

FINLAND. INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Title of the inspection activities: **Chemical factors**

Duration of the inspection activities: **1.3.2020 – 31.12.2023**

Aim of the inspection activities: **At workplaces, employees are exposed to chemical exposures that are harmful to your health. We monitor, guide and instruct workplaces so that occupational diseases and work-related diseases caused by harmful exposure are reduced. The project was implemented as workplace inspections. If necessary, the project was also be implemented as hybrid inspections (meeting via Teams and a separate workplace tour). In addition, the project included communicating about chemical factors through other channels. The goal described above was reached by ensuring, in particular, the preparation of a risk assessment of chemical factors and the legal implementation of the protection measures identified and defined therein.**

Scope of the inspection activities: **Matters covered by the inspection:**

- **workplace survey of occupational health care (for chemical agents)**
- **list of chemicals**
- **Safety data sheets**
- **risk assessment of chemical factors (measures)**
- **health checks in jobs that pose a special risk of getting sick**
- **ASA notification (obligation to notify and implementation based on occupational health care workplace survey and risk assessment of chemical agents)**
- **teaching and guidance**
- **using personal protective equipment (workplace tour)**
- **keeping personal protective equipment (workplace tour)**
- **labelling of chemicals (workplace tour)**
- **issues raised by the workplace**

Sector covered by inspections: **Inspections were targeted at workplaces and educational institutions as well as other workplaces where there is a possibility of exposure to chemical agents. In 2023, inspections were also targeted at companies on the construction side, especially exposure to epoxy.**

The number of establishments inspected in the framework of the activities: **2 323 establishments were inspected. A total of 2 709 inspections were carried out.**

The number of labour inspectors involved in implementing the inspection activities: **69 inspectors**

The number of persons involved in supervising the implementation of the inspection activities (including development of inspection documents and summarizing results of inspections): **7 persons**

Short summary of the outcome of the inspection activities: **Through 7 different projects, enforcement was targeted at workplaces where employees could be exposed to chemical agents. The inspections had a significant impact on communicating information related to the management of the risk of cancer to workplaces. In addition, the obligations imposed influenced workplace procedures by improving the risk management of chemical agents and the planning and implementation of dust management, and by making the use of personal protective equipment more efficient. More than 1,000 inspections were carried out in the Chemical agents project (the so-called basic project). The state of risk analysis and risk assessment of chemical agents has been monitored in more detail in this monitoring for two years in order to assess the long-term effectiveness of the monitoring. When they are in order, it is estimated to indicate that employees are not exposed to chemical agents in their work that endanger their health as the employer has paid attention to the investigation of the risks of chemical agents and risk assessment, thereby attempting to improve the working conditions of employees. In about one third of the enforcement carried out, the employer has carried out a risk analysis and risk assessment of chemical agents. Around one fifth did not carry out risk assessments in writing. And about half of the analyses and assessments of the risks of chemical agents have had different deficiencies, such as that not all exposure agents have been taken into account, implementation is still under way, assessment of health significance has not been carried out, or the magnitude or properties of protective equipment specified in the safety data sheet have not been taken into account. Two years is too short a time to assess a possible change, but in the longer term, the state of analysis and risk assessment of chemical agents is estimated to describe the effectiveness of enforcement.**

Another factor in assessing the effectiveness of enforcement in the project on chemical agents (so-called basic control) was inspections of sites that had previously received written advice on the risk assessment and risk assessment of chemical agents during the framework period. These inspections (around 140 inspections) revealed that some employers had taken significant improvements to reduce workers' exposure, but some had not followed the guidelines we issued after the inspection on the risk assessment of chemical agents. In the light of this information, follow-up inspections will continue to be needed to ensure that workplaces comply with our obligations and thus reduce employees' exposure.

No.	question	yes/no	comment
Inspection activity			
A. Selecting priority areas for inspection			
1.	What sources of information did you use in selecting the priority area for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inspectorate's own database of occupational diseases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> proposals of other regulatory institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rescue department (notices on supervision) - Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (permits, inspections) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASA notification (notification on use of carcinogenic substances) - KemiDigi (Chemical data service): companies' chemical data https://www.kemidigi.fi/
2.	What was the main reason for selecting the inspection priority area?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> high rates of inability to work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) Occupational diseases and work related illnesses caused by chemicals also if they do not cause absences.
3.	What was defined as priority area?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a particular hazard(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a particular hazard (a group of hazards) in a given sector
4.	What was the predominant aim of workplace inspections?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to provide the inspected entities with information on how to ensure compliance with legal requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to achieve a measurable effect, e.g. in the form of reduced accident rate, morbidity rate, etc.
5.	How did you determine the number of entities to be inspected?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) According to the plan, approximately one third of the resources used for monitoring

			working conditions will be allocated to the monitoring of chemical agents.
6.	What was taken into consideration when determining the number of inspections to be carried out by individual field offices (regions):		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) Regional characteristics (such as the use of hazardous chemical agents) and the number of inspectors of chemical agents in the area were taken into account in the planning.
7.	Were IT tools used to identify the priority area in the described inspection campaign?	YES	A brief description of IT tools - We use power BI, where we have ASA data (notification on use of carcinogenic substances). Power BI allows us to view all items for which an ASA notification has been made in the map view. - KemiDigi (Chemical data service): companies' chemical data https://www.kemidigi.fi/
B. Determining the time span of inspection activities			
9.	How was the breakdown of inspections planned? Were the inspections carried out:		
a)	evenly throughout the whole period of the planned activities	YES	
b)	as a series of intensified inspections in predetermined short periods of time	NO	
10.	What was the average duration of a workplace visit conducted in the framework of the programme implementation (the time it took to complete inspection activities at an individual establishment)?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> within one day, no longer than 2 hours;
11.	What was the average duration of the activities carried out in the office of the labour inspectorate (excluding		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> within one day, no longer than 2 hours;

	the penal and administrative sanctions)?		
C. Selecting establishments for inspection.			
12.	What criteria were used when selecting establishments for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the number of workers employed in conditions specifically relating to the subject of the campaign <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> personal knowledge of labour inspectors who supervise particular workplaces (groups of workplaces) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sectoral criterion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reported occupational diseases - obligations previously imposed by inspectors - uninspected workplaces where chemicals are used (information from KemiDigi or knowledge based on sector)
13.	What sources of information were used when selecting establishments for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inspectorate's own database <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> databases of other regulatory institutions (which ones?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASA notification (notification on use of carcinogenic substances) - KemiDigi (Chemical data service) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> labour inspectors' knowledge of workplaces <input type="checkbox"/> business catalogues (yellow pages) and information from mass media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rescue department (notices on supervision) - Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (permits, inspections) - reported occupational diseases

14.	Were IT tools used to select specific inspected entities in the described inspection campaign?		<p>A brief description of IT tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We use power BI, where we have ASA data (notification on use of carcinogenic substances). Power BI allows us to view all items for which an ASA notification has been made in the map view. - KemiDigi (Chemical data service): companies' chemical data https://www.kemidigi.fi/
D. Provision of staff for carrying out inspections			
15.	What group of inspectors was involved in the inspection activities?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a select team of inspectors was involved based on their education and experience: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> between 10% and 30% of the staff
16.	How were inspectors prepared for the inspection activities (additional training)?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> additional training was provided by the same person (the same team) for all labour inspectors involved in the campaign;
17.	Were IT tools used to prepare labour inspectors to carry out activities within the described inspection campaign?	YES	<p>A brief description of IT tools</p> <p>Inspectors' training was carried out by Teams.</p> <p>- what scope of knowledge and/or skills did labour inspectors acquire using the indicated IT tools?</p> <p>Guidelines for inspection activities were issued by Teams</p>
18.	What materials were at the inspectors' disposal during the activities?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> description of the inspection activities' objectives; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> description of the ways in which to implement the activities (tasks to be completed); <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> checklists; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> specialist, issue-related materials (applied technologies, machinery, equipment and tools, existing hazards and legal provisions);

			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> examples of reactive actions to be taken by inspectors upon identification of typical cases of non-compliance; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify). Model obligations in the OSH authority's own enforcement database.
19.	Did labour inspectors use IT tools when carrying out activities within the described inspection campaign?	YES	A brief description of IT tools: Inspectorate's own database. - IT tools were used : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for labour inspector's preparation for an inspection at a specific inspected entity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> when performing inspection activities during the inspection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> when summarizing and documenting the results of the inspection in a specific inspected entity - how did they support the labour inspector in (please provide a short description): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - preparation for an inspection? Selection of the object of inspection and preliminary information about the workplace and previous supervision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - performing inspection activities? Recording of observations and writing of the inspection report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - summarizing and documenting the results of the inspection? Data obtained from the system was analysed.
E. Involvement of other regulators, institutions, authorities for labour protection and social partners in the implementation process.			
20.	Can other regulators, institutions, authorities for labour protection and social partners submit their proposals	YES	- The goals of OSH inspection are discussed with labour market organisations

	of inspection topics to the inspectorate's plan of work?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New legislation is considered when planning the activities - Other authorities can make suggestions on co-operation, but the action taken is considered depending on OSH inspections own goals. Th eco-operation with other authorities is most active regarding foreign workers. - Information gathered by other authorities and organisations is used actively.
21.	Was the inspection activity the result of a proposal submitted by another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner?	YES	Sometimes individual inspections are carried out on the proposal of other authorities.
22.	Was there any cooperation between the labour inspectorate and another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner?	YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (ASA-register) - Rescue department (notices on supervision) - Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (permits, inspections)
23.	At which stage was the cooperation with another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner initiated?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> at the planning stage;
24.	What did the cooperation with another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner involve?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> voluntary provision of information (data) accumulated by another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner – what kind of information was that? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (ASA-register) - Rescue department (notices on supervision)

			- Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (permits, inspections)
25.	Are there any legal requirements obliging other regulators, institutions, authorities or social partners to make their data accessible to the labour inspectorate for inspection needs?	YES	- KemiDigi (Chemical data service) Register of occupational safety and health personnel: data on occupational safety and health personnel - Incomes register (Electronic database of incomes information)
26.	Does the labour inspectorate have direct online access to information and data collected by other bodies, institutions and authorities?	YES	- KemiDigi (Chemical data service) Register of occupational safety and health personnel: data on occupational safety and health personnel - Incomes register (Electronic database of incomes information)
27.	What information obtained in the above manner was used for implementing the inspection campaign?		- KemiDigi (Chemical data service) : target selection and verification of data on individual chemicals - Register of occupational safety and health personnel: data on occupational safety and health personnel - Incomes register (Electronic database of incomes information): ensuring that there are workers in the target
F. Supporting inspection activities with training provided for employers or workers (combining inspection and educational activities)			
28.	Were establishments covered by inspections provided with information or training prior to the commencement of the inspection task ?	NO	

29.	Is the effectiveness of prior information or training activities taken into account when evaluating the results of the inspections?	NO	
30.	Once the inspection activity is completed , are representatives of inspected establishments provided with recommendations and proposed corrective measures – in the form of guidance or training – regarding the identified compliance level in establishments operating in the field covered by inspection?	NO	
G. Monitoring the implementation of inspection activities			
31.	Was the implementation of inspection activities in any way monitored and coordinated?	YES	<p>How many people were involved in monitoring and coordination of the inspection activity?</p> <p>Project group 5 persons Regional supervisors (approx. 7 persons)</p> <p>What was the function of those persons in relation to labour inspectors who implemented the activity (fellow labour inspectors, immediate supervisors, national coordinator at the labour inspectorate's headquarters)?</p> <p>The project group plans the supervision, monitors the obligations imposed, outlines the supervision policy for the matters to be inspected.</p> <p>Regional supervisors monitor the workload of individual inspectors and, if necessary, intervene in deviations from the number of inspections or supervision policies.</p>

32.	What was the scope of monitoring and coordinating actions regarding the inspection activity?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> assistance in solving problems: Teams video conference or Teams communication. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed quantitative plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed qualitative plan (how?) All obligations concerning the risk assessment of chemical agents were discussed in the project group. Good examples of them were drawn up and they were discussed in current affairs reviews. The enforcement policy was specified and harmonised, when written advice are issued and when improvement notices are issued.
33.	Were IT tools used to carry out monitoring and coordination activities as part of the described inspection campaign?	YES	A brief description of IT tools: Inspectorate's own database is used for planning the inspections and to record the findings and inspection reports. The amount and content of the inspections and enforcement can be seen from the data base. - IT tools were used to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> assist labour inspector in solving problems related to inspection carried out within the inspection campaign (how?) Inspectorate's own database has model obligations that essentially support the inspector in writing the inspection report. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed quantitative plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed qualitative plan (how?)

			Additional qualitative data was added into the Inspectorate's own database. (see question 38)
H. Communicating the information about inspection campaign and its results.			
34.	Did you develop any plan to communicate the information about the inspection activities to:		
a)	stakeholders in the sector covered by the inspection activity ?	NO	
b)	the general public?	YES	If so, what information did the communication plan contain? Direct messages to companies, online news, webinar on risk assessment of chemical agents.
35.	What was the scope of information communicated to:		
a)	stakeholders in the sector covered by the inspection activity ?		
b)	the general public?		Main topics: diisocyanatos, risk assessment of chemical agents. In general, the results of enforcement.
36.	How was the information about the inspection activities communicated to stakeholders and the general public?		
I. Evaluating the results of the inspection activities. Evaluation methods and tools.			
37.	How were the results of inspection campaign evaluated?		
a)	based on a checklist	YES	How are the results of inspections evaluated by means of a checklist? The matter was assessed to be in order or not in order.

			With regard to the risk assessment of chemical agents, why the matter was not in order.
38.	How was the information about the effects of inspection campaign obtained (e.g. about the elimination of irregularities, introduction of higher standards)?		
a)	information provided by the employer	YES	<p>If so, what form did the information provided by the employer have?</p> <p>Additional data is gathered on shortcomings in risk assessment of chemical factors (has not been made at all, is not written, in not sufficient)</p> <p>Was the information provided by employers randomly verified by labour inspectors?</p> <p>Yes, inspector saw the risk assessment during the inspection.</p>
b)	information provided by the labour inspector who conducted the next inspection at the workplace	YES	<p>If so, what form did the information provided by the inspector have?</p> <p>Follow-up inspections were made in 2023 to evaluate if the inspections had acted based on the inspections. Data was gathered on the type of action taken.</p> <p>What is the ratio of information provided by the labour inspector who conducted the next inspection at the workplace to the overall pool of information about the effects of inspections?</p> <p>.....</p>
39.	What performance indicators were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the inspection campaign?		<p>Please list and briefly describe the indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The risk assessment of chemical factors is up to date which indicates that employees are not exposed to chemical factors that endanger their health in their work.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workplaces implement measures to eliminate or reduce harm caused by chemical agents, which indicates that employees are not exposed to chemical agents in their work that endanger their health.
40.	Were IT tools used to assess the effectiveness of the inspection campaign?	YES	<p>If so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - please provide a brief description of IT tools: Inspectorate's own database includes all information on inspections (items checked, enforcement, additional information gathered) - IT tools were used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> provide compilations of data on the basis of which the inspection campaign was assessed
41.	How were the project effects evaluated?		
a)	Was any final summary evaluation of the inspection task (inspection campaign) made?	YES	<p>If so, what was the scope of such evaluation?</p> <p>The annual report on occupational safety and health enforcement also contained a summary of this project.</p> <p>No separate report has been prepared on the project.</p>
b)	Were partial assessments made during the inspection activity?	YES	<p>If so, what was the frequency and scope of such assessments?</p> <p>The project group's meetings have assessed the monitoring project and it has been discussed with all inspectors. In addition, the project group has dealt with enforcement matters approximately once a month (not every time the actual evaluation was carried out).</p>

c)	Did you prepare a formal document with evaluation of the inspection activity after its completion?	NO	
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