increased.

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Rather bad	13%	12%	13%	11%
Bad	5%	6%	8%	7%

[1] No of enterprises with more than 5 workers (15 193) based on the information system of the Labour Inspectorate (ITI)

In the course of **follow-up inspection** risk factors of work environment and work environment activity were assessed as follows:

Good	71% (in 2010 - 65%);	Rather bad	3% (in 2010 - 4%);
Rather good	23% (in 2010 - 28%);	Bad	2% (in 2010 – 2%).

To illustrate the comparison between assessments given in 2011 and 2010 all activities that have been assessed during the initial inspection are shown in the table below ((%-s of the figures are given on the basis of enterprises where the risk factor occurred or the activity was required).

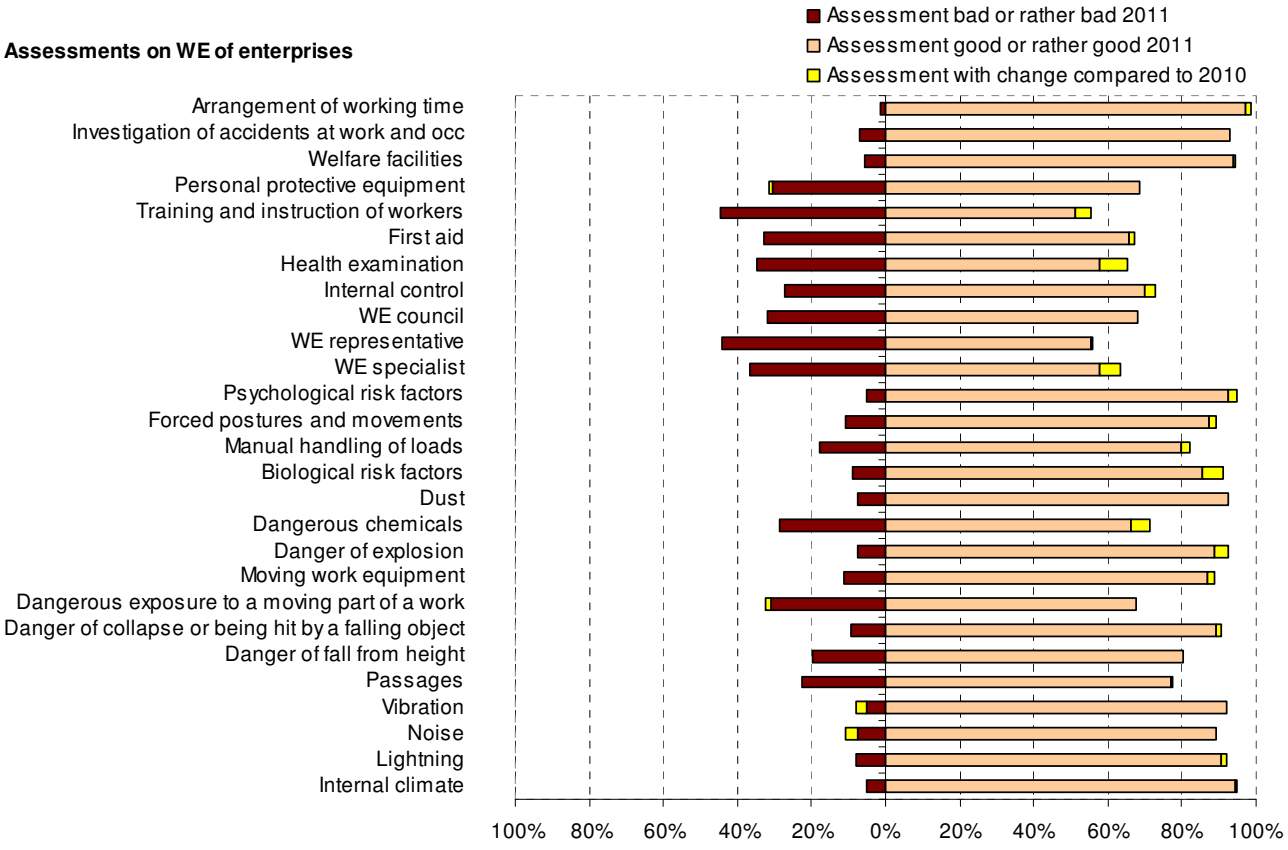


Figure 6

As it can be seen in the Figure, assessments on risk factors and employers`activities have changed for the better as compared to the year 2010. Similarly to previous years problematic aspects and activities have remained the same - most often training and instruction of employees was assessed as bad or rather bad, even in more than 40% of enterprises assessed. Unfortunately insufficient training and instruction of employees is the main cause why accidents at work take place. Nomination of work environment representatives and work environment specialists is still a problem in many enterprises or their activity was not in compliance with requirements. Health examination had not been arranged, provision of first aid insufficient and the activities were not in compliance with requirements in management of risks related to exposure to moving parts of work equipment in one third of enterprises inspected. Problems related to reduction of noise and vibration were discovered somewhat more than in 2010, these problems pose the greatest risks to workers`health and are one of the most common risk factors of work-related diseases.

In more than 90% of enterprises arrangement of working time, management of psycho-social risk factors, indoor climate, availability of welfare premises and arrangement of investigation of accidents at work and occupational diseases, management of explosion hazards, reduction of the influence of vibration and lighting to health were assessed as **good or rather good**.

As compared to assessments of previous years, it is evident that the main changes for the better took place in those activities that had previously been the most problematic. Thus, assessments on work environment have improved mostly concerning activities in relation to managing biological and psychological risk factors, prevention of explosion hazards, dangerous chemicals, provision of health care and training and instruction of employees.

Follow-up inspections were carried out in 645 enterprises i.e. in 19% of enterprises inspected during the year. At about 94% of enterprises work environment was assessed as good or rather good in the course of follow-up inspection visits. Major changes compared to the situation during initial and follow-up inspection of enterprises concern problems related to noise; paths have been cleaned up, possibilities to exposure to moving work equipment were assessed, measures to avoid exposure to dangerous chemicals were taken. However, it is evident that e.g. to improve organisation of health control within a given term still pose difficulties to enterprises, it was noticed at about 14% of enterprises covered by follow-up inspection visits. 10% of enterprises could not select persons responsible for work environment by the time of follow-up inspection visit i.e. there was neither a work environment specialist, a work environment representative nor work environment council, who should deal with better organisation of work environment in the future.

On the ground of complaints 87 enterprises were inspected in 2011. On the basis of complaints enterprises of construction and trade sectors were visited more frequently. Complaints on construction enterprises were mostly submitted by anxious citizens, who had noticed construction workers without personal protective equipment at construction sites (mostly on roofs). Information was submitted on commercial establishments related both to conditions of work with a request to draw the management`s attention to them and with a request for reducing the noise level in turning down the music in trade centres.

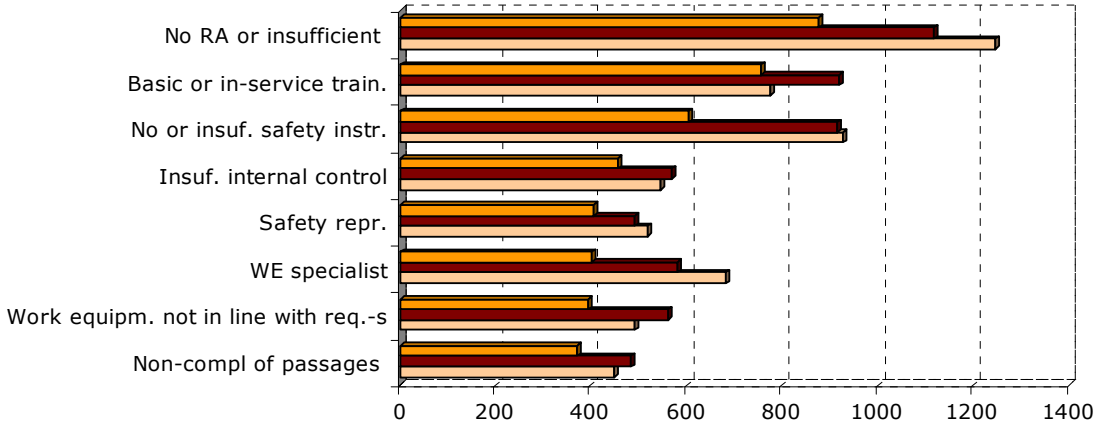
Infringements of requirements of different legal acts were identified in the course of inspection in 12 855 cases (the respective number in 2010 was 15 959), 64% of which were formalised in notices (in 2010 – 61%). As compared to the year 2010 the number of non-compliances discovered has decreased, but still infringements were established in 79% of enterprises visited (in 2010 – 82% of enterprises). 76% of requirements issued by inspectors were timely met in 2011, in 2010 the respective percentage was 67%. Thus, it is good to note that enterprises have paid more attention to compliance with requirements of safety at work and in cases infringements had been established, requirements were met more accurately than in previous years.

Infringements of requirements of the **Occupational Health and Safety Act** were identified 3986 times, i.e. about a third of all the infringements (in 2010 – 5018). Based on the Occupational Health and Safety Act the majority of infringements detected concerned the lack of safety instructions on works carried out and work equipment used - 603 or at every sixth enterprise, in 2010 such infringements were established in every fourth enterprise. Risk assessment had not been conducted in 453, i.e. in every seveth enterprise (in 2010 every sixth i.e. in 651 enterprises). Risk assessment had been performed, but insufficiently in 423 enterprises i.e. every eighth enterprise, the result was the same in 2010. To sum it up, we may say that continuously there are problems with conducting of risk assessment in every fourth enterprise inspected. Internal control of work environment has not been performed in 456 i.e. every seveth enterprise and the person responsible for work environment i.e. work environment specialist had not been nominated in every eighth enterprise (in 2010 in every sixth). Taking the results for the basis the organization of the whole work environment should be systematically examined. The work environment situation of enterprises would considerably improve if the employers would determine people responsible for work environment (work environment specialist, work environment representative), who would systematically conduct or have work environment risk assessment conducted, would identify work environment risk factors and based on the results could prepare necessary safety instructions on work to be carried out and work equipment to be used, as a result of which the number of possible violations would considerably decrease.
2485 infringements in all i.e. 19% of the total number of infringements were identified of **occupational health and safety requirements regarding work place and the use of work equipment** (in 2010 - 3462 i.e. 22%). As compared to the last few years the number of

such infringements has decreased. Based on the requirements most often devices to ensure safety of work equipment, paths or loading bays did not comply with safety requirements.
Infringements of the requirements of the **"Procedure for training and in-service training regarding occupational health and safety"** were registered in 1663 enterprises i.e. 13% of the infringements (in 2010.a – 2128). Based on the Procedure the requirement of primary and supplementary instruction of workers is most frequently not observed, it was established 756 times i.e. in every fourth enterprise. However, these results show directly that the companies still do not address issues related to prevention of accidents at work. It is the instruction and training of workers that are the key elements in avoiding accidents at work.

Somewhat more than during the previous years infringements related to selection of personal protective equipment have been established, enterprises can not guarantee record-keeping, storage and maintenance of personal protective equipment, greater attention has been paid to violations related to marking of dangerous places and paths.

More frequent OSH infringements



	Non-compl of passages	Work equipm. not in line	WE specialist	Safety repr.	Insuf. internal control	No or insuf. safety	Basic or in-service train.	No RA or insufficient
2011	368	393	399	404	456	603	756	876
2010	483	559	581	489	567	914	916	1116
2009	448	489	680	519	544	927	775	1245

Figure 7

With the aim to eliminate an infringement, work was suspended in 176 cases and the use of work equipment was forbidden in 459 cases (in 2010 the respective figures were 159 and 503). Suspension of work with the aim to eliminate violations has been resorted to more and more year after year, which in turn means that inspectors have become more demanding and dangerous situations are liquidated quickly. The majority of the cases when work was suspended still took place at construction works. The most common causes were that scaffolding and work platforms were not in line with requirements, also work equipment was not in working order (power cutters, drilling machines, grinding wheels, etc.).

Warnings of penalty payment for non-observance of requirements were imposed in 725 cases in all, in the amount of 230 767 euros. Penalty payment was enforced in 31 cases in the amount of 9867 euros.
As compared to the average of previous years the number of warnings of penalty payment has indeed increased, however, as compared to the year 2010 the number has decreased already. The necessity to enforce penalty payments is most often related to cases when infringements regarding dangerous equipment and machinery have not been eliminated.

Misdemeanour matters were heard in 187 cases. Penalties were imposed in 166 cases in the amount of 29 445 euros, including 60 cases for natural persons in the sum of 6 035 euros and 106 times for legal persons in the sum of 23 410 euros. Among them, based on the conclusions of investigations of accidents at work and cases of occupational diseaseses, fines were imposed to natural persons 20 times in the sum of 1 536 euros and legal persons 83

times in the amount of 15 995 euros. As compared to the year 2010 the numbers both of misdemeanour cases and penalties imposed have increased to some extent.

Accidents at work

In 2011 the Labour Inspectorate was notified of 3741 accidents at work. As compared to the year 2010 the number of registered accidents at work has increased 16,4 % i.e. by 526 cases.

Registered accidents at work 2007-2011
(change compared to previous year)

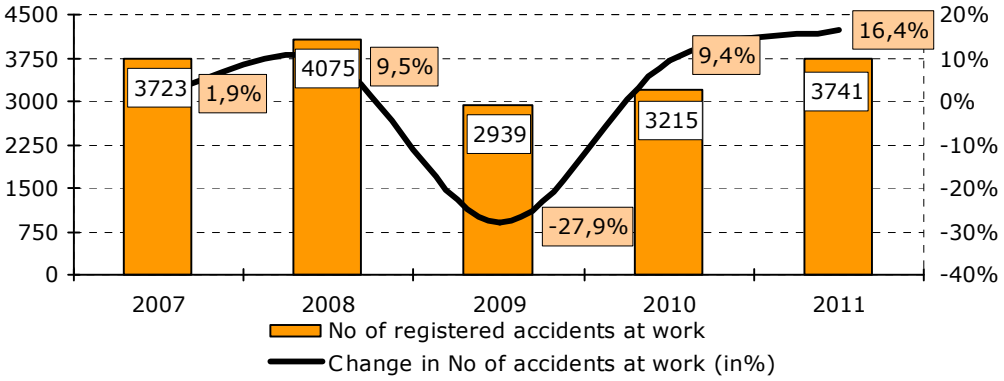


Figure 8

However, the National Audit Office highlighted the fact that in Estonia there is no veritable statistics on accidents at work as compared to the other EU Member States and compared to weighted data by the Statistlcs Estonia, based on survey research, we must recognise the fact that in Estonia accidents at work are registered 2, 4 times less than can be seen from research surveys. The statistics on accidents at work drawn up by the Labour Inspectorate is based on data officially submitted by employers.

By the level of severity of damage to health, accidents at work with serious damage to health were registered in 796 cases in 2011, minor accidents at work in 2926 cases and fatal accidents at work in 19 cases. As compared to the year 2010 the number of serious accidents at work increased approximately by 11%, the number of minor accidents at work about by 18% and the number of fatal accidents at work has increased by 2 accidents. The proportion of serious accidents at work of the total number of work accidents has slightly declined as compared to the previous year.

Registered accidents at work by level of severity 2007-2011

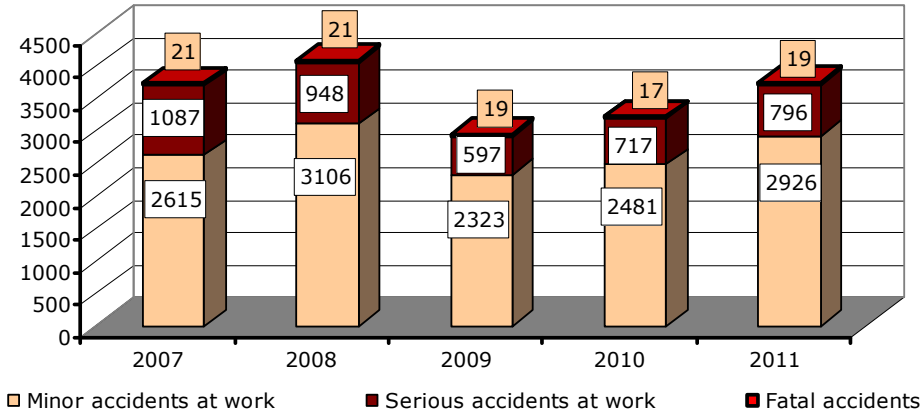


Figure 9

The ratio of accidents at work per 100 000 employees increased by 9% during the year. The ratio is related to the number of engaged, aged 15-74 by counties and fields of activities. Based on the data on 2011 the number of employed in Estonia was 609 100 (in 2010 the

respective number was 570 900). Thus, 614 accidents at work were registered per 100 000 employees, including 480 minor work accidents, 131 serious work accidents and 3 fatal work accidents in 2011 (in 2010 the respective numbers were 563 work accidents, of which 435 minor, 125 serious and 3 fatal work accidents).
The increased number of new workers at work places and the slightly increased production intensity can be regarded as one of the reasons of increase of proportion of accidents at work. The analysis of accidents at work confirms that the majority of work accidents take place with workers who have worked less than a year, one of the reasons of which could be insufficient instruction and training.
Labour inspectors are of the opinion that the economic recession has left a significant mark on the work environment, which in turn is reflected in the growth of the number of accidents at work. On the one hand the intensity of work is growing but employers try to economize on all kinds of measures ensuring safety of work. Labour inspectors have been to enterprises where work environment specialists have been made redundant because they demand new personal protective devices for workers or other conditions to improve work environment. Employers, however, find such expenditures unnecessary. One can come across such employers who comply only with such safety requirements without which performance of work would be impossible and who do not want to contribute to safety of work environment. Unfortunately, workers are also in an insecure position concerning labour market where they are rather satisfied with such conditions of work they are offered and do not dare to demand conditions of work safer for their health in the fright of losing their job. On the other hand, inspectors point out the impact of the communication activity of the Labour Inspectorate, through which the awareness of both employers and employees has grown. In the inspectors` mind notification of accidents at work has improved, which in turn is reflected in the number of registered accidents at work.

No of employed and work accidents per 100 000 workers

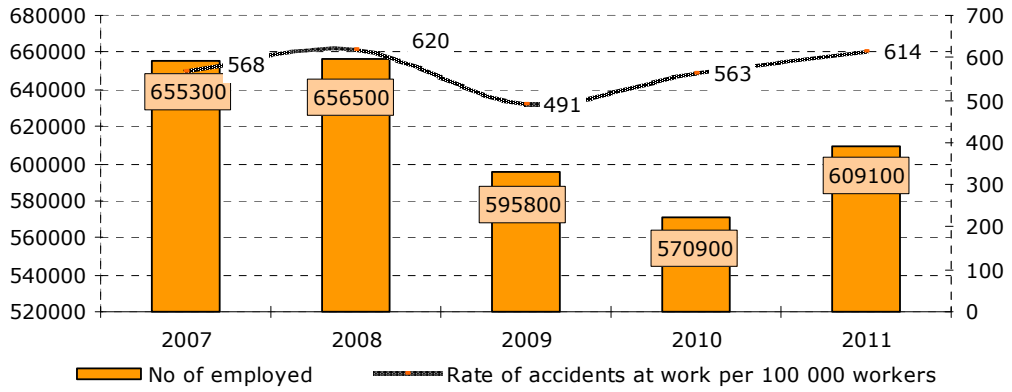


Figure 10

By counties, most accidents at work per 100 000 employees were registered still in Lääne-Viru County. The large number of registered accidents at work in Lääne-Viru County can be explained by notification of accidents at work by doctors and employers at a very good level. The good level of notification of accidents at work is characterised especially by notification of minor work accidents as it is this type of accidents that is considerably less reported of by other counties. However, the Lääne-Viru County is one of the few counties where both the number of accidents at work and the ratio per 100 000 workers declined in 2011. The number of registred work accidents decreased only in Valga County.

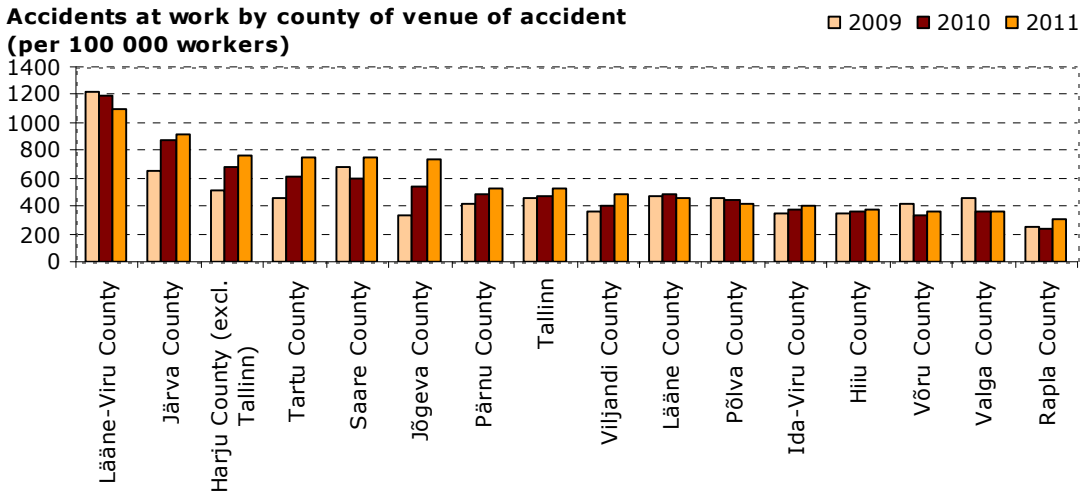


Figure 11

As compared to the year 2010 the number of accidents at work per 100 000 workers has increased in nearly all counties, most in Jõgeva, Saare and Tartu County. In Tartu County quite a number of work accidents were registered in e.g. Tartu Prison, the Police Department and the University Hospital. In addition, registration of minor accidents at work by small enterprises dealing with catering and construction can be seen. To some extent more accidents at work taken place at schools and kindergartens were registered during the year. Change in the number of accidnts at work is influenced by both the change in the number of workers in the county and the growth in the number of work accidents. In absolute figures work accidents were registered most in Tallinn, Harju County and Tartu County in 2011.

Table 1. Accidents at work by county

Accidents at work by county of venue of accidents 2009-2011 (excl. accidents outside Estonia)																
	Minor accidents at work			+/- 2010	Serious accidents at work			+/- 2010	Fatal accidents at work			+/- 2010	Accidents at work in all			+/- 2010
Toimumiskoht	2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011	
Harju County (excl. Tallinn)	233	299	364	65	79	104	128	24	3	1	4	3	315	404	496	92
Hiiu County	11	9	10	1	4	5	7	2	0	0	0	0	15	14	17	3
Ida-Viru County	195	173	217	44	39	51	57	6	1	3	1	-2	235	227	275	48
Jõgeva County	34	49	78	29	11	23	24	1	0	1	0	-1	45	73	102	29
Järva County	86	72	107	35	23	50	34	-16	0	3	0	-3	109	125	141	16
Lääne-Viru County	268	287	262	-25	43	39	44	5	1	0	2	2	312	326	308	-18
Lääne County	40	35	37	2	17	19	19	0	0	1	1	0	57	55	57	2
Põlva County	40	32	32	0	9	13	15	2	0	0	2	2	49	45	49	4
Pärnu County	109	113	127	14	54	63	72	9	0	0	0	0	163	176	199	23
Rapla County	28	19	36	17	12	18	14	-4	2	0	1	1	42	37	51	14
Saare County	81	75	90	15	15	13	20	7	1	1	1	0	97	89	111	22
Tallinn	698	719	844	125	184	185	214	29	3	0	3	3	885	904	1061	157
Tartu County	258	341	454	113	42	33	44	11	0	1	2	1	300	375	500	125
Valga County	47	35	30	-5	12	15	14	-1	0	0	1	1	59	50	45	-5
Viljandi County	72	83	97	14	10	15	28	13	2	0	0	0	84	98	125	27
Võru County	50	40	47	7	5	16	12	-4	0	0	0	0	55	56	59	3
Total	**2250**	**2381**	**2832**	**451**	**559**	**662**	**746**	**84**	**13**	**11**	**18**	**7**	**2822**	**3054**	**3596**	**542**

The number of accidents at work taken place **outside the Republic of Estonia** has increased year by year, however, the year 2011 was the first in several years when the number of accidents at work with Estonian employees decreased to some extent.

Table 2. Accidents at work by countries (outside Estonia)

Accidents at work by countries where the accident took place outside Estonia 2009-2011																
Country	Accidents at work in all			+/- 2010	Minor accidents at work			+/- 2010	Serious accidents at work			+/- 2010	Fatal accidents at work			+/- 2010
	2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011		2009	2010	2011	
Austria	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Belgium	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	-1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Spain	1	1	0	-1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1	0	0	0	0
Holland	3	2	1	-1	1	1	0	-1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Ireland	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
England	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Italy	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	4	5	4	-1	1	3	4	1	2	1	0	-1	1	1	0	-1
Latvia	2	4	7	3	2	4	3	-1	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0
Norway	1	5	10	5	1	1	8	7	0	4	2	-2	0	0	0	0
Poland	0	8	2	-6	0	7	1	-6	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Portugal	0	2	0	-2	0	2	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
France	2	3	2	-1	2	1	1	0	0	2	1	-1	0	0	0	0
Sweden	8	21	9	-12	5	14	3	-11	3	6	6	0	0	1	0	-1
Germany	3	2	11	9	0	1	6	5	3	1	5	4	0	0	0	0
Finland	48	63	69	6	32	35	51	16	16	27	18	-9	0	1	0	-1
Switzerland	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Czech Republic	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Denmark	2	3	3	0	0	1	2	1	2	2	1	-1	0	0	0	0
Outside EU, not specified	41	39	21	-18	27	28	13	-15	10	8	7	-1	4	3	1	-2
Total	**117**	**161**	**145**	**-16**	**73**	**100**	**94**	**-6**	**38**	**55**	**50**	**-5**	**6**	**6**	**1**	**-5**

Most of the accidents at work taken place outside the Republic happened in Finland and outside the EU Member States (mainly during peacekeeping missions). In 2011 the number of accidents at work where Estonian workers were involved has also increased in Germany and Norway. The main fields of activity where Estonian workers were injured were continuously construction, the majority of the accidents at work happened with Estonian construction workers working in Finland. The number of work accidents is also large in transport sector where work accidents with Estonian workers were registered with drivers working in Germany, Sweden and Finland. Outside the EU Meber States accidents were registered mostly in the national defence sector with peacekeepers. In 2011 there was one fatal work accident outside the Republic of Estonia when a member of the Defence Forces was perished during the mission.

By fields of activities for the third year in a row the majority of accidents at work were registered not in production and manufacturing sectors but in public administration and national defence. Pursuant to the activities in the public sector and national defence, accidents at work involve mainly employees of the Police Forces, Rescue Board and Prison Board and peacekeepers of the national defence.

The number of accidents at work has mainly increased in nearly all fields of activity, but mostly in administration and support activities in the recent years (+70), concerning mainly minor accidents at work. In this sector most of the work accidents registered concerned security workers and agency workers. As for security workers the increase in cases of violence towards them has been noted, also the number of accidents at work due to fall has grown. As for agency workers we can assume that they have not sufficiently received training and instruction on occupational health and safety.

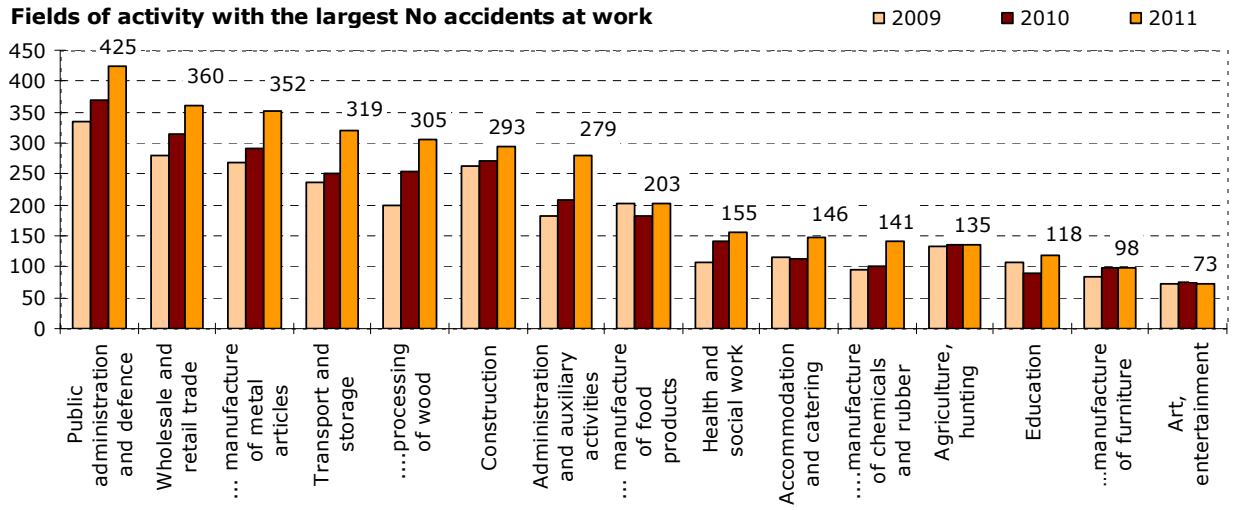


Figure 12

In the fields of activities in processing industry the largest number of accidents at work **per 100 000 workers** was registered in **wood industry** (2006), **in food industry** (1471) **and in paper industry** (1189). From other sectors the largest ratio of accidents at work concerned **administration and support activities** (1631), **public administration and national defence** (1054) and **accommodation and catering** (760). In all of those sectors the ratio of work accidents has increased as compared to the year before. The ratio of accidents at work per 100 000 workers has increased mostly in public administration and support activities, fishing and manufacture of chemical products from manufacturing industry. Though in the construction sector there are a lot of accidents at work, including serious ones, with 100 000 workers it is not such a dangerous field of activity as can be predicted. Here one of the causes could be the proportion of concealment of accidents at work in the construction sector. Based on the weighted data by the Statistics Estonia it is known that actually there are five times more accidents at work in the construction sector than officially registered.

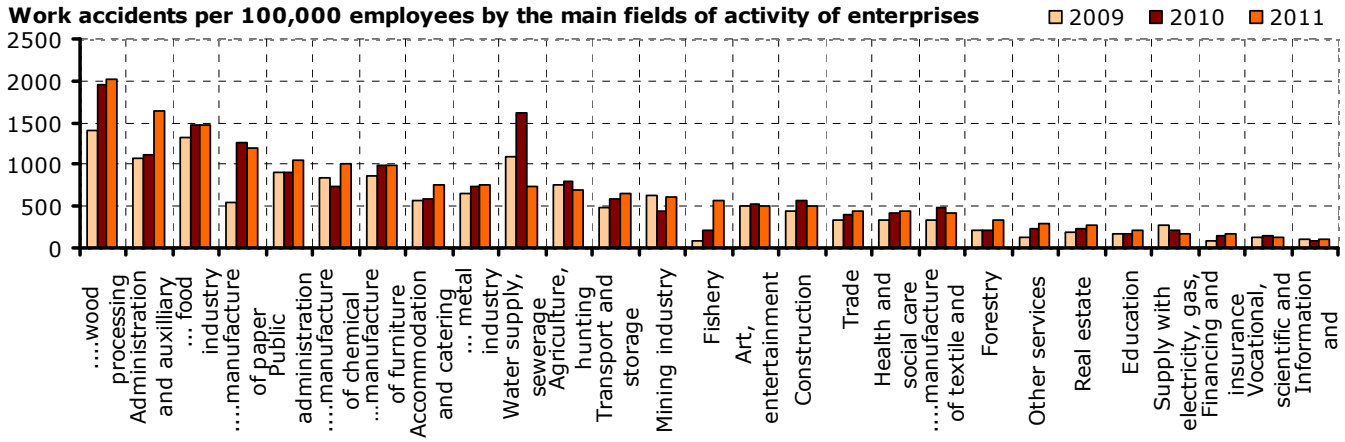


Figure 13

The number of serious accidents at work increased by 79 i.e. approximately 11%. The majority of accidents at work happened in transport, metal industry and construction.
The number of serious work accidents has substantially increased in the transport sector. Work accidents in the transport sector are characterized on the one hand by the increased number of traffic accidents, which are also regarded as work accidents and on the other, by the growing number of accidents due to fall which result either in arm or leg fracture, but are considered as serious bodily injuries. In metal industry serious work accidents have mainly been caused by working on machinery that does not have protective covers and interlockings.

About a third of serious accidents at work are accidents caused by slips and falls resulting in arm or leg fractures that are classified as serious bodily injuries on the basis of diagnosis.

Thus, many serious accidents at work are not caused by risks and hazards related to production/processing but also paths along which workers move.

19 fatal accidents at work were registerd in 2011 (in 2010 - 17, in 2009 – 19 and in 2008 – 21 fatal accidents at work).
By the venue of the county 7 fatal accidents at work were registered in Harju County, including Tallinn, 2 in West-Viru County, Põlva County and Tartu County and 1 in East-Viru County, Lääne County, Rapla County, Saare County, Valga County and one outside Estonia.
By fields of activities fatal accidents at work happened in 2011 mostly in construction (4), trade, agriculture and manufacture of chemicals, metal production and wood industry from branches of processing industry (3), also in public administration. Two accidents at work took place in transport sector and one in the field of administration and support activities.
In four fatal accidents at work people were perished while driving a means of transport, only one of these cases was a traffic accident. Three of these work accidents were related to violence, in which employees were attacked, including in a war situation. Thus, the most hazardous occupations that year were drivers of motor vehicles and employees ensuring order – policeman, security guard, armed forces.
In half of the cases of fatal accidents at work inspectors have identified that the accidents at work had been caused primarily by non-compliance of occupational safety requirements by employees themselves. Lack of internal control and insufficient training and instruction of employees are also causes of work accidents.

The most frequent causes of serious accidents at work according to employers`points of view and inspectors`investigation results were as follows:

	Employer`s view	**Identified by inspectors**
Violations of occ.safety requirem.-s by workers	**50%**	33%
Other causes	25%	21%
Non-compliance of work equipment with OSH requirements	9%	24%
Violations of occ.safety requirem.-s by another worker	9%	14%
Insufficient training and instruction	8%	31%
Insufficient internal control	6%	**35%**

As compared to previous years employers have started more and more to identify the true causes of accidents at work. The number of such reports where the only cause of an accident at work was stated as "other causes" has decreased. At the same time the largest differencies between findings by inspectors and employers, concern identification if internal control had been sufficient at the work place to prevent the accident at work. Regarding 1% of cases of serious accidents at work employers have stated fatigue of the worker as the cause.

Insufficient training and instruction as causes of work accidents

As can be seen in the inspection results of work environment insufficient training and instruction are one of the biggest problems in Estonian enterprises. Consequently in 2011 serious accidents at work, resulting from insufficient training and instruction, were analysed during a longer period of time i.e. during the years 2006-2010 with the aim to analyse differencies of accidents at work due to insufficient training and instruction and to provide general instructions to reduce accidents.

The analysis showed the following facts:

- **New employees at the enterprise -** About 30% of all accidents take place during the first year at a new employer`s, it is more than twice as much as during the second year of employment. Thus it is of utmost importance to emphasise the necessity of instruction and training of employees with lack of experience at the enterprise.
- **Accidents with male workers –** In the first year of employment male workers are four times more prone to serious accidents at work than female workers. Male workers are more venturous and thus get more frequently into accidents.

- **Young workers –** Accidents at work happened most often with up to 25 years old young workers in the first year of employment. Of all employees aged 18–24 who had a serious accident at work about 60% had an accident during their first working year.
- **Hazardous activities** – More than a half of serious work accidents took place during the first year of employment in the following fields of activity:
  - construction;
  - manufacture of metal products, machinery and electrical equipment;
  - wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles;
  - wood processing and manufacture of wood products.
- **The most frequent deviations due to work accidents are as follows:**
  - An employee falls from hight;
  - An employee loses control over an equipment;
  - An employee falls (slips, trips) on the same plane;
  - An employee loses control over an object to be handled;
  - An employee is caught under a slipping, falling or collapsing object.

As for material risk factors accidents are more often caused by slippery surfaces, stairs and mobile ladders and machine-tools for sawing. Mainly limbs are injured at accidents at work and on an average each serious work accident results in 67 days of incapacity for work.

Investigation conclusions and reports – concerning 56% of accidents taken place in 2006-2010 and investigated by the Labour Inspectorate, labour inspectors have identified insufficient training and instruction as one of the causes of the accident. The former cause has been identified for two of the three work accidents taken place in the first working year. Employers, however, found in their investigation that only 13% of work accidents were related to insufficient training and instruction.

Instruction and training are the foundation of employers`prevention activity, helping to avoid occurrence of accidents at enterprises. Delivery of essential and logically sorted information to new employees, who belong to the largest risk group, helps them get accustomed at the enterprise and reduce making mistakes at performing work operations.

Thoroughly planned and proficient instruction and training of employees enables to avoid painful lessons and to promote improvement of efficiency of work and saving of costs.

Other circumstances of accidents at work statistically

In 2011 2413 men and 1328 women were injured as a result of an accident at work, meaning that 64% of work accidents took place with men. Most accidents involved workers aged 25 to 34, especially men in the age group. Most accidents with women happened in the age group of 45 to 54. 684 accidents at work took place with young people aged 15 to 24 in 2011 (in 2010 - 574). The youngest injured person suffering from an accident at work was 15 years old and the oldest was 84 years old.

Injured at work accident by gender and age 2011

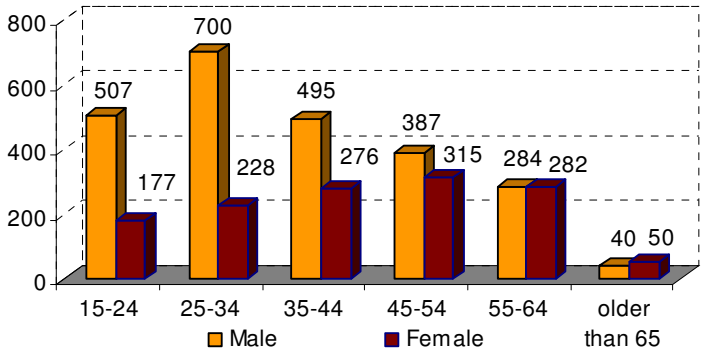


Figure 14

As for fields of activity, men tend to get mostly involved in accidents at work in the construction sector and women in the health care and education sector.

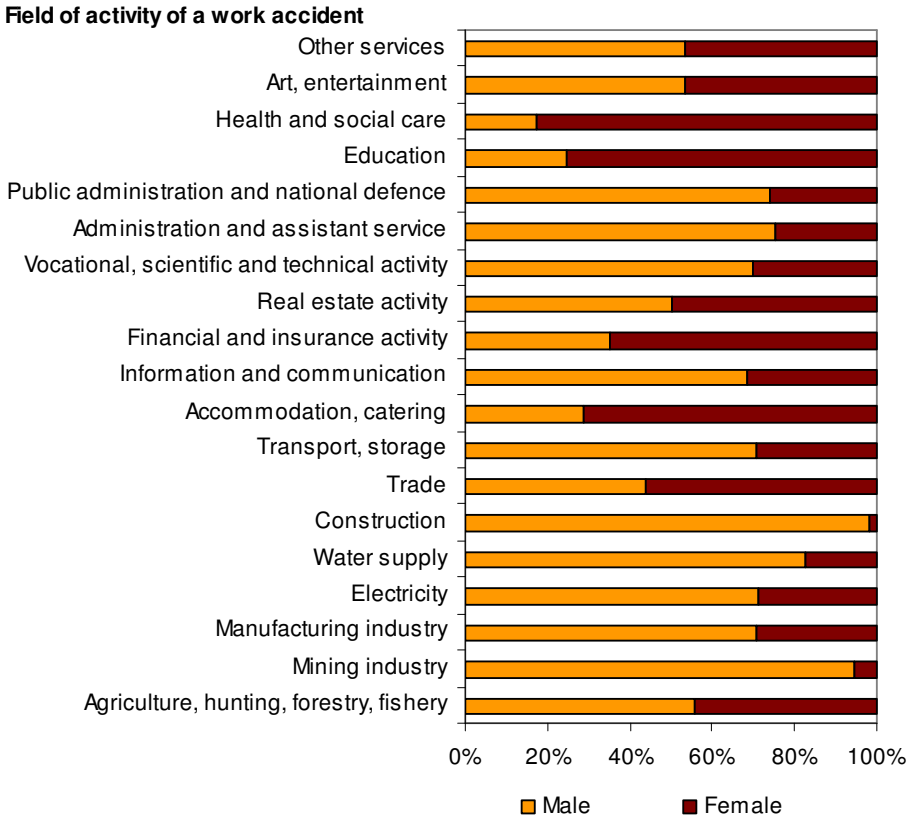


Figure 15

The Labour Inspectorate and Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, collect data on the circumstances of the accidents, due to which accidents happen. As it can be seen in the figure below most of the work accidents are caused by loss of control of machinery, work equipment, means of transport or even by animals. The second most common causes of work accidents are slips, trips, falls, causing most serious bodily injuries

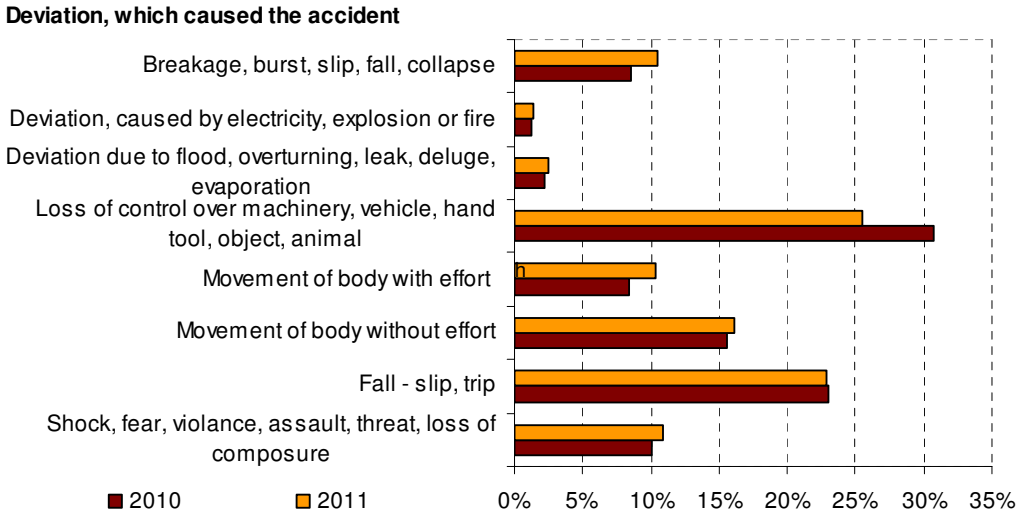


Figure 16

Trips, slips, falls cause 34% of all serious accidents, so it is particularly important for enterprises to keep in order first and foremost all paths, both in inside and outside territory. Fatal accidents at work were mainly caused by falling of different materials/objects onto the

injured person or the injured person was caught under building material, earth or a falling tree.

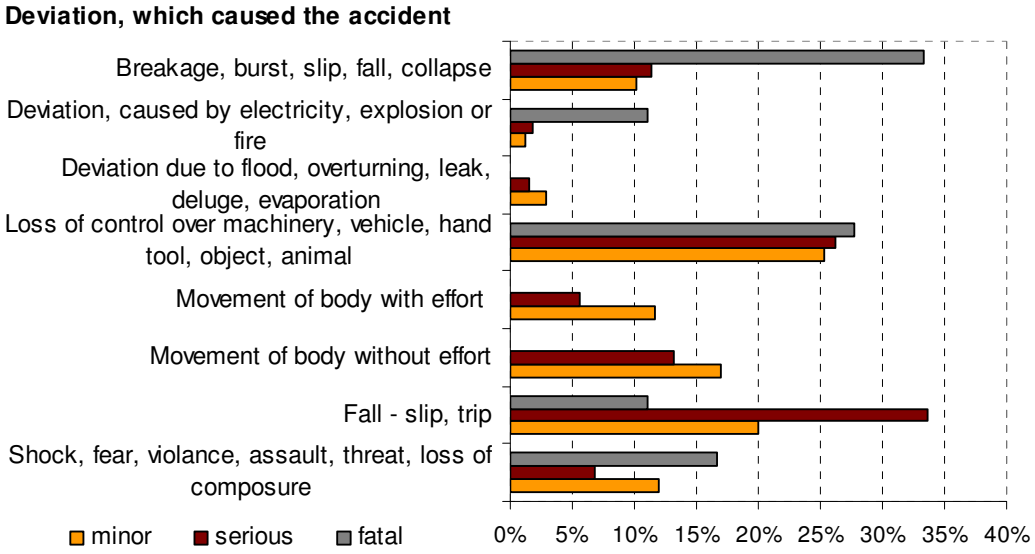


Figure 17

In Figure 18 it is seen how different factors cause bodily injuries of various level of severity. Contact with sharp work equipment most often causes rather minor bodily injuries, serious bodily injuries are diagnosed more often as a result of falls and fatal accidents at work, which are mainly caused by falling of different objects on the victim, the result of which the worker has been caught between different materials.

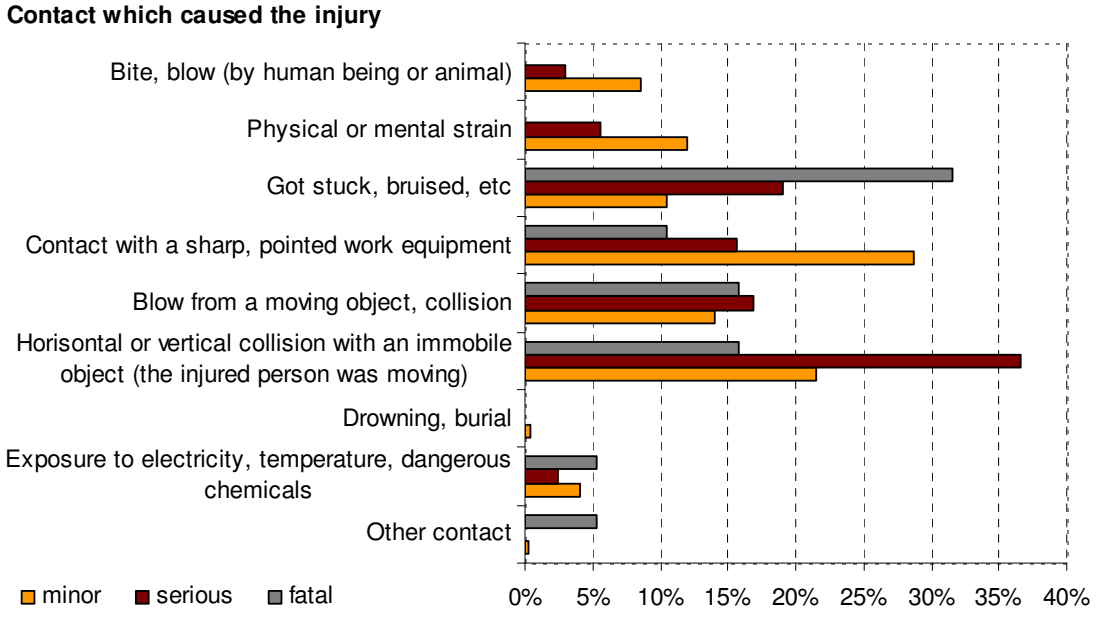


Figure 18

Occupational and work-related diseases

In 2011 the Labour Inspectorate received notifications of diagnosis of an occupation disease concerning 87 workers and notifications of work-related diseases (WRD) were registered concerning 167 cases. As compared to the previous years, the number of diagosis of cases of occupational diseases has somewhat increased but here we cannot say that it is due to significant deterioration of work environment but rather due to the economic recession of late (loss in salaries makes one search for other earnings, whether be it compensation for a case of an occupational disease)

The number of WRD-s has also increased, which in essence can be a prior diagnosis for an occupational disease, but not always. However, the figure is indicative of continuous worsening of health among the labour force in Estonia, as WRD are mainly diagnosed during health examination at an occupational health physician.
So, as compared to other European countries, diagnosis of both occupational health and work-related diseases is still disproportionately low.

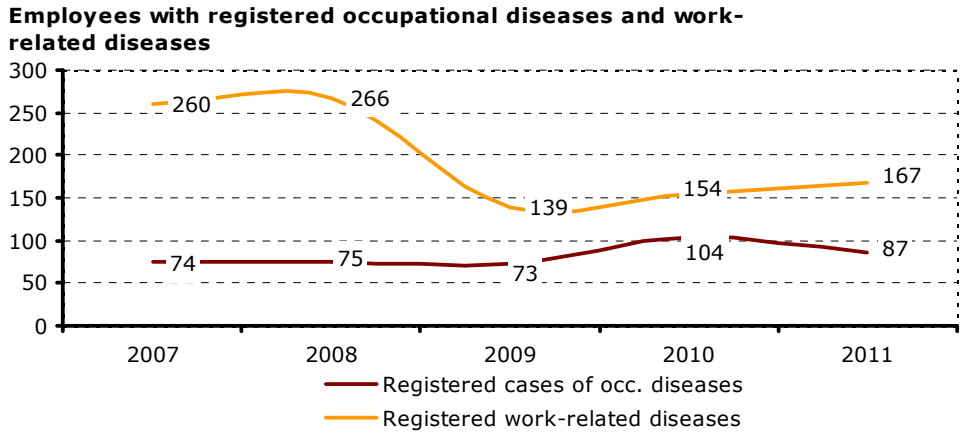


Figure 19

By fields of activity of enterprises slightly more than a third of cases of occupational diseases were diagnosed in the manufacturing industry, most commonly at workers of textile, metal and food industry. From other fields of activity we can bring out occupations related to agriculture, hunting, forestry sectors and construction industry, also trade and transport.
Work-related diseases, most often reported in 2011, concerned workers of construction sector, metal industry and agriculture. Nearly 30% of all WRD-s were diagnosed at workers of manufacturing industry.

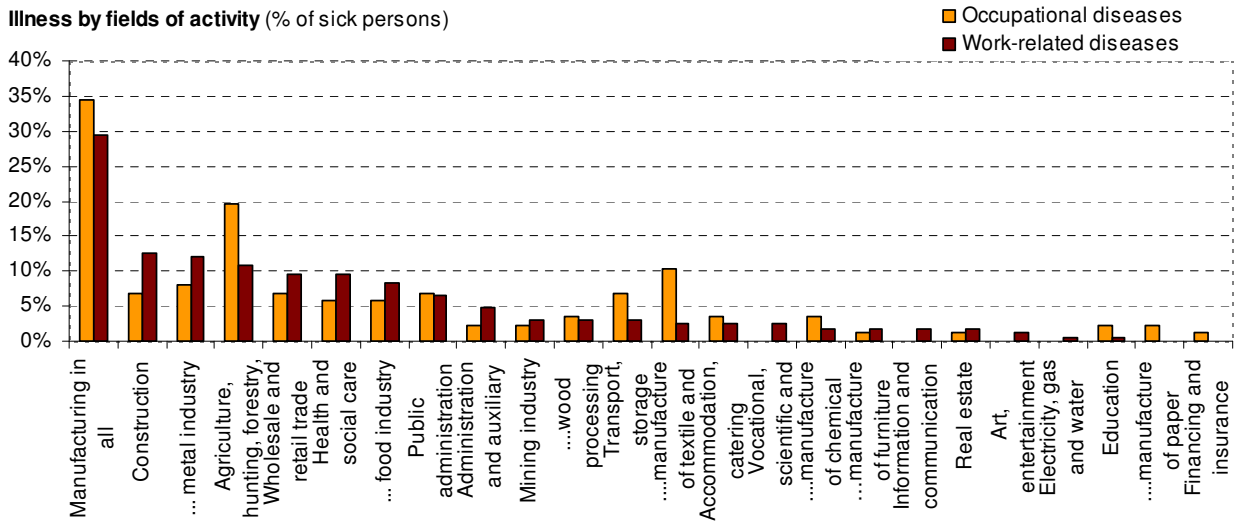


Figure 20

Work environment risk factors, causing occupational diseases and work-related diseases, at diagnosing were identified as follows: the biggest threats continue to be repetitive stereotypical movements and wrong working position. Thus the number of illnesses caused by adverse working position, repetitive monotonous movements is continuously increasing. The number of illnesses caused by manual handling of loads and vibration has slightly decreased.

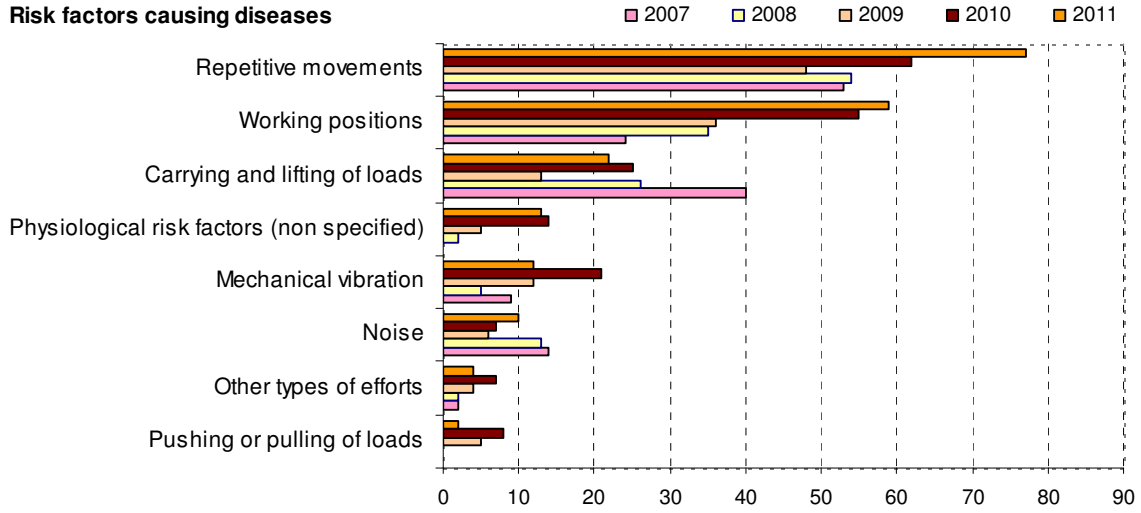


Figure 21

By occupations occupational and work-related diseases have been more frequently diagnosed in recent years at operators of machinery and equipment – either drivers of farming or forestry machinery or operators of different machinery and equipment. OD and WRD of craft and related trade workers we can bring out such occupations as seamstresses, painters, skilled workers of food industry and agriculture – cattle breeders and skilled workers of forestry. All those workers have a common denominator – working in forced position, monotonous work or manual handling of loads.

By age occupational or work-related diseases were diagnosed mostly at employees aged 45-54. Conspicuous is the fact that women are at a younger age group more frequently diagnosed with an occupational or work-related disease than men, which might suggest that women either go to health control sooner or care about their health more seriously and dare to speak of their health problems during health examination.

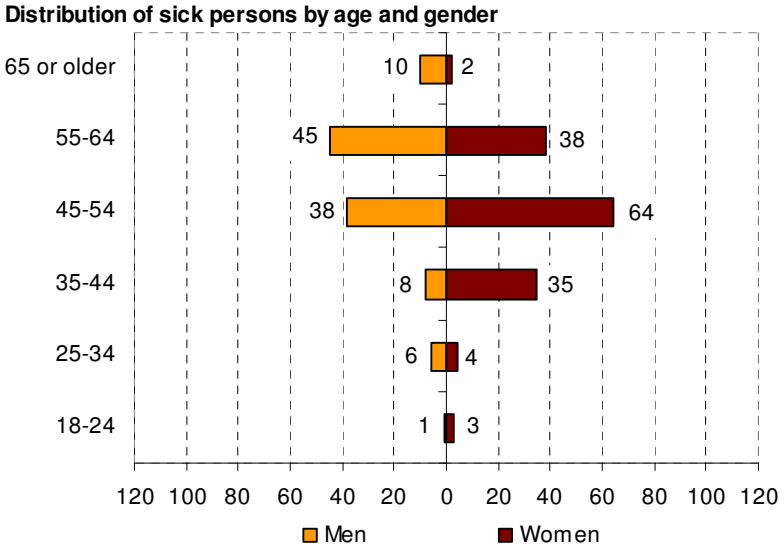


Figure 22

Unfortunately, four times cases of WRD-s were diagnosed at workers younger than 25 years of age. The most frequent risk factors were chemical substances that cause allergy or or asthma

(3 cases), and one young worker has health problems related to repetitive monotonous movements.
Since 2011 cases of occupational diseases and work-related ill health have been analysed by illnesses by the Health Board. Summary of illnesses is available here:
http://www.terviseamet.ee/fileadmin/dok/Tervishoid/tootervis/toost_pohjustatud_haigused_2011.pdf

Labour relations

Inspection of labour relations

In 2011 labour inspectors – lawyers visited 557 different employers with the aim of inspection of labour relations, of which 73 times enterprises or institutions were visited in the frames of target inspection of minors and on undeclared labour relation. In addition target inspection was conducted of 186 employers who had been previously inspected.

Violations of Employment Contracts Act or any other acts regulating labour relations were not identified at the 100 enterprises visited during the target inspection. At about half of the cases mentioned earlier labour inspectors-lawyers were not able to perform inspection of labour relations because work was performed on the basis of some form of law of obligation i.e. all employees worked on the basis of an agency or employment agreement. Inspection of the latter labour relations does not fall under the supervision of the Labour Inspectorate.

35 employees at 15 different enterprises worked without a contract i.e. as "black labour force" during inspection visits. Data on those employees were forwarded by way of professional assistance to the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund and Tax and Customs Board.

During inspection activity on labour relations 1406 infringements of Employment Contracts Act, 7 infringements of Collective Agreements Act and two infringements of Employees Representative Act were identified. Notices were drawn up for elimination of 922 infringements. In comparison with the year 2010 the number of infringements identified in the course of inspection of labour relations has increased by nearly a fifth.

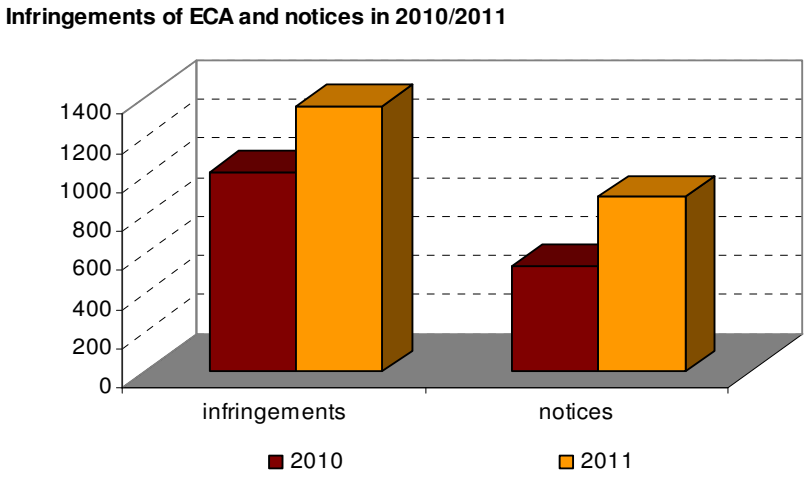


Figure 23

Most of the infringements identified i.e. 83 % were related to failure to notify employees of the data of the first subsection of § 5 of the Employment Contracts Act (ECA), 11 % of the total number of infringements concerned requirements for working and rest time, provided for in §§ 43 – 53 of the ECA and 6% other infringements of labour relations.

Data mentioned in the first subsection of § 5 of the ECA that must be included in the written employment contract were not submitted or were not in accordance with the requirements of the Act, primarily it concerned data related to payment of wages (ECA § 5 subsection 1 clause 5) and data concerning term of advanced notice for cancellation of employment contract (ECA

§ 5 subsection 1 clause 10). Employers often lacked proper rules of work organization (ECA § 5 subsection 1 clause 11).

103 employers inspected did not have proper written employment contracts in accordance with the valid law and notices were prepared with a requirement to submit data based on § 5 subsection 1 of ECA.

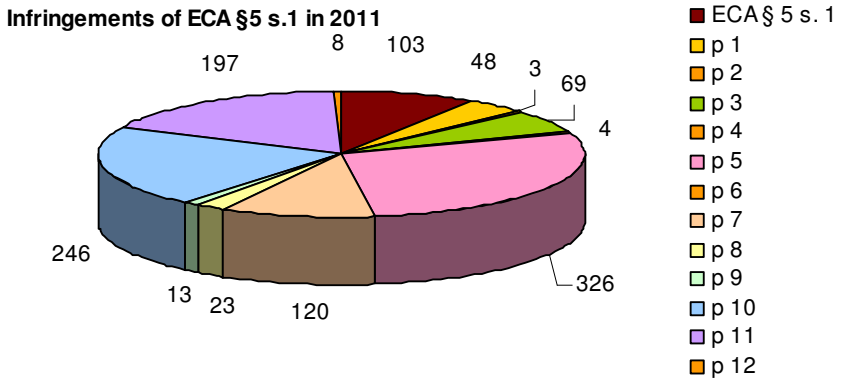


Figure 24

Violations of Collective Agreements Act primarily were due to the fact that the employer was not aware of the collective labour agreement in force in the field of activity of the enterprise and thus failed to pay the wages agreed by collective agreement.
There were two violations of Employees Representative Act when the employers did not provide the employee, who had been elected as employees` representative, time provided by law for performing the duties of a trustee. At one inspection visit it was the first time for an employer`s representative to meet the trustee although the employees`representative had been elected a year ago already.

Cautions of penalty payment and misdemeanour procedure

In order to ensure compliance with requirements of notices cautions of penalty payment were applied in 75 cases in the amount of 9567 euros. Requirements of notices with caution of penalty payment were generally timely complied with. However, 8 times cautions were enforced in the total amount of 1210 euros.

Misdemeanour proceeding on violations of labour relations was commenced 23 times. Fines were imposed on natural persons 8 times and legal persons 7 times. There were 3 caution proceedings and proceedings were terminated due to absence of elements of misdemeanour also three times. Two misdemeanour cases are still pending. Compared to the year 2010 when there were only 5 misdemeanour cases, the number of proceedings has increased four times.

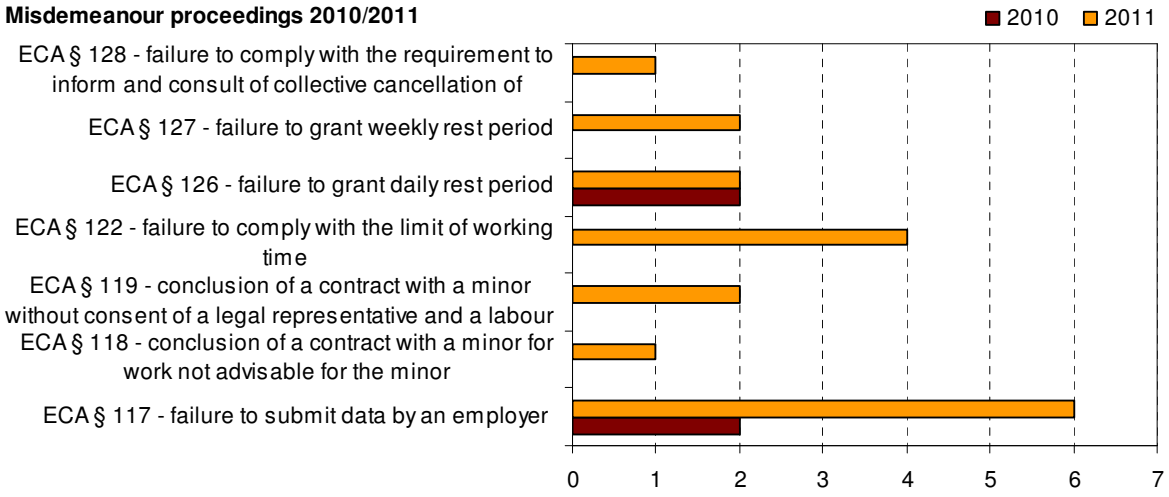


Figure 25

In 2011 the total amount of fines related to violations concerning labour relations were imposed was 3340 euros. The largest fine of 1200 euros was imposed pursuant to ECA § 122 subsection 2 to a legal person for infringement of requirements of working time concerning working conditions harmful to health of workers. The natural person responsible for organizing working time was imposed a fine of 65 penalty units or in the amount of 260 euros pursuant to ECA § 126 subsection 1 for failure to provide daily rest time.

Target inspection of minors

In the course of target inspection 35 employers were visited in all, mainly working conditions of minors in food and service enterprises, but also in other fields of activity, including local government were inspected.

In the course of inspection activity labour inspectors-lawyers identified 37 violations, on elimination of 16 of which employers were issued a notice. For resolution of two cases misdemeanour proceedings were carried out. One natural person was cautioned with penalty payment in the amount of 50 euros and another was imposed a fine in the amount of 40 euros. In both cases it was a local government representative.

From the results of target inspections it can be concluded that the awareness of employers, but also parents and young people themselves on labour law regulations and specifications concerning the work of minors is unfortunately low. Employers do not understand their legal and moral obligation to protect young people in the work environment and they try to get rid of liability by concluding an agreement on the basis of the law of obligations.

It is important to note that the Labour Inspectorate does not approve of conclusion of a contract of services or authorisation agreement or any other contract under the law of obligations with minors, which will deprive young people of statutory guarantees. Concluding contracts on the basis of some other law of obligations, the employer must be guided from the principles of the European Social Charter and the Directive 94/33/EC, according to which the work of a minor must not interfere with his social development or education. For example, for the purposes of the law interference for obtaining education must be considered also such cases when a minor attends school but due to fatigue is not able to actively participate in the lessons. Summer holidays are meant for young people to rest. A target inspection focusing on minors is carried out also in 2012.

Campaign of corporate chains

In September based on the facts presented in the press in the course of the campaign and also taking for the basis the increased public interest inspection of stores of Maxima Estonia OÜ was carried out.

With the aim to inspect labour relations labour inspectors-lawyers visited together with technical inspectors 15 stores of the Maxima Estonia OÜ all over Estonia and in addition the headquarters in Tallinn was visited on 12 October.

During the visit of the stores and the headquarters lawyers identified 28 non-compliances of the Employment Contracts Act in all.
The infringements detected in the course of inspection activity were mainly related to requirements of working and rest time:

1) the employer had implemented calculation of total working time, but employees were not informed of the duration of the summation period. Also heads of stores were of different opinion of the lenth of a summation period;

2) the employer had not kept records of working time on the basis of actual working time but depending on the opening hours of the store or time schedule prepared by employees. Labour inspectors were submitted in essence a fictitious recording of woring time on September.

Notices were issued for elimination of 26 shortcomings identified. The notices were complied with in time.

Since inspection of labour relations within the campaign turned out to be effecient, it was decided to carry out similar campaigns also in 2012.

Results of the inspection of working and rest time of drivers of motor vehicles

150 inspections of working and rest time of drivers of motor vehicles were carried out all over Estonia in 2011. Compliance of the requirements of working and rest time of 1233 drivers were inspected all in all during 68 462 work days (in 2010 the respective figures were 1273 and 61 600).
The aim of the inspection activity was to control how working and rest time of drivers was organised at enterprises, whether the established driving and rest periods were observed to ensure traffic safety on roads. Organisation of working time, drivers`daily driving hours and rest periods, breaks and weekly working, driving and rest time, restrictions on driving for two weeks, compliance of data recorded by tachogrphs with requirements were controlled at employers` premises.

Table 3. No of drivers and working days inspected at employers`premises

Type of shipment	No of inspected drivers	No of inspected working days
I type		
Passanger transport	229	8153
Carriage of goods	1004	60309
II type		
Carriage for hire or reward	1196	65112
Carriage on own account	37	3350

(R – violation of the Regulation (EU) No 561/2006, D – violation of the Directive 2006/22/EU)

Table 4. Violations – No and type of violations identified at employers`premises

Article	Type of infringement	Transport of passangers	Carriage of goods
R 6	Driving time: – daily driving time – weekly driving time – fortnightly driving time	25 0 0	119 8 15
R 6	Other work and/or there are no data on availability	30	24
R 7	Breaks while driving: (more than 4,5 h driving time without breaks or too short break)	93	250
R 8	Rest time: – minimal daily – minimal weekly	34 2	315 102
R 10 & 26	Data on driving time: – keeping data for 1 year – Record sheets on the previous 28 days	16	38
D I ANNEX	Tachograph: – not in working order – incorrect use of tachograph or manipulation	0	0

Table 5. No of employers and drivers inspected at employers`premises by the size of vehicle fleet of the company

Size of vehicle fleet	No of inspected entrepreneurs	No of inspected drivers	No of infringements identified
1	4	1*	3
2–5	49	154	151
6–10	31	201	255
11–20	28	272	280
21–50	28	442	208
51–200	9	163	174
201–500	0	0	0
More than 500	0	0	0

* "1" was marked for the number of inspected drivers, as three of the four employers inspected present data recorded on record sheet/tachograph card.

The Labour Inspectorate together with the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board participated in the meeting in Poland. The meeting was organised by the Transport Inspectorate of Poland and it took place from 06 to 09.11.2011. During the meeting representatives of supervisory authorities of both countries introduced their organisations and the scope of inspection activity and exchanged knowledge and experiences. The Estonian officials had an opportunity to take part in the roadside inspection.

Inspection results at employers` premises are taken for the basis for planning future inspection activities, where both the number of infringements and level of severity on the one hand, and information from competent authorities of other countries on the other, are taken into consideration.

Information and Communication Activity

In order to be better available to employees and employers and to raise awareness of both parties, already in 2008 a nationwide infoline was opened - **640 6000 -** where lawyers answer questions each work day arisen at implementation of legal acts under the supervision of the Labour Inspectorate. Answers are given to questions related to employment contracts, working and rest time, wages, holidays and work environment, also collective labour relations. In 2011 there were 51 819 calls on the infoline, of which 31 202 calls i.e. 69% of calls were answered. The number of calls a month remains within 4300 calls as an average.

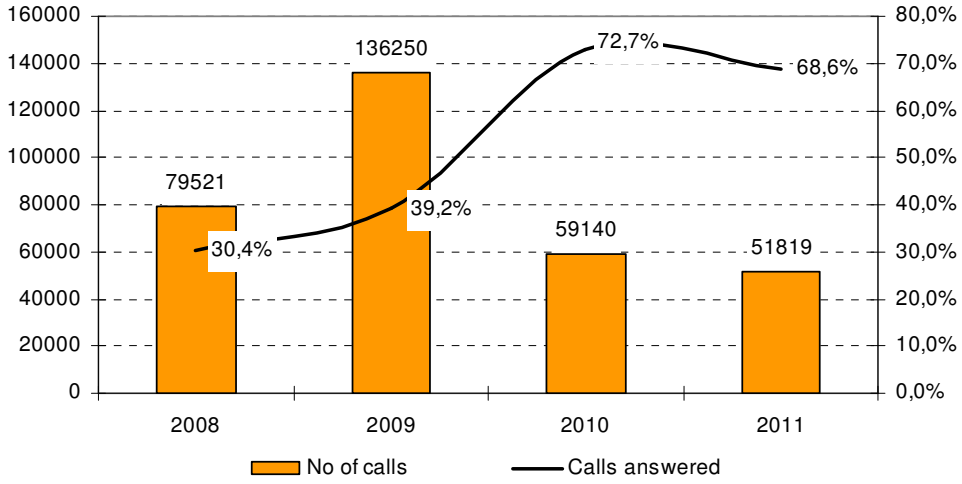


Figure 26

Answering e-mails

In addition to infoline it is possible to ask the Labour Inspectorate questions by e-mail. 2040 requests for explanations were sent to the general e-mail address of the Labour Inspectorate during the year. In addition to requests for explanation all e-mails sent to local labour inspectorates and lawyers were answered.

Consultation at reception

4483 citizens came to consultation on legal matters organised by the Labour Inspectorate during the year. It was quite often that at consultation assistance was sought e.g. on how to draw up an application for a labour dispute committee or have it reviewed before submitting it to a labour dispute committee

Most frequently asked questions:

- what is considered to be violation by employer, when can an employee cancel an employment contract?
- when and how can an employer withhold wages?
- how to calculate wages in case of calculation of total working time?

- based on termination of which kind of employment contract is there a right to get compensation from the Unemployment Insurance Fund?
- can employer alter the terms of an employment contract unilaterally?
- how to claim wages for the period of working abroad?
- how to get leave before pregnancy and maternity leave?
- how to get payment of wages ordered by a LDC`s decision?

According to lawyers issues related to occupational health and safety have become more frequent of late, e.g. safety of works at roofs, how to notify of an accident at work, etc.

Labour disputes

In 2011 the **Labour Dispute Committees** were submitted 2909 statements of claim concerning a labour dispute in all, which is the smallest number of the last four years. By the end of 2011 the Labour Dispute Committees had, together with previously filed applications, 3311 applications in the proceeding (at the end of 2010 the number was 5083). During the year 93% of all applications were in the proceeding (in 2010 - 92%).

Applications submitted to Labour Dispute Commitees
(change compared to previous year)

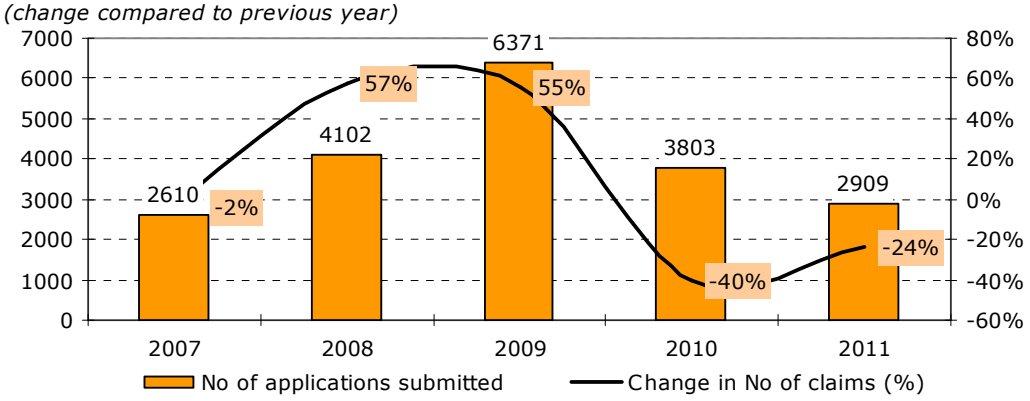


Figure 27

One of the indicators, the Labour Inspectorate monitors related to the change in the number of labour disputes, is economic confidence. As it can be seen in the Figure below, when economic confidence begins to decrease, which in turn implies changes in work organisation of the enterprise, the more complicated are labour relations and the number of changes concerning labour relations. Thus, one can conclude that in 2011 the economic situation had settled down already and the major changes in the working environment were passed.

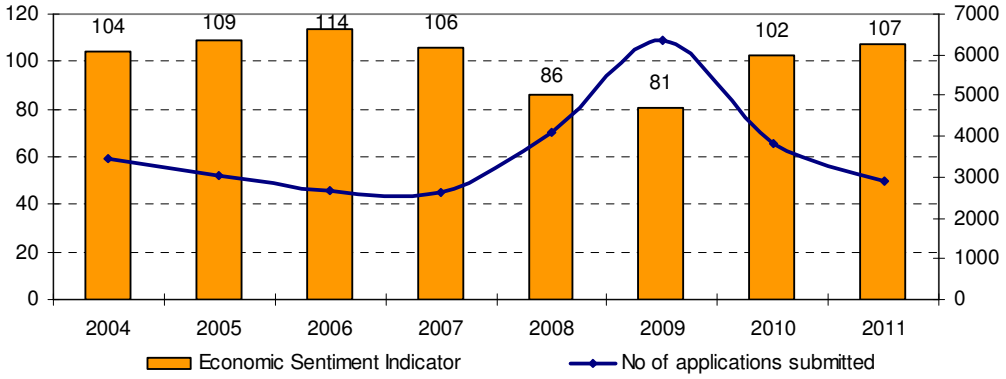


Figure 28

Within one month i.e. 30 days the largest number of applications was heard in the Labour Dispute Committee of the Ida Inspectorate, namely in Jõhvi - 93%, in Saaremaa – 87% and Võru LDC - 86%. The LDC-s in Tallinn managed to proceed 81% of applications filed within a month (in 2010 only 16%). Compared to 2010 given terms have become shorter in all LDC-s.

The length of time for processing labour disputes is, however, largely dependant on the number of labour disputes submitted, despite the fact that the actual length of time for proceedings must be within 30 days. Due to the large number of labour disputes in 2009 the length of time of proceeding became longer in the III quarter of 2009 up to even 90 days. At the end of 2010 proceedings of applications were conducted within 52 days on an average and in 2011 within 39 days on an average. The length of time of proceedings compared to previous years has generally equalised in different regions of Estonia, still some variations by committees have remained depending on how many applications have been filed there. For instance in LDC-s of the Ida Inspectorate a labour dispute was resolved in 33 days, from Lääne LDC-s in Saaremaa within 33 days, but in Pärnu within 51 days; from Lõuna LDC-s applications were resolved within 45 days on an average and in the LDC-s of Tallinn within 38 days.

By counties the majority of applications were submitted to LDC-s by employees/employers of Tallinn and Harju County (1467 applications), of Ida-Viru County (411) and Tartu County (373). The least number of labour disputes was in Hiiu and Põlva Counties, where only 12 statements of claim concerning a labour dispute were registered in both of them.

Applications submitted by **employers** made up 10% of the total number of applications i.e 281 applications submitted in 2011. As compared to the previous years the number of applications submitted by employers has somewhat increased each year, e.g. in 2009 applications filed by employers made up only 3% of all applications.
Employers turned most often to the Labour Dispute Committees with the following requirements:

- Contestation of cancellation of an employment contract – 121 times i.e. the claim was in every second application;
- claims for compensation of the damage to the property by employees – 78 times i.e. the claim was in every fourth application;
- leave of employment without authorization before time of advance notice – 68 times;
- claim for compensation due to leave of employment without reason or unannounced leave by an employee – 40 times;
- claim for contractual penalty due to non-compliance with obligations by an employee – 28 times;

2628 applications in all were submitted to Labour Dispute Committees by **employees** in 2011 i.e. 26% less than in the year before (in 2010 - 3570). The most frequent cause was non-payment of salaries – 1251 times i.e. every second application. Every third application included the requirement for collactable claim due to termination of an employment contract, i.e for payment of final settlement - 1008 times.
Cancellation of employment contract was contested 807 times i.e. such claims were in every third application. Cancellation of employment contract was contested on legal basis, e.g. due to violation of obligations by employers - 257 times, violation of one`s obligations because of employees - 258 times, for economic reasons - 72 times, violation of rights of a pregnant woman, employee who had a right for pregnancy or maternity leave or parental leave - 5 times, due to violation of workers`representatives rights 5 times, cancellation of employment contract due to violation of restriction. Claims for non-payment of holiday pay were submitted 369 times in all.

Monetary claims

The proportion of monetary claims has changed mostly related to claims in the amount of 2557-3200 euros i.e. 40 000-50 000 kroons in the former currency. The proportion of monetary claims in the sum over 640-1279 euros has increased. It can be concluded that on the one hand salaries have significantly decreased or employees do not wait in good faith for several months any more before they turn to a labour dispute committee. Non-monetary claims constituted approximately 7% of all the claims (in 2010 - 8%).

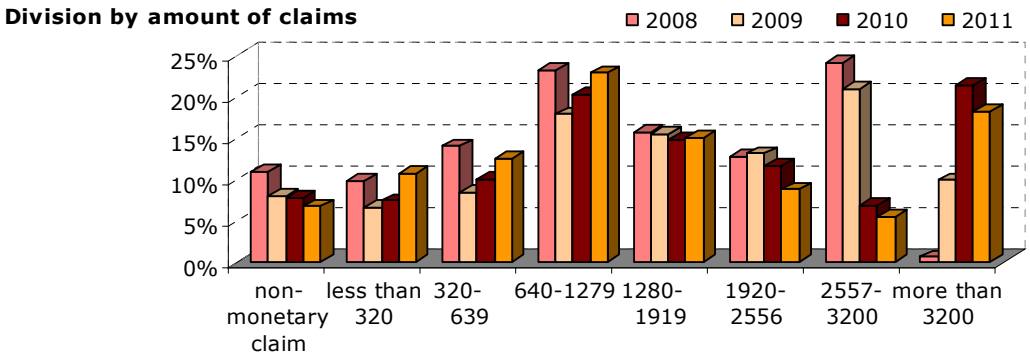


Figure 29

By occupations applications were filed with Labour Dispute Committees mostly by construction workers, salesmen/customer service, cooks, bakers, pastry-cooks, lorry-drivers and employees involved in sales (sales and marketing managers, sales representatives, consultants). We could thus conclude that construction sector, trade and transport sector continue to be the most problematic fields of activity.

By decisions of labour dispute committees the number of satisfied applications has decreased as compared to previous years, however, the number of partially satisfied applications has increased, which may mean that an application may contain several claims, all of which are not provable.
758 times i.e. concerning 25% of applications filed the proceeding was terminated without a decision on the substance. Predominantly causes for termination of proceedings were waiver of claims by applicants or applicants`failure to appear. Approximately every fifth application submitted to the Labour Dispute Committee was waived in 2011.

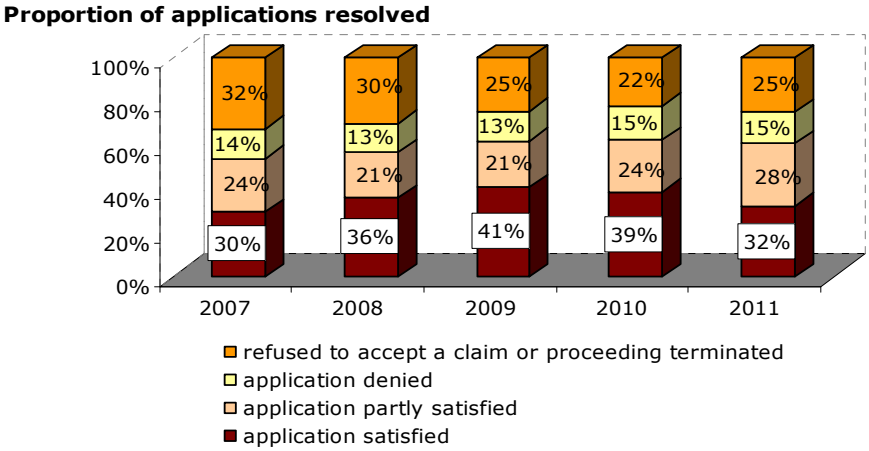


Figure 30

National Information and Training Activity

National communication and training activity of the Labour Inspectorate of Estonia takes place with the support of the European Social Fund (ESF). The Programme is called: " Reduction of work-related health risks and improvement of labour relations 2010 – 2014"

- **Prevention campaign on reduction of work-related health risks – Personal Protective Equipment**

In 2011 the prevention campaign of the Labour Inspectorate on safety at work focused on the use of personal protective equipment at workplaces with the aim to emphasize the need to use them and to inform of the potential consequencies of non-use. During free of charge

communication days overview was given of requirements established for personal protective equipment and the use of them and it was recommended how and which PPE to choose. Purveyors of PPEs were invited to the communication and information days so that they could introduce new or innovative personal protective equipment. It was the wish of the Labour Inspectorate to provide participants of the communication and information days with expanded more thorough and practical know-how of the options for selection of appropriate personal protective equipment for them. Since the days for information were mainly addressed to enterprises of production and construction sector, the fields of activities of these sectors were born in mind in particular. Products were presented by AS Becky Tööohutuskeskus, Parem Käsi OÜ, Tamrex Ohutuse OÜ, Karske Eesti OÜ and R.M.S.R. OÜ, who had carefully selected their products for presentation and had taken along new products, which attracted participants' interest during breaks. It also provided with tangible, visible eximplification to support lecturers` speech. At the information days lectures were delivered by labour inspectors of local offices and an external lecturer - Taavi Lukas (from Juhi & Hoia OÜ), who was very good at thought-provoking, making the audience to express their opinion and ask questions. Also suppliers`representatives found it a good idea to bring together so many parties, since as rapidly as technology evolves, evolve the characteristics of personal protective equipment. Ideas, experiences and contacts were exchanged both among participants and among suppliers. General assessment of the information day was 4.4 in a 5 point scale. Information on these information days was mainly obtained from the website of the Labour Inspectorate. 2400 brochures in Estonian and 600 in Russian were compiled, translated and printed for the information days. The number of people participating in the information days was 229.

- **Information campaign directed to problematic aspects of labour relations – Termination of employment**

Every year problems concerning labour relations arisen in the course of inspection activity, consultation or labour disputes are analysed for planning of information activities for the next period. In 2011 the Labour Inspectorate carried out 13 information days focusing on problematic aspects of labour relations in nine different cities for 983 participants. The aim of the information days was to inform employers and workers of their rights and responsibilities to avoid conflicts and reduce the number of labour disputes. Registration for the information days organized through the website of the Labour Inspectorate. A presentation was prepared that was translated into Russian and was printed for handouts to be delivered at the information days. In addition to that, printouts of §-s 79-110 of the Employment Contracts Act was distributed to the participants and the brochure "Termination of emoloyment" was drawn up and printed out (1200 copies in Estonian and 400 in Russian).
Participants appreciated the competence of lecturers (lawyers of the Labour Inspectorate), the usefulness of information and knowledge obtained for everyday work and said that they would definitely recommend such information days for their colleagues and partners. The general assessment given to the information days was 4,7 in a 5-point scale. For the most part information on the information days was obtained from the website of the Labour Inspectorate and to some extent from acquaintances. The participants recommended organization of similar information days in future on different labour relation issues, such as, e.g. commencement of labour relation, more lectures on practical application of the law.
During the period from 01.04 to 31.05.2011 38 media coverages were published at different media channels, delving into problematic aspects of labour relations from different angles, mostly topics related to termination of labour relations. The media coverages were frequently published rubrics where lawyers from the Labour Inspectorate answered specific questions (e.g.: on 05.05.2011 "Lawyers advise: How long is it necessary to notify in advance of termination of employment contract?" on 09.05.2011 "How long is the obligatory period of notification in advance before leaving one`s job?"). Numerous articles written by lawyers of the Labour Inspectorate came out on a wide scope of these topics (for instance: on 17.05.2011 "On extraordinary cancellation of employment contract", on 09.05.2011 "What is necessary to know about termination of a labour relation"). Also the press release introducing the campaign of termination of labour relations was reflected in the media and statements were made on nationwide information days. The great number of media coverages and participants in the information days vividly illustrates that termination of a labour relation is a topic of great interest to the general public. Information and communication activities continue in the next period as a result of the analysis of topics related to labour relations.

Information days:

Working and rest time of drivers of motor vehicles

The aim of information and communication activity was introduction of provisions of working and rest time in the frames of the new Traffic Act that came into force on 01.07.2011. 195 participants from 164 different enterprises were briefed in all. Among the audience, in addition to transporter representatives there were also listeners from universities, vocational schools and the Police Board. The average assessment given to the information days was 4,5 in a 5-point scale. The majority of the participants who gave their feedback would definitely recommend such information days for their colleagues and business partners. The material of such lecturers as Priit Tuuna and Ilmar Ronk (from the Lõuna Inspectorate) included practical examples of situations which transport companies are continuously tackling in their daily operation. The obtained knowledge on recording different actions of drivers of motor vehicles can be used, maintaining data; requirements for working and rest time, most common infringements can be used by transport operators for planning their work. In future cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications may be worth to be considered in the field of information and communication (Traffic Act). Proposals were made to focus on the use of recording equipment. It was also proposed to address the issues within the competence of the Labour Inspectorate (occupational health and labour relations at transport companies).

Information of high school students of regulation on labour relations

Information days were carried out at 26 high schools all over Estonia, which were attended by 1412 students in all. It is the opinion of the lawyers of the Labour Inspectorate that examples from real life help young people create the understanding that it is necessary for everyone to be familiar with this topic. "If you get caught up too much by paragraphs, then you lose focus, but if concrete examples are given of labour dispute cases or accidents at work, it makes young people to listen." Most students considered the topic of lectures of the information days to be interesting, informative and enjoyable. The average assessment by all schools together given to the information days was 4,2 in a 5-point scale. Students highly appreciated examples from situations and cases from taken place in real life. There could have been even more examples in their opinion. As quite a number of young people learned a lot and got necessary information, it was thought that it is necessary to organize information days on similar topics also in future. As a conclusion we may say that information days were a success and the objective to familiarize young people with the issue, to advise them where they can find more information and explain them the need to stand up for themselves, was achieved.

Training of work environment specialists and managers of SMEs

Training of work environment representatives and managers of SMEs began in 2011 with changes in the curriculum and the target group. Changes in the curriculum resulted in reduced number of days of auditory training for work environment specialists by 1 day per group (in 2010 – trainings of 10-days, in 2011 – trainings of 9 -days). The capacity of the curriculum in academic hours did not change (120 academic hours). Involvement of managers of SMEs in addition to representatives of small enterprises (designated as work environment specialists) in training activity has been a right decision. Since 2011, in addition to e-training videos and electronic timetable, it is also possible to pass examinations electronically. The new e-examination system has justified itself – trainees were more willing to pass examination than do homework and everything went smoothly and specialists in communication no longer had to spend much time on organization of exams on paper form, which used to be rather time-consuming. Besides, trainees had the opportunity to pass the examination at their convenience – depending on the course the trainees could take the exam within a week at a time convenient to them.
Examinations were passed either well or excellently, the number of those who flunked was very small (25 people a year and when they had a new opportunity they passed it well). In the curriculum of 2011 the number of homeworks was reduced to 3, which effectuated in more responsible attitude of participants to homework and nobody discontinued courses because they were unable to perform homework. The curriculum of 2010 entailed 9 mandatory

homeworks and there was a problem of the rate of dropouts. We will definitely continue the existing well functioning system with e-examinations and will keep the number of homework small**.** We have planned to make the content of examination following the 9-day training course for work environment representatives more difficult, as compared to the 3-days training for representatives of SMEs.
In 2011 623 participants in all were trained: among them 194 work environment specialists (8 groups), 238 representatives of SMEs (8 groups) and 191 work environment specialists on the basis of optional module (8 groups).

Training of optional module was carried out 8 times:

- "OSH at workplaces" in Tartu on 12.05.2011
- "Ergonomics" in Kuressaare on 19.05.2011
- "Investigation of work accidents and cases of occupational diseases" in Tallinn on 24.05.2011
- "Lighting" in Jõhvi on 24.05.2011
- "Ergonomics" in Tallinn 22.11.2011
- "OSH at workplaces" (in Russian) in Tallinn on 28.11.2011
- "Investigation of work accidents and cases of occupational diseases" in Tartu on 29.11.2011
- "Lighting" in Pärnu on 30.11.2011

Other activities:

- **Compilation of publications and insructions –** In 2011 publications on four different subject-matters were published by the Labour Inspectorate: "Personal protective equiment – a tedious obligation or happy future?"; "Slips and trips – how to prevent work accidents?"; "Training and instruction of workers at work places" and „Stress at work" and a leaflet on services rendered by the Labour Inspectorate. Guidance material for new enterprises was prepared on work environment related issues. It is planned to consider the technical possibilities for electronic delivery of the material again in 2012.
- **Electronic newsletter –** By the end of 2011 1780 people have joined the mailing list of the electronic newsletter. Increase in the number of subscribers compared to the number of 2010 has stopped, but in part it is due to the updating and correction of the list – non-active users are deleted from the list (if the person no longer works at the organisation, the address of which has been registered, or the e-mail account does not exist any more). E-newsletter articles are also available in an archive at the website of the Labour Inspectorate. Articles are made public about a week after the newsletter has been sent to its subscribers. Publication of the newsletter and the availability of the articles at the website of the Labour Inspectorate have been introduced through channels of social media.
- **Working life portal -** For elaboration of the portal of working life a work group has been established, consisting of 7 members, including 3 representatives from the Labour Inspectorate, 2 from the National Institute for Health Development, 1 from the Health Board and 1 from the Ministry of Social Afffairs. The structure of the content of the portal has been agreed and first materials in the work environment field have been prepared. For preparation of materials a team of qualified persons in the field from the Labour Inspectorate and the Ministry of Social Affairs has been set up. Texts related to labour relations will be prepared from the beginning of 2012.
- **Development of work-related stress mapper** – Within the year the work-related stress mapper has been used by about 600 enterprises. At the beginning of 2011 problems related to the use of the mapper have been reviewed. During the year minor improvements were made for ensuring users`convenience (logging in with an ID-card, changing the wording of subheadings, etc.). In order to better and more quickly solve technical problems of users it is planned to conclude an agreement on maintenance services with the mapper`s developer in 2012 with the aim to ensure smooth operation of the mapper of stress at work, solving problems by the developer encountered by users. It is scheduled to integrate the mapper of stress at work with the Safe Working Life software (Ohutu Tööelu Tarkvaraga = OTT) in 2013.

- **Participation in fairs –** The Labour Inspectorate participated in two construction fairs and information fair "Signpost" for young people in 2011. The aim of participation at fairs is to provide interested people with competent information and knowledge both in work environment and labour relations. The Labour Inspectorate is always represented by labour inspectors, labour inspectors-lawyers and communication specialists at such events. Participation in the fairs gives a good opportunity to disseminate information materials. At the Construction Fair representatives of the Labour Inspectorate were mainly asked advice on working at heights and safety of construction sites. The most popular handout turned to be the brochure and information material reflecting issues related to stress at work "Instruction and training of workers at the place of work". At the information fair for young people visitors were informed of issues related to working and rest time, concluding an employment contract, study leave, etc. Great interest was shown in the information days and work environment training courses organised by the Labour Inspectorate. Information was provided by a communication specialist, an inspector and a lawyer each day.

- **Collection and dissemination of examples of best practices on work environment –** During the year 2011 we collected 60 new best practice examples, which have been added to the database on the website of the Labour Inspectorate. Taking into consideration the target set for the year (35 new best practices), we managed to find examples significantly better than we had assumed. Compared to previous years considerably more examples of best practice were submitted before the competition deadline, indicating that recognition is motivating and there is interest in participating in the competition. Before the closing date we informed enterprises and institutions of the possibility to take part in the competition more actively through different channels (the website of the Labour Inspectorate, social media, etc.).

  56 best practice examples were translated into Russian in 2011 (4 examples from the year 2010 and 52 examples of 2011). The Russian language database is updated on regular basis and best practices are sent to be translated periodically, when a sufficient number of best practices in Estonian have been submitted.

  The event of recognition of best practices took place on 24 November 2011 in the frames of the conference organised by the National Institute for Health Development "Health-friendly work place – a key to an employer`s success". The cooperation with the National Institute for Health Development took place with the aim to have greater impact through joint activity of collection and dissemination of best practices and to gain public attention. The acknowledgement of best practices was reflected in press, online and also audiovisual media.

  66 best practices in all competed in the best practice competition of 2011, which had been submitted during the period of October 2010 and September 2011, which is nearly two times more than in the competion of 2010. Diplomas and health promoting and work environment related literature were awarded to the following enterprises: Lõhavere Treatment and Care Centre, Nõlvak & Ko and Eesti Post.

  For drawing more attention to best practices there is a pertinent rubric on the website of the Labour Inspectorate, the link of which is accessible directly on the main page. To highlight the results of the competition, there was a special banner which was available on websites of the Labour Inspectorate both in the Estonian and the Russian language. The event was also reflected in social media.