

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IN FINLAND



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH

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Occupational Safety and Health in Finland

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I Occupational safety and health (OSH) ensures a safe and healthy work environment

Meaningful work, in which the physical and mental health as well as the social health and safety of the individual are safeguarded, is of crucial importance to the quality of life and wellbeing. Good working conditions help employees cope at work while improving productivity and competitiveness.

In Finland, occupational safety and health (OSH) is understood to cover not only safety and health at work but also terms of employment, mental wellbeing, the functioning of management and the organisation, productivity, and codetermination.

The principal responsibility for improving working conditions rests with workplaces. Employers have a statutory duty to ensure that work is safe and healthy. Employers are also responsible for the costs incurred through OSH and improvement of the work environment. However, employees too have a responsibility to look after their own safety and that of their co-workers. The OSH administration, occupational health care and other expert services support workplaces in this.

The OSH authorities address issues that are of key importance to wellbeing at work. The OSH administration works closely with the social partners to improve employee safety, wellbeing and health and also the performance in the production of goods and services.

The focus areas in the OSH strategy of the administrative sector of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health are:

- maintaining and promoting work ability and functional capacity,
- preventing occupational accidents and occupational diseases,
- preventing musculoskeletal disorders,
- mental wellbeing at work,
- coping at work, and
- control over one's work.





The number of absences due to illness has been steadily growing since the mid-1990s. In 2009, a total of about 15.7 million compensated days off sick were recorded in Finland. The major reasons for sickness absence and for disability pensions are mental health problems and musculoskeletal disorders. The incidence of occupational diseases in Finland has gone down since 1994. At present, some 5,000 cases are diagnosed annually. The major groups of occupational diseases now are noise injury, skin diseases and repetitive strain injury. (Figures 1, 2, 3, 4)

The number of accidents at work per annum – accidents to employees at workplaces – declined by the mid-1990s to almost half of what it had been in the 1970s and 1980s. Then the favourable trend halted, and since then the incidence of workplace accidents has actually slightly increased. Workplace accidents occur most frequently in construction and industry. Occupational damage occurs most frequently in house construction and in the food industry. (Figures 5, 6, 7)

According to figures from the Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions, compensation was paid for a total of about 150,600 cases of occupational damage to employees and entrepreneurs in 2008. 'Occupational damage' is a blanket term that includes workplace accidents, commuting accidents, and diagnosed or suspected cases of occupational diseases. In 2008, employees were involved in about 143,983 cases of occupational damage, of which 117,920 were workplace accidents, 21,849 were commuting accidents, and 4,212 were cases of occupational disease. There were 35 fatal workplace accidents and 16 fatal commuting accidents in 2008. There were also 107 deaths caused by occupational disease, almost all of them attributable to asbestos. Entrepreneurs were involved in 5,920 workplace accidents. (Figures 5, 8, 9)

The purpose of the OSH strategy of the European Union is to prevent hazards at work and to bring together various political instruments such as legislation, social dialogue, promotive action, good practices and economic incentives, and to create partnerships to improve wellbeing at work. Finland is slightly below the EU average in the incidence of severe and fatal occupational accidents, and is pursuing a determined zero-accident policy, aiming to become a world leader in OSH promotion.

Division of duties and cooperation between ministries

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible for the development of health and safety at work, statutory insurance (earnings-related pension, accident, motor liability, patient and environmental damage insurance) and gender equality, and the preparation of related legislation. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is also responsible for the enforcement and development of OSH, the preparation of OSH legislation and the development of occupational health care. The Ministry works closely with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and other authorities on any matters that may have a bearing on OSH.

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy is responsible for preparing and implementing employment policy strategy, improving the functioning of working life and improving its quality, and promoting employment. The Ministry's brief also includes the planning and implementation of public employment services. Its employment duties include mediation of labour market disputes, safeguarding of the equality principle, certain services for seamen, and pay security. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy is also responsible for administering and developing non-military national service. The Ministry prepares and develops legislation related to all of the above.

2 Legislation governs OSH

Most of Finland's new OSH legislation is prepared in the bodies of the European Union at the initiative of the European Commission. Finnish experts take an active part in the preparation of EU OSH legislation. Finland's aim is to achieve a modern, effective, fact-based and evidence-based body of Community law in this area.

Under the Finnish Constitution, the public administration is tasked with the protection of labour force. The Occupational Safety and Health Act lays down that employers are obliged to look after the safety and health of employees. The Act further contains provisions on the responsibilities of employees and on the cooperation of employers and employees to promote occupational safety and health. The Occupational Safety and Health Act applies to all paid employment and comparable functions.

The Occupational Health Care Act applies to all employment for which the employer is bound by the Occupational Safety and Health Act. It is the employer's responsibility to provide and pay for the services of health care and other professionals to prevent the risks and adverse effects that work and working conditions may cause employees.

The Employment Contracts Act contains provisions on the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees in an employment relationship. These provisions pertain among other things to non-discrimination, family leave, lay-offs and the termination or cancelling of employment contracts. The Act further lays down how collective agreements are generally binding.

Employment relationships are also governed by the Non-discrimination Act and the Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life; compliance with these is monitored by the OSH authorities. By contrast, the Act on Equality between Women and Men does not fall within the domain of the OSH authorities.

A separate body of legislation governs working hours. This includes the general Working Hours Act and the complementary sector-specific Acts. There is a separate Annual Holidays Act, and the Study Leave Act and the

Act on Job Alternation Leave also belong to this group. The OSH authorities monitor compliance with these Acts, too.

The right of employees to receive compensation for occupational accidents is provided for in the Employment Accidents Act. Employers are required by law to take out an insurance policy with an insurance company. The OSH authorities monitor employer compliance with this provision. A similar provision exists for compensation for occupational diseases.

The safety of work depends greatly on the characteristics of the machinery, personal protective equipment, other technical equipment and chemicals used in the work. Manufacturers of technical equipment are subject to certain requirements as stated in the Act on the Conformity of Certain Technical Devices to Relevant Requirements. The law is binding on both the manufacturer and any representative of same. Pursuant to this Act, Decrees have been issued for instance on machinery, personal protective equipment and tractors. The Chemicals Act contains similar provisions applying to chemical manufacturers. The OSH authorities monitor compliance with these Acts, too.

There is a chapter on employment offences in the Criminal Code. Sanctions are specified in the Criminal Code for work safety offences, working hours offences, work discrimination, exploitative work discrimination, violation of the rights of an employee representative, violation of the right to organise, employment agency offences and offences related to illegal employment of foreign employees. Sanctions may be imposed on an employer, an employer's representative or a legal entity. Depending on the offence, the sanction may be a fine or imprisonment, in aggravated cases up to two years.

Enforcement legislation

The rights and responsibilities of the OSH authorities are provided for in the Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health at Workplaces. Cooperation on OSH matters between employers and employees shall be organised as provided for in this Act if there is no valid agreement between the relevant social partners which applies to the workplace in question.

There are two components to OSH enforcement: workplace monitoring and market surveillance. Workplace monitoring includes monitoring of

Generally binding collective agreements – what are they?

A collective agreement is an agreement concluded by one or more employers or employer federations with one or more registered trade unions. A collective agreement contains provisions on the terms and conditions of employment relationships and on working conditions. A collective agreement is binding upon those parties who have concluded or acceded to the agreement. In this case, the agreement is 'normally binding'. However, a collective agreement which has nationwide validity and must be considered representative in its sector is 'generally binding'. A generally binding collective agreement extends to employees of non-organised employers, too. Non-organised employers must abide by the provisions of a generally binding collective agreement. There is a specific board to determine which collective agreements shall be considered generally binding.

conditions at the workplace and of compliance with legislation binding upon employers. Market surveillance includes monitoring of the compliance with legislation on products on the market.

Workplace monitoring

The occupational safety and health divisions at the Regional State Administrative Agencies, i.e. the regional OSH authorities, are responsible for monitoring compliance with OSH legislation. OSH inspectors are entitled to access to workplaces to conduct workplace inspections. They are also entitled to receive the information and reports necessary for the inspection from the employer. Inspection visits to a workplace are announced in advance unless a surprise inspection is deemed necessary for monitoring purposes. An inspection report is prepared for each inspection.

Minor deficiencies are mentioned in the OSH inspector's report, with advice on how to correct them. For major deficiencies, the inspector issues an improvement notice and monitors its implementation. If necessary, the OSH authority may issue a binding decision and impose a conditional fine. In case of a life-threatening situation, the inspector may stop work immediately or issue a prohibition notice banning the use of the dangerous machine, work equipment, technical device or work practice.

A decision made by an OSH authority may be appealed to the relevant Administrative Court. If an OSH inspection has not been conducted in compliance with the law, a written complaint may be submitted to the relevant OSH division.

If the OSH authorities suspect that an employment offence punishable under the Criminal Code has been committed at a workplace within their domain, they must notify the police. Consideration of charges will be undertaken by a public prosecutor. The OSH authority must be heard as an expert witness during the pre-trial investigation and the consideration of charges, and also at the oral hearing in court.

Compliance with collective agreements is monitored by the relevant social partners. The OSH authorities monitor compliance by non-organised employers with generally binding collective agreements. In monitoring compliance with generally binding collective agreements, the OSH authorities cooperate

with those employers' and employees' organisations that are parties to those agreements.

OSH enforcement cooperation between EU Member States is undertaken in the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC) and its working groups. This cooperation consists of European monitoring projects, meetings and thematic days, the OSH information exchange network (SLIC-KSS) and inspector exchange.

Market surveillance

The Department for Occupational Safety and Health at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health takes decisions required for market surveillance. The purpose of these decisions is to prohibit or restrict market access by dangerous products. Generally, such decisions must be communicated to the European Commission and other EU Member States. The investigations required for taking such a decision are generally conducted by the OSH divisions at Regional State Administrative Agencies, based on information gained from workplace monitoring. Decisions taken by the Ministry may be appealed to the Supreme Administrative Court.

Special legislation

Legislation and authority action concerning technological safety are closely connected to OSH. The Occupational Safety and Health Act is a general Act whose provisions are further specified by special Acts. Special legislation exists for instance for electrical safety, radiation safety, pressure vessels, lifts and chemicals. The relevant special authorities monitor compliance with this legislation.



3 Cooperation is an integral part of occupational safety and health

OSH cooperation at the workplace is mostly governed by the relevant agreements between social partners. However, the Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health at Workplaces contains provisions to be observed in the absence of such an agreement. The Act also specifies in which matters the law may not be deviated from by agreement. The following may not be agreed upon:

- restriction of the access of the OSH representative to information or his/her right to stop work that is dangerous,
- restriction of the protection against dismissal of the OSH representative.

The OSH representative represents the employees in OSH cooperation. The law requires that if a workplace has 10 or more employees, an OSH representative must be elected by personnel. The OSH representative is entitled to receive training for his/her duties and to be relieved of other work duties as required for carrying out the duties of an OSH representative. The OSH representative is entitled to receive the information relevant for the carrying out of his/her duties from the employer. The OSH representative is also entitled to stop dangerous work undertaken by employees he/she represents. The employer's representative in this cooperation is the OSH manager, assuming the employer in person does not handle these duties.

OSH cooperation involves any and all work-related matters that affect employee safety and health. Matters involving only one employee are discussed by the employee and his/her supervisor, but the OSH representative is entitled to participate in the discussion. Matters involving more than one employee are discussed by the OSH committee, which includes OSH representatives and other employee representatives and members appointed by the employer.

The Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health at Workplaces only provides for cooperation relating to OSH. Other personnel participation systems are provided for in other Acts, such as the Act on Co-determination in Enterprises.

4 The Ministry directs OSH administration

The OSH administration and its duties are provided for in the Act on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. In Finland, the OSH administration consists of the Department for Occupational Safety and Health at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the occupational safety and health divisions at the Regional State Administrative Agencies. The Ministry directs the OSH administration, develops OSH practices and prepares legislation. The OSH authorities monitor compliance with legislation and regulations. The OSH authorities also give advice and guidance. The OSH administration acts independently in its enforcement duties. Funds for the OSH authorities are allocated in the central government budget annually.

The OSH administration manages regional guidance and supervision of OSH under the management of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The occupational safety and health divisions at the Regional State Administrative Agencies are subordinate to the Ministry; there are five of these. Annual performance targets are agreed in performance negotiations between the Ministry and the divisions.

The occupational safety and health divisions at the Regional State Administrative Agencies are responsible for the development and monitoring of working conditions in their respective regions. The director of the division ensures that these duties are executed so as to attain the agreed performance targets.

The OSH administration employs some 540 civil servants. There are about 80 posts at the Department for Occupational Safety and Health of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and about 460 posts in the occupational safety and health divisions of the Regional State Administrative Agencies. The OSH authorities monitor some 223,000 workplaces and conduct more than 20,000 inspections annually.

Development, networking and programmes

Measures to improve working conditions and wellbeing at work are principally undertaken at workplaces and are supported by research, training, networking, distribution of information and, for instance, the occupational safety efforts of insurance companies. Many national, regional and local bodies contribute to the promotion of OSH aims. In Finland, workplace development is undertaken in cooperation between permanent organisations and processes and various programmes, forums and projects. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health plays an important role in the upkeep and improvement of this network. The Ministry has several avenues available for development. The most important of these are the Wellbeing at Work Forum, the Research and Development functions of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and projects such as the MASTO project aimed at reducing disability caused by depression.

The OSH administration works closely with employer and employee organisations. The tripartite Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health was set up at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to discuss issues of principle in OSH. Each occupational safety and health division at the Regional State Administration Agencies has a similar tripartite OSH committee. At every office of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health there is an advisory committee whose members represent the OSH authorities, the social welfare and health care authorities, the key labour market and entrepreneurs' organisations, local businesses and residents, and other major organisations and communities. As of the beginning of 2010, the advisory committees have been tasked with monitoring changes in regional business structure and working life and to prepare initiatives and proposals for measures to promote OSH and wellbeing at work. Advisory committees also serve as regional networks to promote occupational health and coping at work and to contribute to extending working careers.

National programmes and networked cooperation have been and continue to be implemented in Finland to develop working life and wellbeing at work, involving various ministries, social partners and other parties in close cooperation.

Major development measures since 1996 include:

- National Workplace Development Programme (Tyke/Tykes programme, Tyke funding) since 1996
- National Programme on Ageing Workers 1998–2002
- Coping at work, study and action programme 2000–2003
- Occupational accident programme 2001–2005
- National action plan on extending working life, wellbeing at work and rehabilitation (Veto Programme) 2003–2007
- Wellbeing at Work Forum since 2008
- Project to Reduce Depression-Related Work Ability (Masto) since 2008

The tripartite principle

The tripartite principle promoted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) is a key principle in the Finnish OSH administration. The tripartite principle means that the planning, approval and implementation of any measures concerning OSH always involves not only the government but also employers' and employees' representatives. This ensures that the measures introduced are efficient and practical.

The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes) encourages Finnish workplaces to develop workplace innovations and productivity and to improve the quality of working life. The Tyke funding of Tekes follows on from the National Workplace Development Programme (Tykes). The Wellbeing at Work Forum launched by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health aims to coordinate the practices of organisations that promote wellbeing at work and to disseminate best practices with the aim of creating networking and partnerships to improve the effectiveness and synergy benefits of existing functions.

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, which is located in Bilbao in Spain, plays a significant role in OSH cooperation at the European level, processing and disseminating OSH information. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is the national coordinating body in Finland, acting together with the various bodies represented on the Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health.

Finnish employers and employees are organised to a high degree. The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) represents private employers. Employees are represented by the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), the Confederation of Salaried Employees (STTK) and the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava). The Federation of Finnish Enterprises represents both self-employed entrepreneurs and businesses with employees. Some 69% of the labour force are unionised, a very high percentage compared with many other countries.

5 Regional OSH authorities guide and supervise

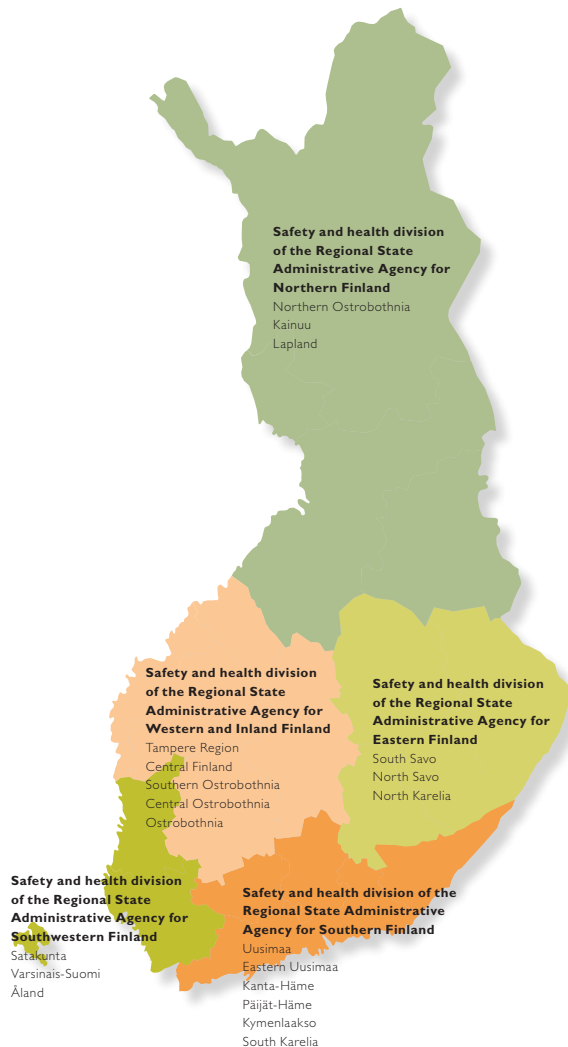
The occupational safety and health divisions at Regional State Administrative Agencies monitor compliance with OSH legislation at workplaces. They also provide information and guidance on good OSH practices. The purpose of official monitoring and guidance is to help workplaces become more self-reliant in evaluating their working conditions and in taking action to improve them.

The OSH authorities monitor compliance with more than 100 items of legislation. The most important of these are the Occupational Safety and Health Act and the Decrees based upon it, the Working Hours Act, the Annual Holidays Act, the Employment Contracts Act, the Occupational Health Care Act and the Young Workers' Protection Act. The OSH authorities also investigate serious occupational accidents and severe cases of occupational disease. Both employers and employees can request advice and workplace inspections from the OSH authorities.

The OSH inspector is entitled to access to every workplace and other monitored site and to see all the documentation relevant for OSH monitoring. If necessary, the OSH authority can require the employer to correct deficiencies in OSH observed at the workplace. OSH inspectors are bound by confidentiality in respect of business secrets, employee health data and requests for inspections sent from the workplace.

OSH monitoring focuses on problem sectors, based on observations made by the authorities and on information received from other sources. Workplaces may themselves request an inspection by the OSH authorities. OSH inspectors also provide consultation by phone. Phone calls to OSH inspectors are commonly about employment contracts, payment of wages, termination, working hours and overtime, privacy protection in working life, annual holidays and collective agreements.

Five occupational safety and health divisions



The national OSH Exhibition, opened in 1909, is located in Tampere. It showcases OSH information in an illustrative and innovative way. The Exhibition has almost 10,000 visitors each year. Presenting a cross-section of OSH, OSH administration and the relevant legislation, the Exhibition also illustrates key focus areas in the OSH administration. National workplace development projects, campaigns of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, good practices in OSH, personal protective equipment and audiovisual OSH materials are also featured. The OSH Exhibition participates in numerous trade fairs and exhibitions across Finland, and abroad too on occasion.

6 OSH cooperation involves a number of actors

The most important actors in OSH are at each workplace. This applies equally to voluntary workplace development and statutory OSH. The workplace management and the line organisation are of key importance. Cooperation between the employer and employees is a central dimension of OSH. OSH in the workplace works best when employer and employees contribute to it together.

The OSH administration and other authorities support OSH and measures to improve it. These authorities include the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira) and the National Radiation Safety Authority (STUK) in the administrative sector of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and in other administrative sectors the Safety Technology Authority (Tukes), the Finnish Consumer Agency and the Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi).

Finnish Institute of Occupational Health

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health is a multi-disciplinary expert and research body that promotes healthy and safe work and the wellbeing of employees. The Institute offers solutions for the needs of its customers and of working life in the areas of research, training, expert services and information distribution. The Institute has offices at six locations: Helsinki, Kuopio, Lappeenranta, Oulu, Tampere and Turku. Its head office is in Helsinki. Additional information: www.ttl.fi

Finnish Work Environment Fund

The Finnish Work Environment Fund provides funding for research, development and publicity that improves working conditions and the safety and productivity of workplace communities. The Fund contributes to research, development and publicity projects, awards personal grants and awards development grants to workplace communities. The Fund has a statutory duty to finance the Centre for Occupational Safety. The Fund receives funding from the statutory accident insurance contributions paid by employers. It is supervised by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Finnish Work Environment Fund and the Centre for Occupational Safety publish the Telma newsletter, which focuses on workplace development. Additional information: www.tsr.fi

Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions

The Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions coordinates the statutory accident insurance. It has a broad remit, including development of the statutory accident insurance and its implementation system and promotion of cooperation between the various parties involved and the system, and also improvement of the coherence of the compensation system. The Federation is a liaison organisation for insurance companies, compiles statistics on occupational accidents and occupational diseases together with their causes and consequences, and helps prevent occupational accidents and diseases. The Federation's duties also include paying compensation for occupational accidents in cases where the work being done is not subject to insurance. Additional information: www.tvl.fi

Centre for Occupational Safety

The Centre for Occupational Safety aims to improve occupational safety, wellbeing at work, effectiveness, the work of supervisors and cooperation in workplace communities. Its actions involve OSH and occupational health care personnel, and also supervisors and shop stewards. Its products and services are constantly being developed in cooperation with clients and interest groups. The Centre offers workplace communities training, information, materials and development services, and maintains a register of OSH personnel. It receives most of its funding from accident insurance contributions paid by employers, through the Finnish Work Environment Fund. The Centre is administered by the social partners.

Additional information: www.ttk.fi

VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland

VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland is an impartial expert organisation that provides high-quality research, technology and innovation services for its customers. In the area of risks, security and reliability of use, VTT offers customers in the public and private sectors a wide range of services and information to support decision-making. VTT's areas of expertise include fire, transport, process and chemical safety, information security, and risk management in industrial and logistics systems. VTT also studies other phenomena related to safety and reliability of use, such as corrosion and wear and tear.

Additional information: www.vtt.fi

Finnish Standards Association (SFS)

The Finnish Standards Association (SFS) is the central body for standardisation in Finland. Its membership includes the central government and professional, commercial and industrial organisations. The SFS guides and coordinates national standardisation and approves national SFS standards. It also manages the Nordic and European environmental label systems for products and services.

Additional information: www.sfs.fi



7 Occupational health care protects and promotes health

The purpose of occupational health care is to ensure healthy and safe work and workplaces, and to maintain the working capacity and health of employees. Employers must by law provide and pay for preventive occupational health care for their employees. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Regional State Administrative Agencies and the OSH authorities monitor compliance with occupational health care legislation. The Social Insurance Institution compensates employers with 60% of the costs of statutory occupational health care.

Occupational health care professionals conduct workplace surveys and risk assessments and monitor the health of employees. Occupational health care physicians and nurses monitor coping at work for instance through regular check-ups. Occupational health care also participates in activities to promote work ability at workplaces.

In addition to statutory occupational health care, employers may provide other medical and health care services for employees. The Social Insurance Institution compensates employers with 50% of the costs of occupational health care.

Employers may outsource occupational health care services from a health centre, organise the services themselves or in cooperation with other employers, or outsource the services from a private health care service provider (medical centre). In 2007, 61% of businesses and 32% of employees used the occupational health care services of municipal health centres. By contrast, 36% of businesses and 48% of employees used the services of private medical centres. In 2007, 87% of the employed labour force was covered by occupational health care.

Occupational health care is developed under the tripartite principle as a component of the general social welfare and health care policy. The strategic policies of occupational health care are:

- maintaining and promoting health and work ability,
- improving the quality of working life, and
- ensuring comprehensive, high-quality occupational health care services.

These policies are conducive towards wellbeing at work, coping at work and equality between women and men.

8 Activities to promote work ability

Activities to maintain work ability constitute an important form of promoting wellbeing at work. Maintenance of work ability (MWA) activities include promoting individual health and resources, professional competence, work and workplace improvement, and helping the workplace community and the work organisation run more smoothly. The aim is to balance human resources with the requirements of the work. MWA activities require close cooperation between supervisors, employees and the workplace community. Occupational health care services and the OSH organisation support the maintenance and improvement of work ability.

9 International connections

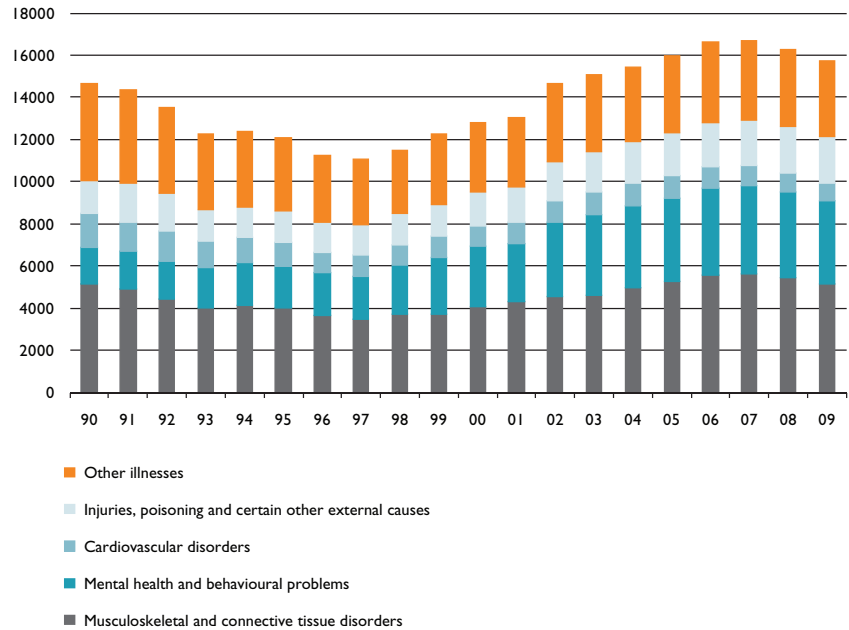
The International Labour Organization (ILO) has had a major impact on OSH development in Finland. Finland is near the top of the league in the number of ILO Conventions ratified. Finland has also supported the ILO's efforts to improve working conditions worldwide.

OSH is one of the most important and advanced areas of the current social policy of the European Union. EU bodies enact legislation and cooperate with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work and with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. This cooperation involves publicity, guidance and promotion regarding a safe and healthy work environment. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, as the national coordination centre of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, Finland aims to make an active contribution to the improvement of OSH in Finland and throughout the EU. (European Union, 1995–2010)

Nordic OSH cooperation is lively and diverse. The Nordic countries signed a work environment agreement in 1989. Following European integration, the focus of this cooperation has shifted in recent decades. Governed by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the cooperation is structured through a working life cooperation programme where work environment and labour law are key areas. The programme emphasises the importance of globalisation in OSH development and sets targets for work environment cooperation. The Council of Ministers has permanent bodies to manage the cooperation. In addition to multilateral cooperation, the Finnish authorities engage in bilateral cooperation with OSH authorities in several countries.

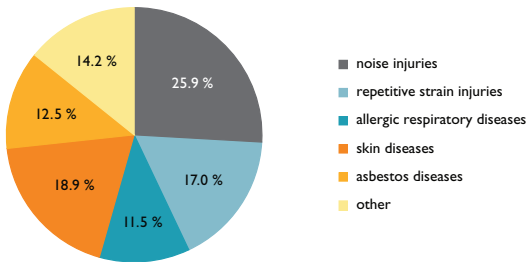
10 Statistics

Figure 1. Sickness allowance days compensated, by illness, 1990–2009.



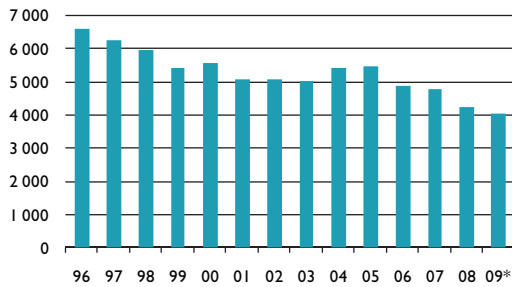
Source: *Sickness insurance and family benefit statistics, KELA*

Figure 2. Number of cases of occupational diseases, by illness group, 2007.



Source: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, register of occupational diseases.

Figure 3. Diagnosed and suspected cases of occupational diseases among wage earners, 1996–2009.

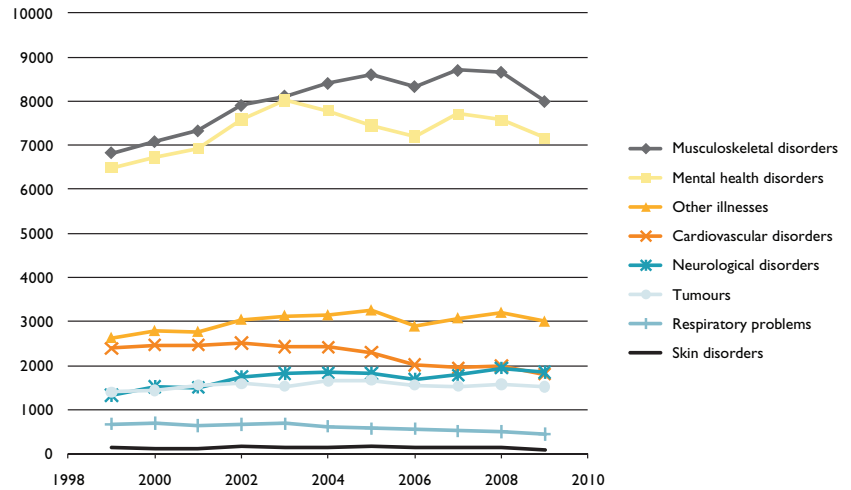


Source: Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions

* Advance data

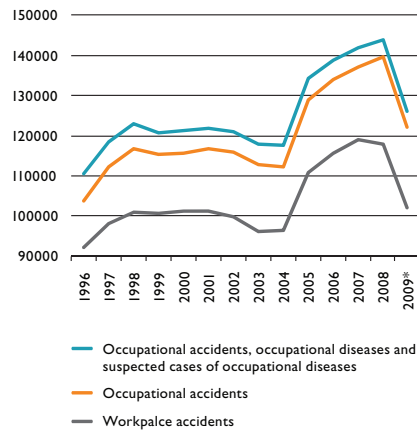
Statistical change since 2005

Figure 4. Number of employees retiring on a disability pension, by illness, 1999–2009.



Source: Earnings-related pension recipients in Finland 1999–2009, Finnish Centre for Pensions, Local Government Pensions Institution, State Treasury.

Figure 5. Workplace accidents and occupational diseases among wage earners, 1996–2009.

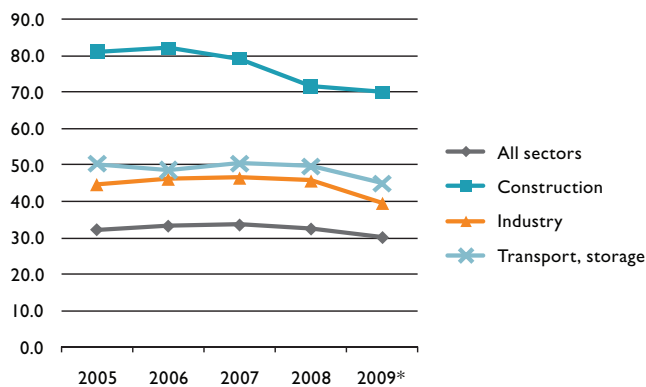


Source: Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions

* Advance data

Statistical change since 2005

Figure 6. Incidence of workplace accidents among wage earners in principal sectors, 2005–2009.

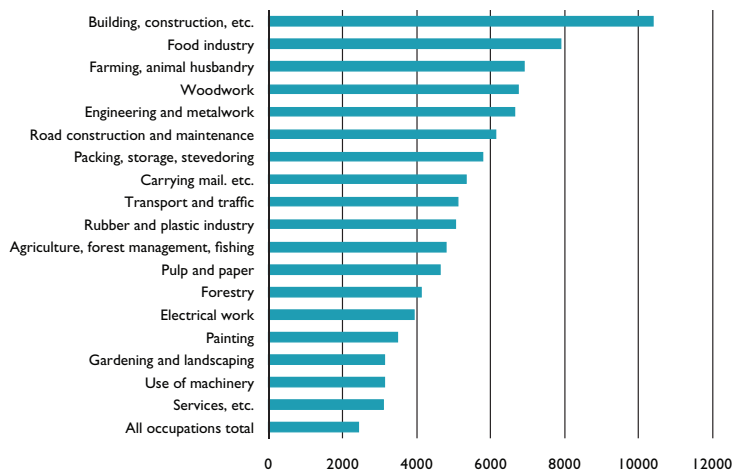


Source: Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions

* Advance data

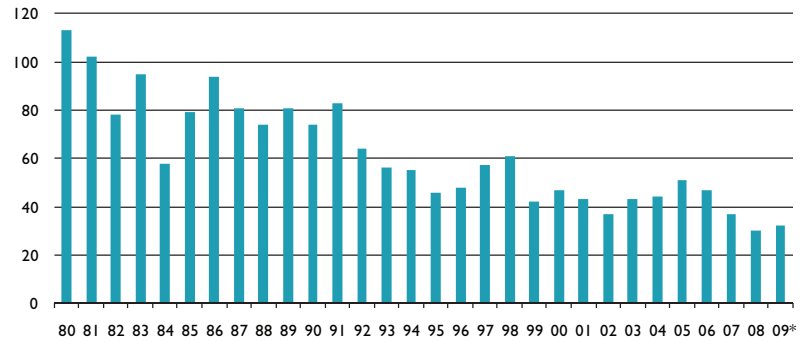
Statistical change since 2005

Figure 7. Workplace accidents among wage earners, by occupation, 2008.



Source: Statistics Finland

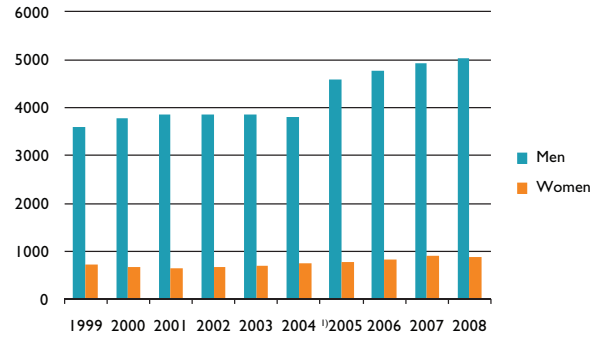
Figure 8. Fatal workplace accidents among wage earners, 1980–2009.



Source: Statistics Finland

* advance data (Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions)

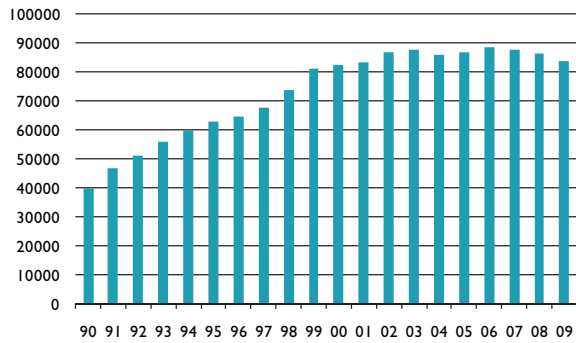
Figure 9. Workplace accidents among entrepreneurs, 1999–2008.



Source: Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions

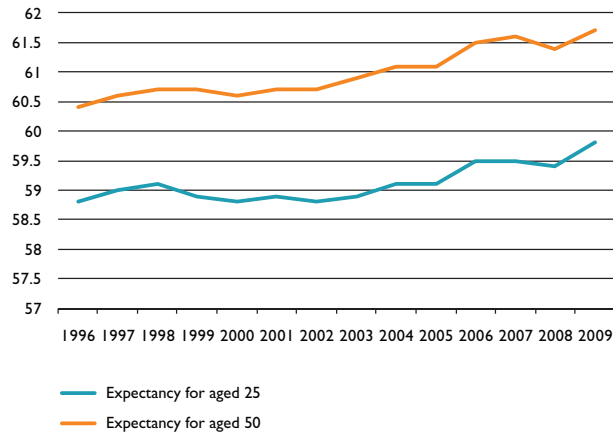
1) Statistical change since 2005

Figure 10. Recipients of rehabilitation services from the Social Insurance Institution, 1990–2009.



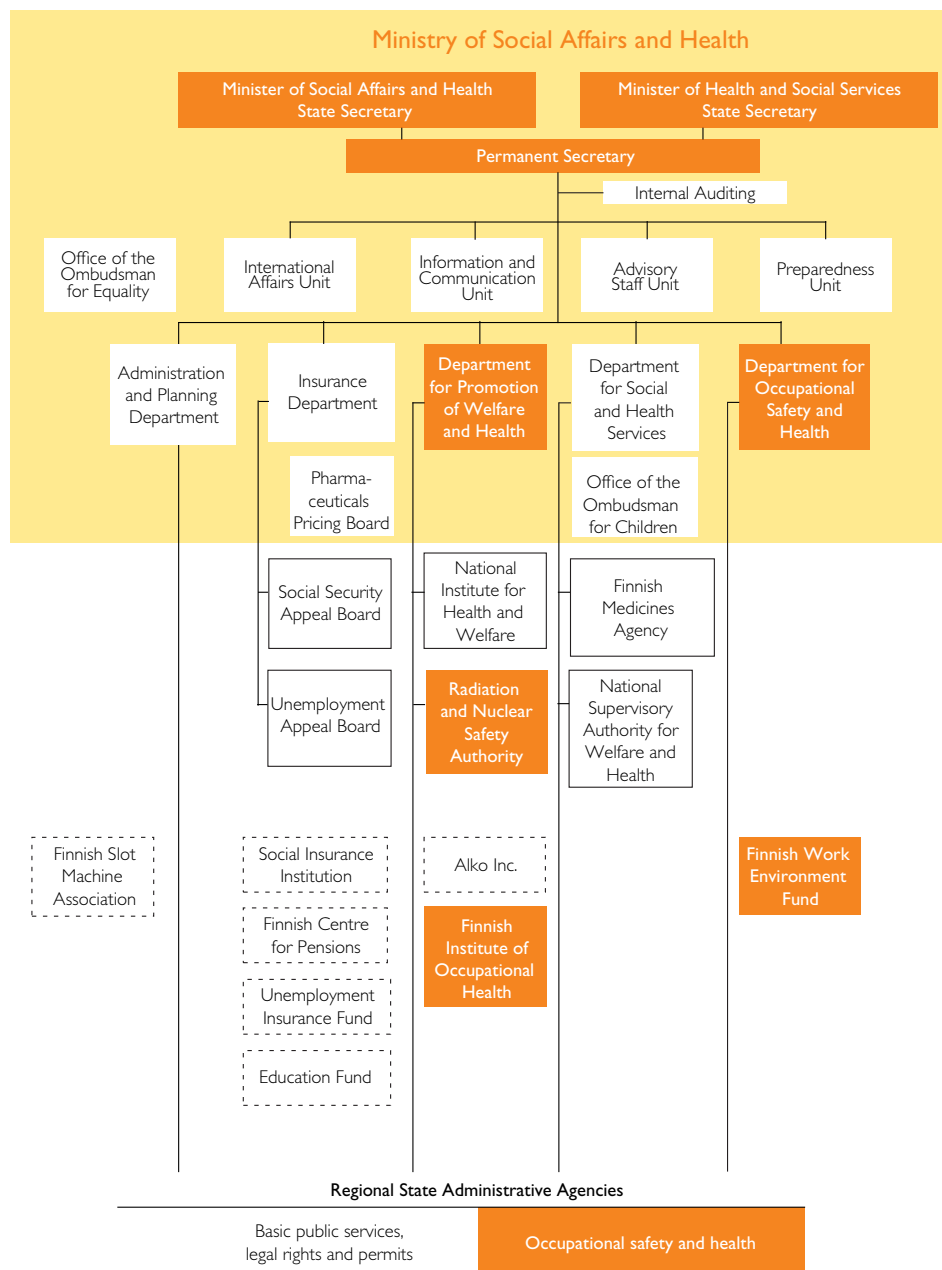
Source: Social Insurance Institution (Kela).

Figure 11. Retirement age expectancy for employees aged 25 and 50, 1996–2009.



Source: Finnish Centre for Pensions

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH AND RELATED NATIONAL AUTHORITIES 2010



Finnish labour market in a nutshell

- Finland's population was about 5.3 million in 2008. The life expectancy was 81.5 years for men and 87 for women, prognosed for 2050.
- The GNP was EUR 184.7 billion in 2008, or about EUR 34,769 per capita.
- The labour force comprised some 2.7 million Finns in 2008, of whom 2.5 million were employed. Of these, about 87% were wage earners and 3% were self-employed entrepreneurs and their family members.
- The employed labour force consisted of 1,216,000 women and 1,315,000 men. The employment rate for women and men aged 15 to 64 was 67%. In 2008, an average of 338,000 people, or 13.3% of the employed labour force, had part-time jobs. More than two thirds of these were women.
- In 2008 on average, 74% of the employed labour force was employed in the private sector; 20% in local government and 6% in central government. Services, the forest industry and the technology industry were the principal production sectors in Finland in 2008. The number of employees was 815,000 in public, other social and personal services; 644,000 in industry and construction; 314,000 in trade; 367,000 in financing, insurance and business services; 174,000 in transport, storage and telecommunications; and 115,000 in agriculture, game, forestry and fishing.

- In 2008, 86,320 persons used rehabilitation services, 66% of them suffering from musculoskeletal disorders or mental health problems. (Figure 10)
- The labour force is ageing. Persons over the age of 55 accounted for 18% of the labour force. The retirement age expectancy in 2008 was 59.4 years. (Figure 11)
- There were 320,952 businesses in Finland in 2008, about 99% of them small businesses employing fewer than 50 people.

(Source: Statistics Finland 2009, Ministry of Employment and the Economy Employment Report 2008, Working conditions survey 2008 and Entrepreneurship survey 2009)