

## Annual Report – Latvia 2004

The year 2004 started with an extremely important event, as from the 1st of May the Republic of Latvia has become a full-fledged member of the European Union. This event has brought considerable changes for the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI). In 2004 the number of SLI international cooperation activities increased: 47 representatives from SLI participated in 33 international seminars and conferences of which the most important were the following:

- International conference “Effective and preventive occupational safety and health system”, organised by the **Baltic countries and Nordic Council of Ministers** in Tallinn (Estonia);
- Seminars with the aim to exchange experience regarding the methods of combating illegal employment, organised within the framework of the **Baltic Countries Cooperation Agreement**, that took place in Lithuania and Estonia;
- International seminar “Legislation regulating the usage of chemical substances and their pollution control”, organised by **Baltic Environment Forum** in Tallinn (Estonia);
- 1.Conference of the Directors of Labour Inspectorates in Dublin (Ireland);
- 2.International conference “Work in safety” in Dresden (Germany);
- *Eurostat* pilotproject “Health and safety at work” final seminar in Bratislav (Slovakia);
- conference “Towards an effective interference and sector dialogue in the field of occupational safety and health”;
- “European Union 3rd quality conference on public administration” etc.

It has to be admitted that after the meeting it is planned to establish cooperation with the **Federal Institution of illegal employment control of the German Customs**.

SLI officials participate in the working groups on occupational safety and health matters at work, organised by the European Commission. During the reporting period our representative has participated in the working group on occupational safety and health matters in the field of construction. It is very important that in 2005 the campaign on occupational safety and health matters in the field of construction will be organised in the new EU member states.

In 2004, the system of analysis of accidents at work was changed in order to comply with the *Eurostat* requirements. Therefore SLI has also joined the common *Eurostat* system providing the analysis and statistics on accidents at work.

Already for two years SLI provides the operation of the National Focal Point of the EU Agency for Safety and Health at Work. The Information Board was operating successfully and organised the informative campaign “Building in Safety!” During the period of campaign the competition on “Good Practice Award” was organised with the aim to demonstrate the benefits of good practice in the field of occupational safety and health at work for the employers and employees. The “Good Practice Award” was given to the construction company "SIA Arcers". It applied for the competition at the EU level and the Committee of the competition expressed recognition to SIA “Arcers” for the achievements in establishing safe working environment.

SLI entities are provided with all the necessary technical means and premises. In order to ensure the reception of visitors in Ludza and Kuldiga, the premises were rented as there is no special office in these districts. In the case the number of SLI staff employees is going to be increased in the above mentioned districts offices will be opened there.

SLI has developed common internal information system that provides an effective information exchange among the SLI structural units.

During the reporting period investments were attracted for updating the informative system database as well as for partial improvement of the outdated computer system which does not correspond to the new SLI informative system.

During the reporting period SLI was facing several difficulties as 28 employees and officials were dismissed from their jobs of their own will due to the growth of inflation and low salaries. During the reporting period there were 10% vacancies for SLI staff units.

The quantitative and qualitative indicators determined by the SLI Action Programme in 2004 were fulfilled irrespective of the high level of labour turnover. Serious attention was paid as well to the information of employers and employees regarding the matters under the competence of SLI.

During the reporting period SLI in cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare has prepared a Plan for the reduction of illegal employment for 2005.-2009., which was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. Implementation of this plan has already started. Reduction of illegal employment is also the priority of SLI in 2005.

Two projects have been prepared to uptake the resources of EU Structural Funds. Implementation of one of these projects has started in November, 2004.

Taking in consideration an increasing number of the occupational diseases, reorganisation in the field of medicine and occupational health has to be carried out. The quality of mandatory health examinations has to be improved as well as the monitoring of their results implemented in practice.

## **1. Laws and decisions pertaining to the operation of the Labour Inspection:**

### **1.1. Laws regulating the operation of the SLI:**

- Law on Labour (01.06.2002).
- Regulation on the State Labour Inspection (20.04.2002.)
- Law on State Labour Inspection (01.01.2002)
- Law on Labour Protection (01.01.2002.)
- Law on Technical Supervision of Dangerous Equipment (27.10.1998.)

### **1.2. Laws, regulations, rules where compliance is supervised by the SLI:**

- Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.293 On Procedure for the Investigation and Recording of Accidents at Work ( 31.07.2002.);
- Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.258 On Procedure for the Investigation of Failures of Dangerous Equipment ( 29.06.2002.);
- Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 384 On Dangerous Equipment (11.11.2000.);
- Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 129 On Procedure for Registration of Dangerous Equipment (04.04.2000.)
- Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 86 On Compulsory Health Examination and Training in Providing First Aid (07.03.1997.);
- Law on Compulsory Social Insurance Against Accidents at Work and Occupational Diseases ( 01.01.1997.).

## **2. The personnel of the Labour Inspection:**

In 2002 the State Labour Inspection had **186 staff units** of which **150** were civil servants and **36 employees**.

**2.1.** As in 01.01.2005, **165** staff units or 88,71% has been filled in, of which the total number of inspectors – **109** of whom:

**2.2.** Chief state labour inspectors – **39**

Senior labour inspectors – **31**

State labour inspectors – **35**

Junior labour inspectors – **4**.

**2.3.** Number of inspectors – women – **57**

Of whom:

Chief state labour inspectors – **18**

Senior labour inspectors – **17**

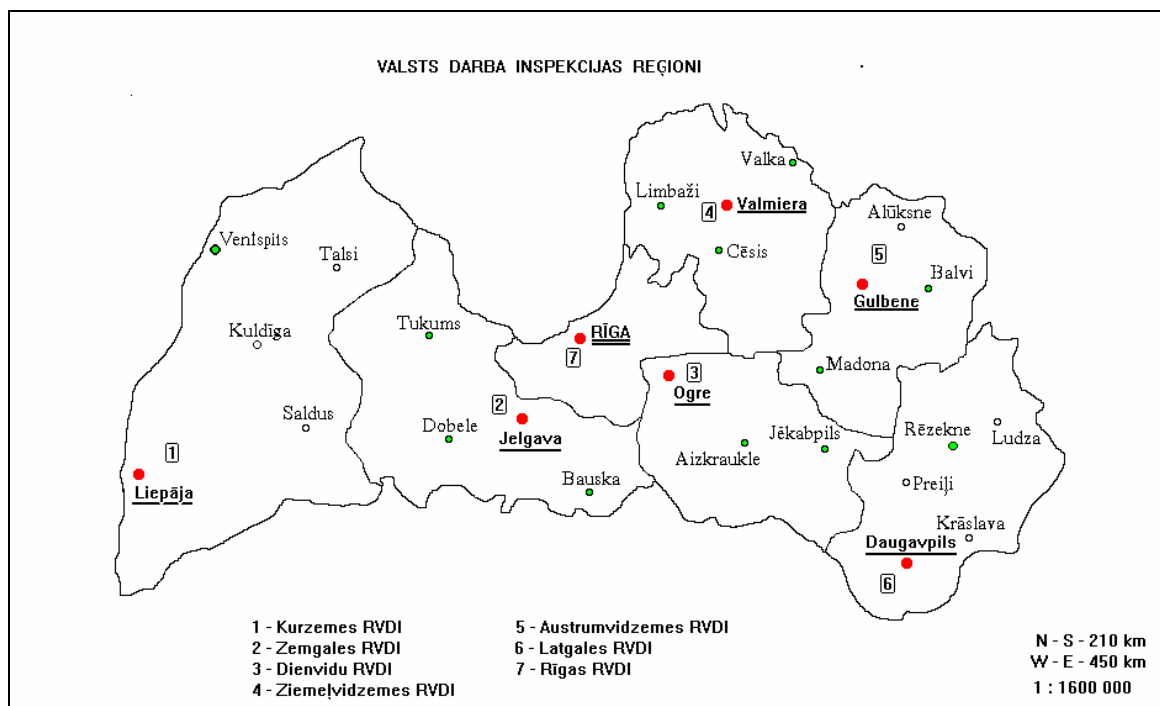
State labour inspectors – **18**.

Junior labour inspectors – **4**.

**2.4.** Data on the geographical location on inspection services:

7 Regional Inspections (hereinafter - RSLI) are operating in the territory of Latvia which are located as follows:

- 1. Kurzeme RSLI** provides the supervision in the regions of Saldus, Kuldiga, Talsi, Ventspils and Liepaja. Its centre is located in Liepaja;
- 2. Zemgale RSLI** provides the supervision in the regions of Bauska, Jelgava, Dobele and Tukums. Its centre is located in in Jelgava;
- 3. Dienvidi RSLI** provides the supervision in the regions of Ogre, Aizkraukle and Jekabpils. Its centre is located in Ogre;
- 4. Ziemeļvidzeme RSLI** provides the supervision in the regions of Limbazi, Valmiera, Valka and Cesis. Its centre is located in Valmiera;
- 5. Austrumvidzeme RSLI** provides the supervision in the regions of Balvi, Alūksne, Madona and Gulbene. Its centre is located in Gulbene;
- 6. Latgale RSLI** provides the supervision in the regions of Rezekne, Ludza, Preiļi, Kraslava and Daugavpils. Its centre is located in Daugavpils;
- 7. Rīga RSLI** provides the supervision in the city of Riga, Riga District and Jūrmala. Its centre is located in Riga.



### 3. Statistical data on enterprises under the control of the Labour Inspection and the number of employees working at these enterprises:

3.1. Number of enterprises subject to inspections – **121 095**

3.2. Average number of employees working at these enterprises – **955 818**.

### 4. Statistical data on inspection visits:

In compliance with Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers On Quantitative Indicators of Institutions, according to the Action Programme in 2004 the SLI had planned to perform inspections of **9200** enterprises; in actual **9759** enterprises were inspected of which **1130** more than once per year.

In 2004 the SLI continued to identify the “new” operating enterprises and to assess them according to the risk degree. Thus, the SLI has identified **49 657** or **41%** of enterprises under its supervision.

Number of employees at the enterprises identified in 2004 – **850 926**

Of whom:

Women – **445 079**

Minors – **768**.

### 5. Statistical data on violations committed and sanctions imposed:

5.1. In 2004 SLI inspectors issued **4168 orders** to the employers for the total number of violations **35 830**, of which:

- violations of labour legal relations, total 6623;
- violations of labour protection legislation, total 29 207.

## 5.2. Data on the classification of violations stated in 2004:

The analysis of the detected violations shows that:

- **18,5%** violations are in the field of **labour legal relations**. Each year the number of violations in the field of labour legislation are increasing (in 2003 this indicator was 18,4%, in 2002 - 16,4%). It can be explained by the rapid increase of the number of applications submitted by the employees of enterprises as well as with the special purpose visits related to the review of the applications.

The main violations of the labour legislation are following:

- failure to conclude the employment contracts with employees, incomplete or imprecise filing of the contracts – 34% of the total number of violations in the field of labour legal relations;
- violations in the field of remuneration for the work (failure to pay overtime work, violations concerning remuneration for work during days-off, failure to pay salaries in due time) that constitute 21,5% of all violations in the field of labour legal relations.

It has to be mentioned that during the reporting period no differences were stated in the payment for women and men in similar positions.

- **81,5%** of violations have been committed in the field of **labour protection legislation**. If comparing with the year 2003, the number of such violations has not changed considerably. The main violations of the labour protection legislation are the following:

violations of organisational character – 82,3%, including:

- no labour protection systems has been established at the enterprise;
- failure to assess the working environment risk factors etc (such violations have been stated in the majority of enterprises in all regions and cities);
- no introductory instructions and no instructions at the work place have been formulated; employees have not undergone instructions;
- employees have not been sent to the mandatory health examinations.

The high ratio of violations of organisational character can be explained by the fact that employers do not pay enough attention for the establishment of labour protection system at the enterprises. Not all employers are familiar with the new labour legislation acts and their implementation is at an early stage.

violations of technical character - 17,7% including:

- exploitation of work stations without protective fencing;
- in the workshops there is a lack of local ventilation systems with dust and splinter gatherers– cyclones;
- no electrical measurements of the drawings are being carried out etc.

## 5.3. The number of imposed sanctions:

In 2004, for the violations of Labour Protection Law, as well as the Regulations on the exploitation of the dangerous equipment, **829 administrative penalties** were imposed including:

- **689 fines** (for the total amount of 52 381 ls):
  - for violations of labour legal relations – **496**;
  - for the labour protection violations – **193** (including the violations of regulations regarding the use of dangerous equipment – **18**);
- **140 warnings regarding suspension of operation.**

In 2004, **178 production units, workshops, machinery, equipment and dangerous equipment** were suspended.

#### 5.4. Data on the character of sanctions.

The most common violations that have resulted in the imposition of penalties are the following:

- in the field of labour legal relations - issues of remuneration for work, employment of workers without contracts, violations regarding the working time;
- in the field of the labour protection – occupational accidents have not been investigated, personnel has not received the necessary training and instructions, mandatory health examinations, working environment internal surveillance as well as the technical inspection of the dangerous equipment have not been carried out.

During the reporting period 44 880 LVL have been collected, that constitutes 86% of the total imposed fine amount. If the fine is collected by the Office of Court bailiffs, the payment period becomes longer.

In cases when inspections of enterprises and objects revealed factors that were dangerous and hazardous for the health and life of employees, state labour inspectors took the decision of suspending the operation of these entities, units or objects. In 2004 the following objects were suspended:

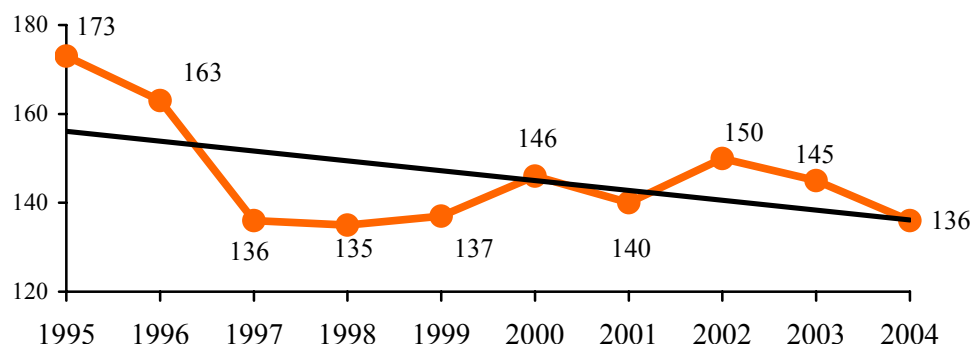
- 6 production units and workshops;
- 172 equipment, machinery including 132 dangerous equipment.

#### 6. Statistical data on accidents in manufacturing:

According to the information at a disposal of the SLI, **in 2004, 1296 employees suffered in accidents in the country**, of which there were 57 cases of lethal outcome, 233 employees were severely injured. In comparison with the data of 2003, the total number of victims of accidents has decreased for 67 cases (4,9%); the number of lethal accidents has increased for 16 cases (39%), however the number of severely injured victims has increased for 13 cases (5,9%). In comparison with the year 2003, increase of the number of lethal cases and severe injuries is mainly related to the growth of economic activity in Latvia as a result of which new employees started to work at the enterprises without the necessary efficient professional training as well as the lack of practical skills was missing or the employees did not receive the necessary training and instructions regarding the labour protection matters.

When analysing the lethal accidents it was stated that 10 of the employees (17,5% of the total lethal cases in 2004) died as a result of the road accidents, the main reasons of which were the violations of the Cabinet Regulations No. 571 “The Road Traffic Regulations”.

When analysing the dynamics of the number of accident victims per 100 000 employees (1995-2004), the conclusions are that accidents tend to decline (see diagram 1).

*Number of accident victims per 100 000 employees (1995-2004).*

The largest number of accidents is in the following industries:

- Timber, wood and cork product manufacturing (D20) – 167 victims or 13%;
- Construction (F45) – 158 victims or 12%;
- Food and beverage production (D15) – 86 victims or 7%;
- Land transport and pipeline transport (I60) – 86 victims or 6%;
- Health and social care (N85) – 79 victims or 6%;
- Land and pipeline transport (I60) – 70 victims or 5%;
- Additional activities related to the transport, types of ancillary activities, activities of tourism agencies (I63) – 65 victims or 5%;
- Forestry, lumbering and related services (A02) – 51 victims or 4%;

When analysing the number of victims per 100 000 employees in the districts of Latvia, we have stated that the majority of victims are in Riga, Cesis, Valmiera, Liepaja, Aizkraukle un Limbazi district, but the smallest number of victims – in Ogre, Ludza, Kraslava, Balvi and Talsi.

The analysis of accidents by group of enterprises show that the majority of victims (508 employees or 39%) are in the medium size enterprises (50-249 employees). The situation can be explained by the considerable proportion of these enterprises in the country, as well as the insufficient attention of the employers to the labour protection issues, including the organisation and improvement of the labour protection system.

Although 91% of the cases the employees had introductory instructing and 92% - instructing at the work places, the number of accidents show that employees have not received enough and unsatisfactory training course regarding the labour protection matters

The analysis of professions of victims of accidents shows that the following groups have suffered most often:

- constructors – 116 victims or 9%;
- operators of paper manufacturing and wood processing equipment – 113 victims or 9%;
- operators of transport vehicles – 94 victims or 7%;
- fitters and operators of equipment and machinery – 72 victims or 6%;
- wood-processing workers and furniture manufacturers – 61 victims or 5%;
- fitters and operators of electric. Electronic equipment – 39 victims or 3%.

In most of the cases the victims are employees with the length of in-service time up to 1 year – 34 % and from 1 to 3 years – 30%.

In 2004, 911 men have suffered from occupational accidents that is 70% of the total number of accidents.

The most frequent causes of injuries suffered as a result of accidents are the following:

- horizontal or vertical collision with stationary object – 35%;
- contact with moving, rotating equipment (falling object; coercion of flying or rotating object, etc.) – 23%;
- *ievilkšana*, compression – 15%;
- contact with sharp, pointed, rugged object – 15%;
- attack of a person or animal – 5%;
- impact of electric power, heat, cold, or contaminant substances – 4%

The most frequent injuries are as follows:

- wounding and superficial wounds of upper extremities (shoulder, arm, palm, fingers, palm joint) - 16%, bone fractures – 15%, traumatic amputation – 6%;
- bone fractures of lower extremities (hip, leg, foot, ankle, toes) – 13%, wounding and superficial wounds – 5%, dislocation and strain – 5%;
- superficial wounds of head (skull nerves and blood-vessels, face, eyes, ears, teeth) – 9%, concussion of the brain and internal wounds – 6%.

The most frequent causes of injuries are as follows:

- failure of the employee to comply with the labour safety requirements (66%) including failure to comply with labour safety instructions, the choice of inappropriate working techniques and methods, insufficient attention in performing work assignments, failure to comply with technology for the execution of the work assignment, failure to use the safety equipment or individual protective means, failings in the discipline of employees (work in a condition of alcoholic intoxication and the performance of unassigned work tasks);
- drawbacks in the organisation of work and related shortcomings (16%), including insufficient control over compliance with requirements of labour safety instructions and the performance of work, unsatisfactory training of employees and their instruction on issues of labour safety and health, unsatisfactory establishment and equipment of the work place, inappropriate choice of work technology;
- unsatisfactory conditions at the work place (7%), including insufficient order at the work place, lack of suitable safety equipment and lack of PPE, damaged equipment, instruments, tools;
- failure to comply with the road traffic rules when using transport vehicles (4%);
- violence (attacks) at the work place or while performing professional duties (3%).



On the basis of the results of the analysis on accidents, the SLI identified the following activities to be undertaken in 2005 for the reduction of the number of accidents:

- Employers have to focus attention on the organisation of labour and labour protection at the enterprise – conditions at the work place (the condition of the technical equipment, order in the work place, the placement of the work place, provision of employees with the necessary PPE). Quality training must be provided to employees on safe work methods, requirements of technology, the use of PPE. Likewise control should be exercised how employees comply with labour safety requirements and discipline in performing their professional duties.
- SLI inspectors, when performing inspections at the enterprises, have to pay more attention to the competence and experience of the labour protection specialist in the field of occupational safety and health. Special attention should be paid to the internal monitoring of the working environment at the enterprise.
- SLI has to continue consulting the employers regarding the examples of “Good Practice “ of the enterprises in Latvia as well as in the other countries.
- To improve cooperation with mass media in order to inform the community regarding the labour protection issues and problems. To provide on regular basis the information on accidents and their causes, on the importance of the enterprise policy and culture in labour safety and health issues, as the possibility of reducing the number of accidents in most cases depends on the attitude of employers and employees towards ensuring a safe working environment and interest in cooperating in addressing these issues.

## **7. Statistical data on occupational morbidity**

In 2004, 796 new cases of occupational diseases were recorded in Latvia (Diagram No.2). It is for 41% more than in 2003. Sometimes one individual has several diseases been diagnosed, therefore the number of diseases is higher than the number of patients. 57% of patients are women, 43% - men.

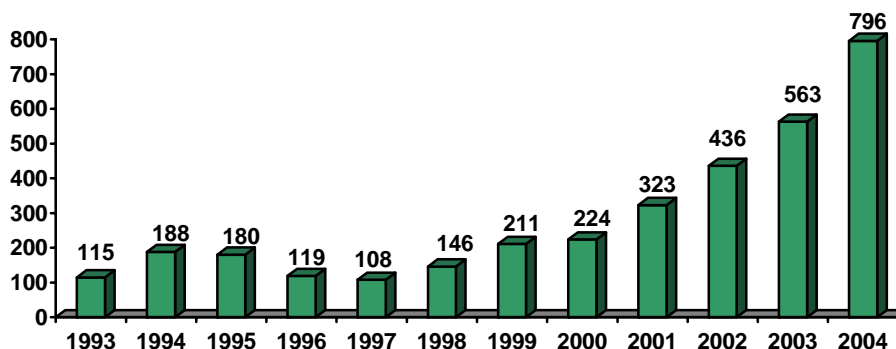
In 2004, SLI received 923 requests for the assessment of hygiene at work places from the Consultative Commission of Doctors of P.Stardins Clinic University, on the basis of which 603 enterprises were inspected, and 927 assessments were carried out.

From 2004, SLI carries out inspections only at the enterprises which are operating practically and has issued the hygienic assessments of the working places that form 86% of the whole registered occupational patients. In 2004, 687 patients were registered at the enterprises, which is for more than 37% in 2003.

During inspections of enterprises state labour inspectors – hygienists assessed also the systems of working environment internal supervision and preventive measures for improvement of occupational safety and health of employees, issuing 95 statements-orders for the elimination of detected violations.

Diagram 2.

*Dynamics of the number of occupational patients.]*



Analysis show that the number of occupational patients has increased in Madona (10), Ogre (26), Aizkraukle (9), Liepāja (21), Rēzekne (14), Limbazi (23), Valka (12) districts. The largest number of patients has been registered in Valmiera district – 45, Dobeles district – 40, but in Riga and Riga district – 55% of all the occupational patients registered in Latvia.

The assessment shows that the majority of occupational diseases are in the following spheres of the economic activity:

- processing industry – 30%;
- transport and communications – 21%;
- health and social care – 18%;
- agriculture and forestry – 7%;
- education, construction – 5%.

Each year there is an increase of occupational diseases among the medical workers. In 2004, it was for 38 cases more than in previous year.

The review of the structure of professions of patients shows that the majority of them are in the following groups of professions:

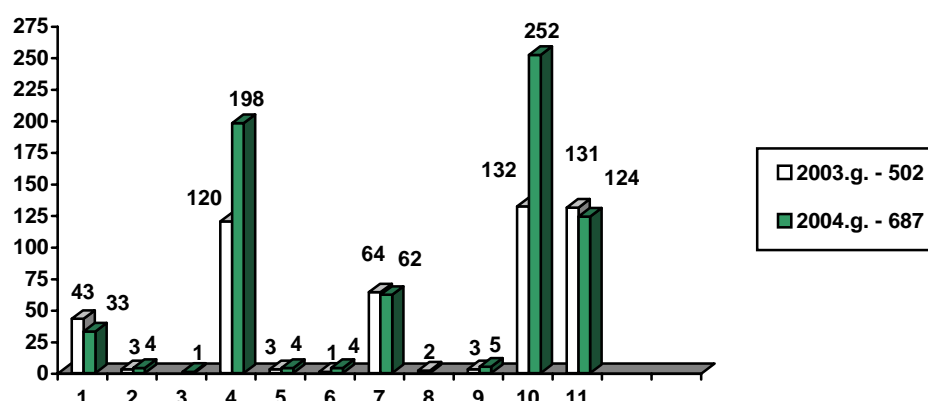
- operators of machinery and equipment and product fitters – 34%;
- qualified workers and craftsmen – 17%;
- specialists – 16%;
- senior specialists – 13%;
- group of manual professions – 9%.

The largest number of occupational patients has been diagnosed the age group of 45 – 54 years – 40% and from 55 – 64 years – 39%..

The majority of diseases under the impact of harmful factors of working environment are in the following age groups:

- 21 – 30 years – 40%;
- 31 – 35 years – 18%;
- 16 – 20 years – 16%.

The distribution of occupational patients by group of occupational diseases according to the 10<sup>th</sup> International Classification of Diseases for groups of systems of organs is presented in Diagram 3.

*Distribution by group of occupational diseases*

- 1- infections
- 2- neoplasms
- 3- endocrine diseases
- 4- diseases of nervous system
- 5- diseases of ears and parotid
- 6- blood circulation diseases

- 7- diseases of the respiratory system
- 8- diseases of digestive system
- 9- skin diseases and diseases of subcutaneous tissues
- 10- diseases of skeleton muscle – connective tissue
- 11- consequences of poisoning and other impacts

The majority of occupational patients are in the following groups of diseases:

- diseases of skeleton muscle – connective tissue – 37%;
- diseases of nervous system – 28%;
- consequences of poisoning and other impacts – 18%;
- diseases of the respiratory system – 9%;
- infections – 5%

The distribution of occupational patients according to the groups of consequences:

- The commission of health and work ability expertise has recognised as invalids – 66%;
- loss of work ability – 27%;

at the moment of hygienic assessment of the working place::

- occupational patients continue to work in the profession that has caused the disease- 69%;
- 11% - work in another place of work;
- 20% - do not work;

Factors causing the occupational diseases:

- deficiencies of work organisation;
- failure to detect and eliminate risks at the working places;
- summing of several working environment risk factors;
- long in-service time in unarranged working environment;
- unarranged working environment at working places;
- impact of harmful working environment factors and concentration in working environment;
- individual features of a person;
- dilatory visits to the doctor in the cases of health disorders.

Each year employees are becoming more and more informed about the matters related to their rights. People are more often turning to the responsible institutions in order to receive the compensations in the cases of occupational diseases, or in order to improve their working environment. Employers, interested in the long-term development of their enterprise, are working a lot in order to meet the labour protection requirements and they continue the arrangement of the working environment at the enterprises.

In 2005, the SLI officials are planning to continue the monitoring and consultative work for the employers so that they are able to establish healthy working environment at the enterprises, to arrange the internal surveillance system of the working environment, to eliminate the detected risks, to improve the organisation of work, as well as to inform the employees about the potential risks at work. As a result the quality of work will improve and the expenses caused by the illnesses of employees will reduce.

SLI Director

Janis Berzins