

THE NETHERLANDS. INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Title of the inspection activities: **Sectoral approach to occupational health and safety**

Duration of the inspection activities: **since 2020 – ongoing**

Aim of the inspection activities: **More employers have the legally required risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E) in place. Contribution to prevention of accidents and illness caused by work.**

Scope of the inspection activities: **Every year, accidents occur in the workplace or people become ill because of their work. For example through exposure to hazardous substances or physical strain. A good health and safety system reduces the risk of accidents and health complaints. An important part of the health and safety system is the legally required risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E). This is a tool to recognise and control occupational risks. An up-to-date, dynamic RI&E ensures that an employer knows the risks in his company and can take appropriate measures to protect employees. This obligation is still unknown to many employers. To change that, the Netherlands Labour Authority informs employers about this legal obligation and carries out inspections. The approach consisted of 5 steps:**

- 1) Online information campaigns (Sponsored LinkedIn advertising) and information provision in collaboration with employer organisations about the importance of health and safety care and the legally required documents/risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E).**
- 2) A letter with the announcement on the occupational health and safety project and information about the legally required documents/risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E) was send to a preselected target group of employers (of small enterprises) within a certain sector. The content of the letter was developed with the help of behavioural experts to increase its impact.**
- 3) After a few weeks a second letter was send to a more specific group of employers within the specific target group who had received the earlier announcement letter, with the request to provide the legally required documents/risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E) digitally. They could upload the documents on our website. This letter was also developed with the help of behavioural experts to increase its impact.**
- 4) Inspectors assessed the submitted documents/ risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E).**
- 5) Inspectors visit employers where document quality is insufficient**

Sector covered by inspections: **Multiple sectors, including**

- garages (2020)**
- wood processing industry (2021)**
- paper industry (2021)**

- construction materials industry (2021)
- computing industry (2021)
- landscaping industry (2021)
- furniture industry (2022)
- glass cleaning (2022)
- horeca sector (2023)
- health care (2023)
- insulation companies (2024)

The number of establishments inspected in the framework of the activities: **over 14.000**

The number of labour inspectors involved in implementing the inspection activities: **during the program period 8 teams over the country have carried out inspections. Approximately 130 inspectors.**

The number of persons involved in supervising the implementation of the inspection activities (including development of inspection documents and summarizing results of inspections): **If only restricted to supervision, this would be approximately 5 persons.**

Recently we decided to delegate supervising the implementation of inspection activities for new projects to the 8 regional teams. They are more closely involved in the total workflow and caseload of the participating inspectors. Because of this the national coordination can be concentrated in a smaller team, which has the overall responsibility for decision making, outcome, communication etc.

Short summary of the outcome of the inspection activities: **The number of employers with the legally required risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E) increases significantly through this approach. For example, only 30% of small entrepreneurs in the construction materials industry had a proper RI&E at the start of the project. In the computing industry it was 21% and in the landscaping industry 22%. After the intervention project, the percentage was 98% in all three sectors.**

More in general for all the approached sectors the level of compliance was raised up an average of 90%.

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 workplace accidents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inspectorate's own database of occupational diseases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLIC recommendations (which ones?) More emphasis in prevention and societal effect <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) A variety of policy-papers, (scientific) articles, literature emphasizing the importance of prevention such as EU-OSHA, Vision Zero, Dutch National Policy Arbovisie 2040
2.	What was the main reason for selecting the inspection priority area?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> high rates of workplace accidents, including fatal and serious accidents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> high morbidity rates of occupational diseases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) Statistics on low rate of compliance concerning risk assessment and evaluation, especially in small enterprises
3.	What was defined as priority area?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a particular sector(s) of economy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> incompliance with legal requirements concerning labour relations/working conditions
4.	What was the predominant aim of workplace inspections?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to provide the inspected entities with information on legal requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to enforce compliance with the law in the inspected entities

5.	How did you determine the number of entities to be inspected?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the percentage of all registered entities where the problem determined as the priority area was expected to surface (range: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> over 50 to 75 %; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> over 75 %; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> nearly 100 % of all registered entities) It varies from (sub)sector, depending on the amount of companies (target group) belonging to the (sub) sector.
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"/> the number of inspectors carrying out inspection tasks in a given region; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) risk based preselection
7.	Were IT tools used to identify the priority area in the described inspection campaign?		<p>If so, what data was analysed to determine the priority area? – please indicate the type of data:</p> Combined data on compliance, accidents, illness caused by work – integrated in a specific method called IRA (integrated risk analysis) of the Netherlands Labour Authority.
8.	Were IT tools used to identify the target group of inspected entities in the described inspection campaign?		<p>If so, what data was analysed to determine the target group of inspected entities? – please indicate the type of data:</p> See above (7)
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	NO	
b)	as a series of intensified inspections in predetermined short periods of time	NO	

c)	other way (how?)	YES	We planned approximately 3 sector projects per year, besides the regular work
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, between 2 and 4 hours
11.	What was the average duration of the activities carried out in the office of the labour inspectorate (excluding the penal and administrative sanctions)?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> within one day, no longer than 2 hours; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> within one day, between 2 and 4 hours
C. Selecting establishments for inspection.			
12.	What criteria were used when selecting establishments for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> overall number of workers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sectoral criterion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) We use a risk based selection of sectors and within these sectors companies were selected based on their amount of employees. From our data we saw mostly small companies with less compliance on risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E), in a large variety of sectors.
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 institutions registering economic activity
D. Provision of staff for carrying out inspections			
15.	What group of inspectors was involved in the inspection activities?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (please specify). Nearly all inspectors specialized in OSH and that are participating in the regional teams of the Netherlands Labour Authority

16.	How were inspectors prepared for the inspection activities (additional training)?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (please specify). Inspectors were instructed during kickoff meetings based on a specific project plan and handouts.
18.	What materials were at the inspectors' disposal during the activities?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the rationale of the inspection 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"/> description of the reporting requirements; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> promotional and communication materials for employers;
19.	Did labour inspectors use IT tools when carrying out activities within the described inspection campaign?	YES	<p>A brief description of IT tools:</p> <p>The regular systems and equipment needed for daily work.</p> <p>IT tools were used :</p> <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. <p>They support the labour inspector in summarizing and documenting the results of the inspection.</p> <p>They facilitate the work. Normal IT-programs</p>
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	Which regulators, institutions and authorities for labour protection can submit their proposals?

	of inspection topics to the inspectorate's plan of work?		We worked together with branches, so they could inform their member companies. We also worked together with the policy department of the ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, that launched an extra campaign and internet supporting tools for companies to inform and help using the risk assessment tools.
22.	Was there any cooperation between the labour inspectorate and another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner?	YES	What was that co-operator? (see 20: working together to express the same message on the importance of having and using a Risk Assessment and Evaluation – instrument RI&E)
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; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> at the communication stage regarding the onset of the inspection activity; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> at the evaluation stage of the inspection activity;
24.	What did the cooperation with another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner involve?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> participation in preparation of supplementary materials for labour inspectors
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	Please indicate institutions and the type of accessible data / information: In specific situations within the legal framework of privacy-law certain data can be asked.
26.	Does the labour inspectorate have direct online access to information and data collected by other bodies, institutions and authorities?	YES	Please indicate institutions and the type of accessible data / information: At a certain level yes: we can use the application "Inspectieview" used by other inspection-bodies.

27.	What information obtained in the above manner was used for implementing the inspection campaign?		<p>Please indicate the cooperating institutions and the type of data / information used in the described inspection campaign:</p> <p>For the introduced project “Sectoral approach to occupational health and safety” we didn’t use other data of information. There was no need to use other information.</p>
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 ?	YES	<p>How was it provided?</p> <p>See description on page 2 (a five steps approach, were communication prior to the inspections was one of the key success factors).</p>
29.	Is the effectiveness of prior information or training activities taken into account when evaluating the results of the inspections?		<p>How is the effectiveness of information and training activities assessed?</p> <p>Only a communication approach was set up consisting of building up information and preparedness for the actual inspection. See page 2, 5 steps approach.</p> <p>What tools are used for that purpose?</p> <p>A strategic communication approach based on knowledge on influencing compliance behaviour. (see also page 2)</p>
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?	YES	<p>What form do they have?</p> <p>After the inspection visit the enforcement letters also contain information on how to better comply.</p> <p>Sometimes sectors themselves took initiative to help company members (e.g. in healthcare) in working sessions how to make a proper risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E).</p>

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>Approximately 5 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>Manager of a unit at the Inspectorate's headquarters, projectleader at the headquarters, data-analists, communication advisor.</p>
32.	What was the scope of monitoring and coordinating actions regarding the inspection activity?		<p>Please choose the most appropriate answer (it is possible to choose more than one answer):</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> assistance in solving problems: over the phone, via email, formally (official correspondence),</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed quantitative plan</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed qualitative plan (how?)</p> <p>Including making decisions on capacity, choices of sectors etc.</p>
33.	Were IT tools used to carry out monitoring and coordination activities as part of the described inspection campaign?	YES	<p>A brief description of IT tools:</p> <p>Our regular systems such as 'Survalizer' in which inspectors write their answers, or I-net in which inspectors administrate the outcomes of their enforcement-interventions.</p>
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 ?	YES	If so, what information did the communication plan contain? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online information campaigns targeted at employers in the sector (Sponsored LinkedIn advertising, see example below) and information provision in collaboration with employer organisations about the importance of health and safety care and the legally required documents/risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E). • Informational letters.
b)	the general public?	NO	
36.	How was the information about the inspection activities communicated to stakeholders and the general public?		See above 34.
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		
b)	based on the number of legal measures issued	YES	We measured compliance percentage before and after our interventions.
c)	based on the type of legal measures issued		
d)	based on the number of implemented legal measures		
e)	based on the type of implemented legal measures		
f)	other way		

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>Employers uploaded documents.</p> <p>Was the information provided by employers randomly verified by labour inspectors?</p> <p>Not random but all of them were verified, as a part of the risk based selection.</p> <p>What is the employer's liability for providing false information?</p> <p>We used a checklist to screen employers documents; If not OK they were selected for physical inspections.</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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information letter (physical) and links to informative websites conversation with the employer
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"> percentage of compliance, measuring the reach/scale and number of social media-visits (unique hits) by our targetgroup.
41.	How were the project effects evaluated?		
a)	Was any final summary evaluation of the inspection task (inspection campaign) made?	NO	<p>If so, what was the scope of such evaluation?</p> <p>Up until now we have in between results. The program is still running. A final evaluation is expected by the end of 2026. As described in page 2: an enormous raise in compliance concerning risk assessment and evaluation documents is measured up until now.</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>After every project. Up until now we have reports (factsheets per project) on results and effects of our interventions. We published most of them:</p> <p>Some examples:</p> <p>1) Inspectieresultaten Arbozorg in de meubelindustrie Publicatie Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie</p> <p>2) Inspectieresultaten Arbozorg in de glasbewassing Publicatie Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie</p> <p>3) Inspectieresultaten Arbozorg in de hotel- en restaurantbranche Publicatie Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie</p> <p>4) Inspectieresultaten Arbozorg in de café- en restaurantbranche Publicatie Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie</p>
c)	Did you prepare a formal document with evaluation of the inspection activity after its completion?	NO	<p>If so, was the formal evaluation document prepared by the labour inspectorate or an external evaluator?</p> <p>Please name the entities which conducted such external evaluation.</p> <p>Up until now we don't have a formal evaluation because the program is not ended yet.</p>
42.	How was the final document utilized in practice?		The program is still continuing. By the end of 2026 an evaluation is planned.