



OCCUPATIONAL
SAFETY AND
HEALTH
IN FINLAND

■ THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH

Brochures 2016:4

■ *A safe
and healthy
life for all.*



Brochures of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IN FINLAND



THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Helsinki 2016

Occupational Safety and Health in Finland

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I The content and importance of occupational safety and health

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. The annual economic losses caused by poor working conditions amount to billions of euros, not to mention the losses in human wellbeing. Investment in wellbeing at work pays a good interest. 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 co-determination.

The principal responsibility for improving the working conditions rests with the workplace. The employer has a statutory duty to ensure the 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 social partners to improve employee safety, wellbeing and health and also the performance in the production of goods and services.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health aims at extending working careers by three years by 2020.

Achieving this aim requires a number of different measures. The following objectives are set in order to improve health and safety.



The desired state in 2020:

- Incidence of occupational disease down by 10%
- Frequency of occupational accidents down by 25%
- Perceived physical strain down by 20%
- Perceived mental strain down by 20%

the figures indicate the change from 2010

In 50 years, the number of fatal accidents at work in Finland has fallen from over 400 to about 30. The total number of occupational accidents has not fallen, but has now remained around 125,000 accidents per year for about ten years. The total number of suspected cases of occupational diseases has fallen to half of what it was eight years ago (2005–2013). According to the most recent Quality of Work Life Survey, 32% of respondents found their work physically extremely or fairly straining. Similarly, 48% found their work emotionally extremely or fairly stressful. According to the survey on working hours conducted by the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), the share of absences due to illness or accidents in the theoretical regular working hours was 4.3% in 2013. The number of new disability pensions declined by 26% between 2008 and 2014, but the work career of 18,600 people still ended prematurely with a disability pension in 2014. The largest groups of illnesses causing short-term and long-term disability were musculoskeletal disorders and mental health problems. The costs of lost work input are estimated to be about EUR 2 billion per month, which amounts to EUR 24 billion per year.

Division of duties and cooperation between ministries

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible among other things 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. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible for OSH monitoring and development, the drawing up of OSH-related regulations and the development of occupational health care. The Ministry works in

close cooperation with, for example, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 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 with links to OSH.

The administrative branch of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment comprises the content of working life, equality in working life, collective agreements and mediation of labour disputes. It is also in charge of innovation and technology policies, internationalisation of companies and technical safety. In addition, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment handles matters related to employment, unemployment and public employment services. The responsibilities related to working life also cover safeguarding equality, certain services for seamen and pay security. 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 also contains provisions on both the responsibilities of employees and the cooperation of employers and employees to promote occupational safety and health. The Occupational Safety and Health Act applies to all paid employment and other 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 OSH authorities monitor employer compliance with the duty to provide occupational health care.

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. Sector-specific regulations on working hours complement the Working Hours Act. 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 Occupational Accidents, Injuries and Diseases Act lays down provisions on employees' entitlement to compensation for an occupational accident or occupational disease. Employers are required to insure their employees against occupational accidents or occupational diseases. The OSH authorities monitor employer compliance with this provision.

The safety of work also depends on the characteristics of the machinery, personal protective equipment and other technical devices and chemicals used. Manufacturers of technical devices are subject to certain requirements as stated in the Act on the Conformity of Certain Technical Devices to Relevant Requirements. As well as on the manufacturer, the act is also binding on the importer, seller and other person who places a technical device on the market or provides it for use. Pursuant to this Act, decrees have been issued for instance on machinery and personal protective equipment. The obligations of operators manufacturing chemicals, placing them on the market and using chemicals are based on EU regulations, which are directly binding.

At national level, the Chemicals Act mainly contains provisions on the authorities' duties in the implementation of the EU regulations and on certain national obligations. The OSH authorities monitor compliance with these acts.

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 or a representative of an employer. Depending on the offence, the sanction may be a fine or imprisonment, in aggravated cases up to two years. In addition, a legal person may be sentenced to pay a corporate fine between EUR 850 and EUR 850,000 in case of a breach of OSH.

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'. If a collective agreement has nationwide validity and must be considered representative in its sector, it is a 'generally binding' collective agreement. General applicability extends the minimum terms of employment relationship to be applied to employees of non-organised employers too. Non-organised employers must comply with the provisions of a generally binding collective agreement. The commission conforming the general applicability of collective agreements confirms which collective agreements shall be considered generally binding.

Special legislation

The legislation and activities of the authorities related to technical 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 applies, for example, to electrical safety, radiation safety, pressure vessels, lifts and chemicals. The special authorities concerned monitor compliance with this legislation.

OSH enforcement

The Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health at Workplaces lays down provisions on the OSH authorities' duties and the methods available to them. If the workplace is not bound by an agreement between the labour market parties on OSH matters, the cooperation of employers and employees in these matters shall be organised according to the provisions in the Act.

There are two components to OSH enforcement: workplace monitoring and market surveillance. The term workplace enforcement is used to refer to the monitoring of workplace conditions and compliance with legislation concerning employers. Market surveillance refers to monitoring whether technical devices available in the markets comply with the requirements for technical equipment used at work. It applies to manufacturers, authorised representatives, importers and distributors.

Enforcement measures

The Occupational Safety and Health Divisions at the Regional State Administrative Agencies, i.e. the OSH authorities in regional administration monitor compliance with OSH legislation. OSH inspectors are entitled to access workplaces and 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 usually announced in advance

unless a surprise inspection is deemed necessary for monitoring purposes. The inspector presents a summary of the main observations at the workplace and notifies the workplace of the measures required of the employer. An inspection report is prepared for each inspection.

The Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health at Workplaces determines the measures that can be taken by the OSH inspector and the OSH authorities if an employer or other target of monitoring does not comply with its statutory duties.

Minor deficiencies are mentioned in the OSH inspector's report and a written advice is given. In the case of major deficiencies or non-compliance with the written advice in specific matters, the inspector issues an improvement notice and compliance with the notice is monitored. If the employer has not taken measures to comply with the improvement notice by a given deadline, the inspector will transfer the matter to the OSH authority. If necessary, the OSH authority may issue a binding decision and impose a conditional fine to ensure compliance with it.

The inspector may issue a temporary prohibition notice (ban the use of machinery, work equipment or other technical device or working method, or stop work) if there is immediate danger to life or health of the employees at the workplace as a result of a deficiency due to non-compliance with legislation. After having heard the employer, the OSH authority confirms the temporary prohibition notice of use or concludes that it has expired. A conditional fine may be imposed to ensure compliance with the prohibition notice.

Decisions made by the OSH authorities 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 OSH authority. If the OSH authorities suspect that a punishable employment offence has been committed at a workplace within their domain, they must notify the police. The 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. The social partners concerned monitor compliance with collaborative agreements. The OSH authorities monitor compliance with the generally binding



collective agreements by non-organised employers. In monitoring compliance with generally binding collective agreements, the OSH authorities cooperate with those employer and employee organisations that are parties to those agreements.

Market surveillance

The Department for Occupational Safety and Health of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health takes decisions required for market surveillance. The purpose of these decisions is to prevent or restrict the market access by technical devices that are dangerous or otherwise do not comply with requirements. Generally, such decisions must be communicated to the European Commission and other EU Member States. The investigations required for taking such decisions are usually conducted by the OSH Divisions at Regional State Administrative Agencies. Decisions taken by the Ministry may be appealed to the relevant Administrative Court.

3 OSH cooperation

OSH cooperation at the workplace is mostly governed by the relevant agreements between labour market organisations. 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 cannot 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 an OSH representative must be elected by personnel if a workplace has ten or more employees. The OSH representative is entitled to receive training for the duties and to be released from other work duties 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 representative may also stop dangerous work undertaken by employees he/she represents. If the employer in person does not handle the duties under OSH cooperation, the OSH manager is the employer's representative.

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-operation within Undertakings.

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 OSH Divisions at the Regional State Administrative Agencies.

The Ministry steers the OSH Divisions, drafts and develops OSH legislation and policy, and is in charge of international OSH cooperation. The OSH Divisions are responsible for regional OSH enforcement, guidelines and guidance. The OSH administration acts independently in its enforcement duties. Funds for the OSH authorities are allocated annually in the central government budget.

The objectives of the OSH Divisions are agreed on in four-year performance agreements, which are specified annually. The director of the OSH Division ensures that duties are carried out as agreed in the performance targets.

Resources of some 510 person-years are available to the OSH administration, and of these about 450 person-years have been allocated to the OSH divisions and 60 to the Ministry. The OSH authorities are responsible for the monitoring of about 280,000 workplaces. The inspectors conduct more than 25,000 inspections every year.

Development, networking and programmes

It is important for each workplace to re-create its wellbeing every day. The workplace OSH cooperation, in which employers, personnel, the OSH organisation and occupational health care of the workplace interact successfully, is of primary importance in ensuring that work is healthy and safe. Work ability and the meaningfulness and productivity of work can be increased by influencing the safety and healthiness of work and wellbeing at work in a favourable way. The culture of caring, innovation and encouragement will also grow.

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.

Many operators at local, regional and national level support the development carried out at workplaces. Workplaces can share their good practices and experiences, for example, in The well-being at work network for workplaces or in the TEPSI information bank of good practices. Different research, development and training organisations also support workplaces.

The Department for Occupational Safety and Health of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health works actively in cooperation with labour market organisations and other operators in society to improve cooperation in OSH at different levels and supports active operation at workplaces. They all work in cooperation to influence strategies, different programmes, operating practices, communications and management in order to increase society's awareness about the importance of OSH and to increase awareness about wellbeing at work and operating practices that promote it. This work is carried out for the benefit of workplaces and people.

In Finland, 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 Finnish Confederation of Professionals (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. About 73% of the labour force are unionised (2014), which is a very high percentage compared with many other countries.

The Department for Occupational Safety and Health drafts different reports and analyses of the current situation in working life and foresight reports and calculations, which are used as background material for strategy planning and proposals for OSH development. The Department coordinates research and development projects, and drafts and is in charge of programmes and other projects that support working life.

The Department for Occupational Safety and Health completed an extensive review of the future of work and working life in 2015: Working Life in 2025 review – Effects of the changes in working life and the working environment on occupational safety and health and well-being at work. The review and the abstract in English are available in the publications collection

of the administrative branch of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Department for Occupational Safety and Health has also made calculations on the costs of lost labour input. These calculations proved the importance of preventive measures.

The report and the abstract are available on the Ministry's website (Value of lost labour input in Finland).

Major development measures in recent years include

- Forum for Wellbeing at Work (2008–2015). The objective was to strengthen the existing national and regional networks.
- The Tepsi project (2011–2015). The objective was to produce an open platform for workplaces to share good practices.
- The Osku concept – Working with partial work ability (2013–2015). The objective was to offer support and tools to help people with partial work ability continue to work and find employment.
- Projects for detecting and repairing humidity and mould problems in workplaces (2013–2015).
- The Work and family life programme (2014–2015). The objective was to collect operating models and practices to improve the balance between work and family life.
- The Mielekäs programme (2014–2015). The objective was to make the social welfare and health care sector more attractive.
- The national campaigns of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (since 2001).

National and regional cooperation in the Forum for Wellbeing at Work network has become established. The aim is to improve synergy benefits by further strengthening the networking between different operators. The TEPSI information bank, which brings together Finnish workplace practices that promote wellbeing at work, has been opened on the Yrityssuomi.fi website.

The results of the Osku concept are used in the key project Career opportunities for people with partial work ability of the Government Programme (2015–2018). The projects for detecting and repairing damp and mould problems in workplaces have been completed and the results are

used at workplaces and in the identification and care of people who develop symptoms.

The results of the Mielekäs programme are used in promoting wellbeing at work among social welfare and healthcare professionals. The results of the Work and family life programme are available for use as part of the Programme to address child and family services in the Government Programme (2015–2018).

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) has a significant role as a developer and distributor of cooperation and shared knowledge in Europe. The Department for Occupational Safety and Health of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is in charge of the duties and development related to the Agency's operation in Finland. Finland has an EU-OSHA division of the Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health, which plans and implements operations in cooperation with labour market organisations and other working life actors and in compliance with the agency's principles.

5 Regional OSH authorities guide and supervise

The OSH authorities monitor compliance with more than one hundred items of legislation at workplaces. The most important of these items of legislation are the Occupational Safety and Health Act and the decrees based on it, the Working Hours Act, the Annual Holidays Act, the Employment Contracts Act, the Occupational Health Care Act and the Young Workers' Act. The OSH authorities also communicate information and provide guidance on the requirements in legislation for workplaces. The purpose of official monitoring and guidance is to support and promote safety work at the workplace.

Enforcement is either authority-initiated or client-initiated. The national objectives for authority-initiated enforcement are based on an analysis of statistical and research data, observations from monitoring and surveillance and views expressed by key stakeholder groups for periods of four years. In addition, the OSH authorities complement the objectives and focus enforcement as agreed in yearly performance negotiations and according to the special features of the region. The regional focusing of enforcement is also handled in the regional OSH boards, in which labour market parties and other regional key actors are represented.

The client-initiated enforcement is based on enquiries from clients. Both employers and employees can request advice and workplace inspections from the OSH authorities. The OSH Divisions consider enforcement needs on a case by case basis. Enquiries are most commonly related to matters concerning employment relationships. The second largest number of enquiries from clients are related to the physical and psychosocial work environments.

In principle, an OSH inspection is conducted by visiting the workplace and assessing the workplace conditions and compliance with legislation concern-

ing the employer. When individual matters are enforced, an inspection may be carried out as a document inspection without a visit to the workplace concerned. A document inspection may be carried out when the inspection does not require any observation of working conditions or a visit to the workplace would not provide any added value to the investigation of the matter. In such a case, the inspection focuses on investigating unambiguous information and it is possible to verify undisputedly whether the situation at the workplace is non-compliant with legislation or not by looking at the documents.

In addition, the OSH authorities inspect all serious occupational accidents and diseases and conduct market surveillance to ensure that the available technical devices used for work comply with the relevant requirements.

OSH enforcement is supported by means of communications. Communications is an important part of all operations of the OSH authorities, but special attention is paid to it in connection with national OSH enforcement projects. Communications is carried out for instance in workplace supervision, through the OSH administration's Tyosuojelu.fi online service, social media, the magazines for personnel and stakeholders, and through separate bulletins. In addition, the Occupational safety and health exhibition disseminates information in different fairs and events.

Five occupational safety and health divisions





6 Actors within OSH

The most important OSH operators are at each workplace. This applies to voluntary workplace development as well as to the statutory OSH. The workplace management and line organisation have a key role. 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.

In addition to the OSH administration, other authorities and their expertise also support OSH and the measures to improve it. These authorities include the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira) and the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK) in the administrative branch of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and, for example, the Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (Tukes) in the other administrative branches.

Universities and other research institutes do important work to obtain up-to-date information on working life and to support developing it. Many organisations conduct and support active research and development to meet the needs of working life and workplaces.

Finnish Institute of Occupational Health

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health specialises in the research of wellbeing at work and provides services and training for it. The Institute cooperates with its customers to improve the functioning of work communities and the safety of working environments, and supports the work ability of employees. Its customers include workplaces, decision-makers, citizens, occupational health units and other organisations that improve wellbeing at work. The Institute's vision is 'Wellbeing from work' as healthy, safe and meaningful work creates wellbeing. The Institute's offices are located in Helsinki, Kuopio, Oulu, Tampere and Turku. Additional information: www.ttl.fi

Centre for Occupational Safety

The objective of the Centre for Occupational Safety is better work. The Centre for Occupational Safety supports and encourages 1) the management and personnel to interact to make work better; 2) OSH personnel and representa-

tives to develop their workplace and 3) supervisors to gain an understanding of their responsibility and the importance of the work community in improving workplace wellbeing and productivity. The Centre for Occupational Safety provides knowledge and expertise for the development of work communities by training and communicating information. It anticipates future challenges and takes into account the changes in working life and the needs of work communities. The Centre for Occupational Safety strives to facilitate the daily work of its customers by providing practical services, which it develops and produces in cooperation with the customers. Through networks and in cooperation with experts, the Centre creates capabilities and operating practices that promote wellbeing at work, productivity and interaction. The aim is to improve wellbeing and productivity at work by promoting safe and healthy work, cooperation and good supervisory work. Additional information: www.ttk.fi

Finnish Work Environment Fund

The Finnish Work Environment Fund provides funding for research, development and publicity that improve working conditions and the safety and productivity of workplace communities. The Fund contributes to research, development, publicity and training projects and awards personal grants. The Fund has a statutory duty to finance the Centre for Occupational Safety and it 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 publishes the Tiedon silta publication. The Finnish Work Environment Fund and the Centre for Occupational Safety publish the Telma journal, which focuses on the development of working life. Additional information: www.tsr.fi, www.tiedonsilta.fi, www.telma-lehti.fi

Finnish Workers' Compensation Centre

The Finnish Workers' Compensation Centre coordinates the statutory insurance against occupational accidents and diseases. 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 Centre is a liaison organisation for insurance companies, compiles

statistics on occupational accidents and diseases together with their causes and consequences, and helps prevent occupational accidents and diseases. The Centre's duties also include paying compensation for occupational accidents in cases where the work being done is not subject to insurance. Additional information: www.tvk.fi

Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation

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. Further information: www.tekes.fi

VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland

VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland is an impartial expert organisation that provides diverse high-quality research, technology and innovation services and information for its customers to support decision-making regarding risks, safety and reliability of use. 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.

Further 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. 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. The International Organization for Standardisation ISO began the preparation of the standard for occupational health and safety management in autumn 2013. The Standards Association had founded a monitoring group, SFS/SR 219, which acts as the national expert group for the standardisation of occupational health and safety management systems. The ISO 45001 standard is expected to be completed during the summer or autumn of 2017. Additional information: www.sfs.fi

7 Occupational health care

Employers must provide occupational health care for their employees even if they only employ one person. The operation of occupational health care is driven by the needs of the company, which are defined in cooperation by the employer, employees and occupational health care personnel. This occupational health care cooperation and definition of shared goals is a condition for effective occupational health care.

The purpose of occupational health care is to ensure healthy and safe work and work environment, and to maintain and promote the work ability and health of employees. Occupational health care conducts workplace surveys and assessments of hazards based on these surveys and makes development proposals to promote healthy and safe work. Occupational health care works in close cooperation with workplaces to support employees' health and work ability. The aim is to identify work ability risks and possible rehabilitation needs in time. Occupational health care organises and coordinates the necessary care and rehabilitation and the possible adaptive measures needed for the employee to be able to continue working.

In addition to preventive occupational health care, the employer may also provide employees with medical care at general practitioner level. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Regional State Administrative Agencies and OSH authorities monitor compliance with occupational health care legislation. The Social Insurance Institution (Kela) compensates employers for necessary and reasonable costs of providing occupational health care as laid down in the Health Insurance Act. Occupational health care is free for employees. The employer is required to have an occupational health care agreement, a valid action plan and a workplace survey to receive compensation for occupational health care costs from the Social Insurance Institution.

Employers may outsource occupational health care services from a health care centre, organise the services themselves or in cooperation with another

employer or outsource the services from a private health care service provider (medical centre). According to the Social Insurance Institution's statistics, 86.9% of wage earners were covered by occupational health care services in 2014. Occupational health care is developed on the basis of the tripartite principle as part of the general social and health policies.

8 Promoting work ability

Promoting work ability is one of the most important duties of occupational health care. Occupational health care helps the workplace draw up a plan to promote work ability and prevent factors threatening it. These are so called work ability management practices, which must be described in writing either in the workplace survey or in a separate document in workplaces with fewer than 20 employees. This is a condition for the compensation for 60% of preventive occupational health care costs that the Social Insurance Institution pays to the employer:

Companies with at least 20 employees draw up a separate model for early support and the role of occupational health in supporting work ability care is recorded in the action plan for occupational health care. In practice this means for instance that the employer and employees have agreed on when supervisors should bring up work ability problems, how sick leave notes are delivered to occupational health care and how return to work after sick leave is supported in cooperation.

9 International connections

According to the estimation by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), about 2.3 million women and men die in every year as a result of occupational accidents or work-related diseases. This is about 6,000 people every day. Safe work is a basic human right that not all people enjoy at the moment.

Finland and the other Nordic Countries have systematically been improving work conditions in cooperation with labour market organisations and decreased the number of occupational accidents and occupational diseases. Finland has actively supported the efforts of international organisations such as the UN, ILO, WHO and IALI to improve working conditions globally. Global interaction benefits both Finland and the developing countries. Thanks to a better understanding of the global human rights and costs of poor working conditions, the issue of humane working conditions had been placed higher in the political agenda.

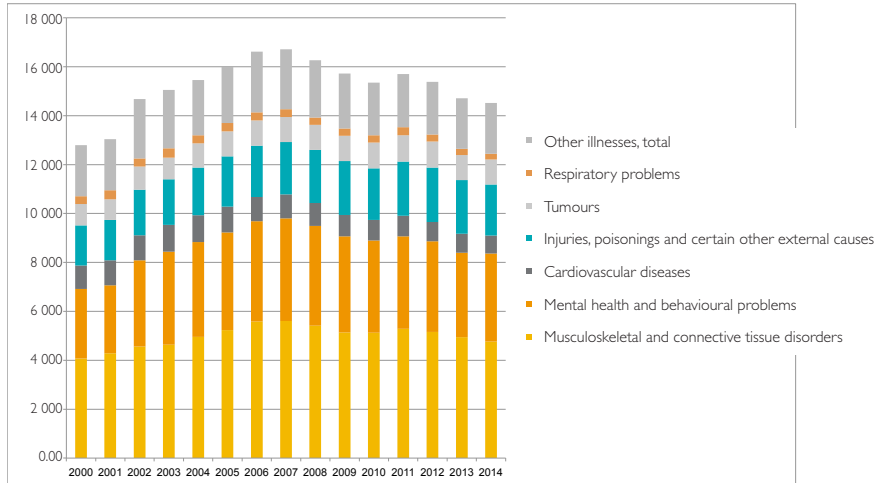
The purpose of the OSH strategy of the European Union is to prevent hazards at work and to bring together various political instruments such as legislation, social dialogue, promotive action, good practices and economic incentives, and to create partnerships to improve wellbeing at work. OSH is one of the most important areas of the European Union's current social policy, which directly influences the legislation of the member states. Finland participates actively in launching the EU's new OSH initiative aimed at reducing human suffering. Communications, steering and promotive measures are implemented in cooperation with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.

EU member states cooperate in OSH enforcement in the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC) and its working groups. This cooperation comprises European monitoring projects, meetings and thematic days, the OSH information exchange network (SLIC-KSS) and inspector exchange between the different countries.

Cooperation between the Nordic OSH authorities and research institutions is active and diverse. The Nordic Countries signed a mutual working environment agreement in 1989, and the aim is to implement its objectives at EU level. The cooperation in the Nordic Council of Ministers is governed by The Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Labour and especially its Committees for Working Environment and Industrial Relations. The Nordic Institute for Advanced Training in Occupational Health (NIVA) provides training in top expertise areas for the Nordic Countries and internationally. In addition to multilateral cooperation, the Finnish authorities engage in bilateral cooperation with OSH authorities in several countries.

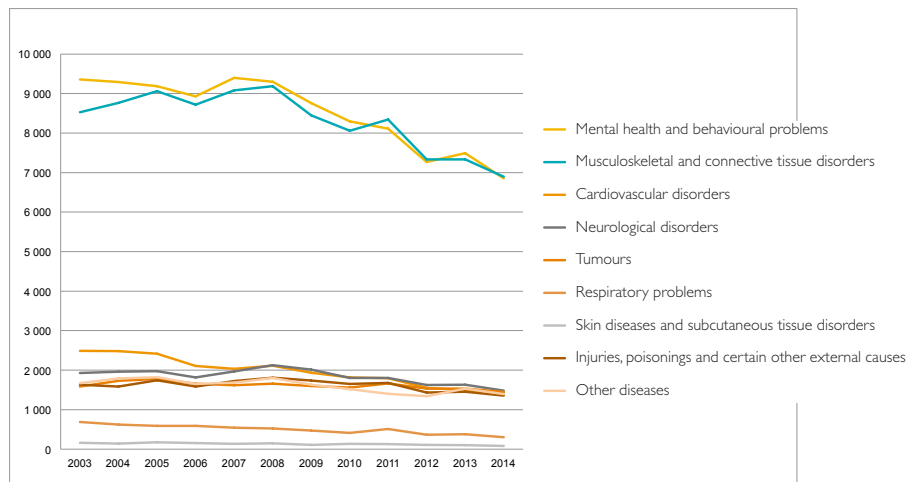
10 Statistics

Figure 1. Sickness allowance days compensated, by illness, 2000–2014.



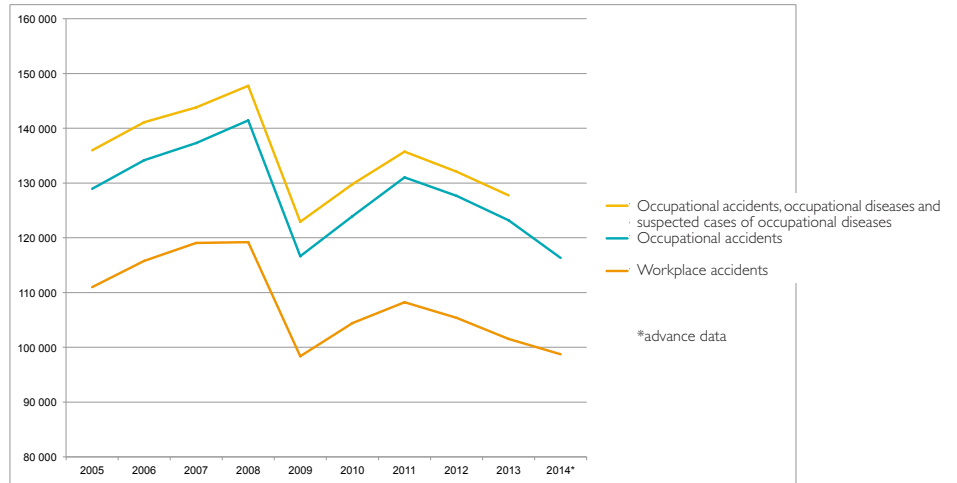
Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Social Insurance Institution (Kela)

Figure 2. Number of all employees retiring on a disability pension, by illness, 2005–2013.



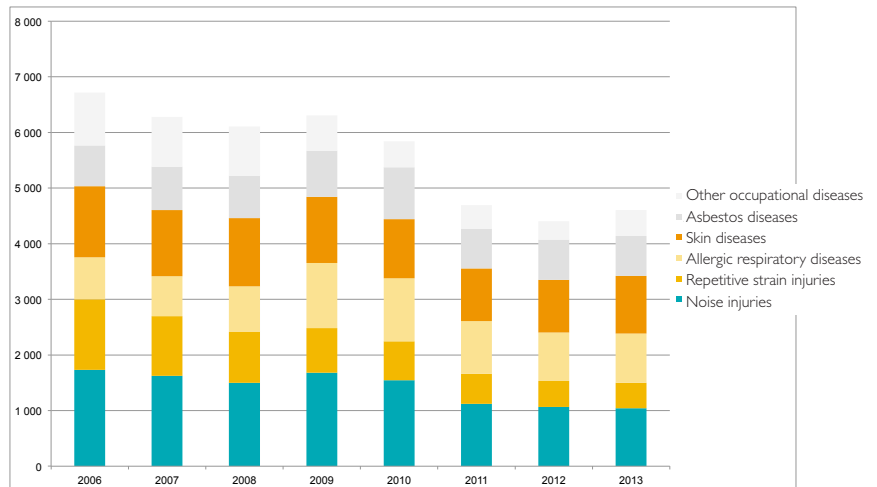
Source: Finnish Centre of Pensions

Figure 3. Occupational accidents and occupational diseases among wage earners, 2005–2014.



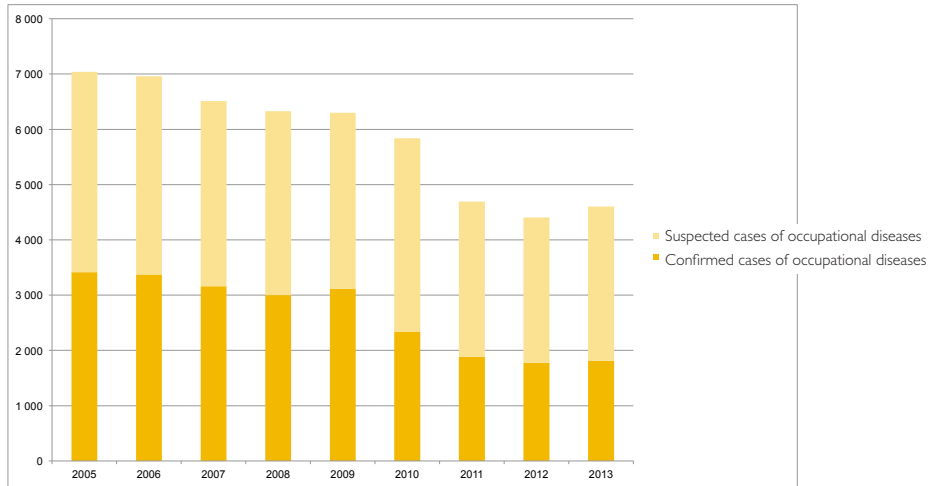
Source: Finnish Workers' Compensation Center

Figure 4. Number of cases of occupational diseases, by illness group 2005–2013



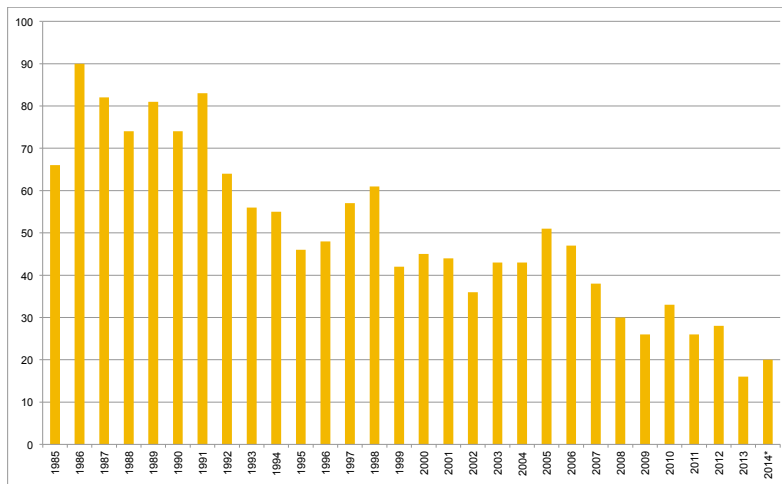
Source: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Finnish register of occupational diseases.

Figure 5. Diagnosed and suspected cases of occupational diseases among wage earners, 2005–2013.



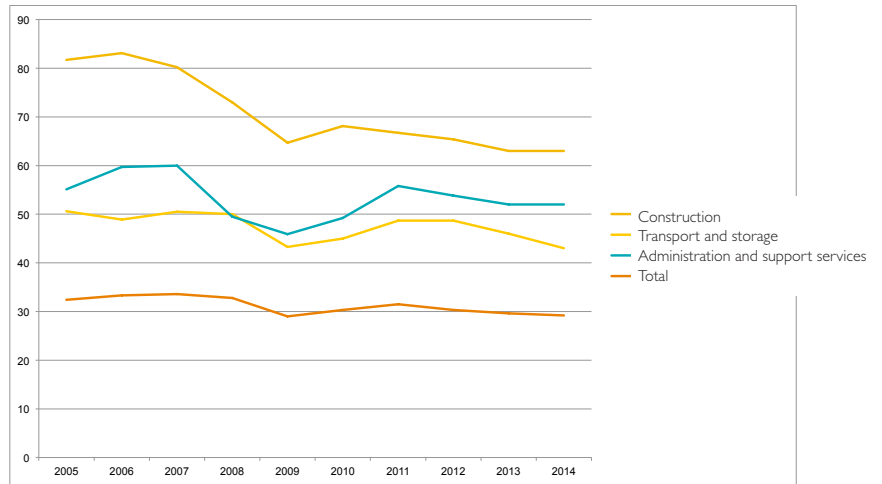
Source: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Finnish register of occupational diseases.

Figure 6. Fatal workplace accidents among wage earners, 1980–2014.



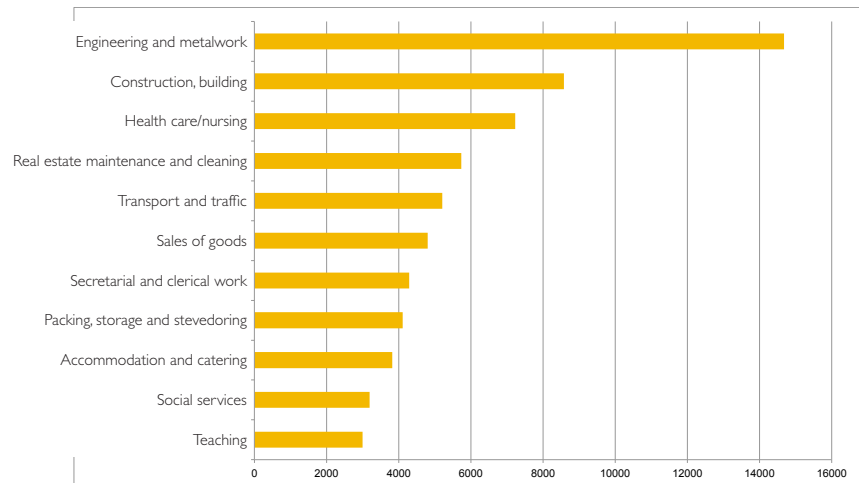
Source: Statistics Finland, Statistics material of the Finnish Workers' Compensation Center 2014

Figure 7. Incidence of occupational accidents among wage earners in principal sectors, 2005–2014.



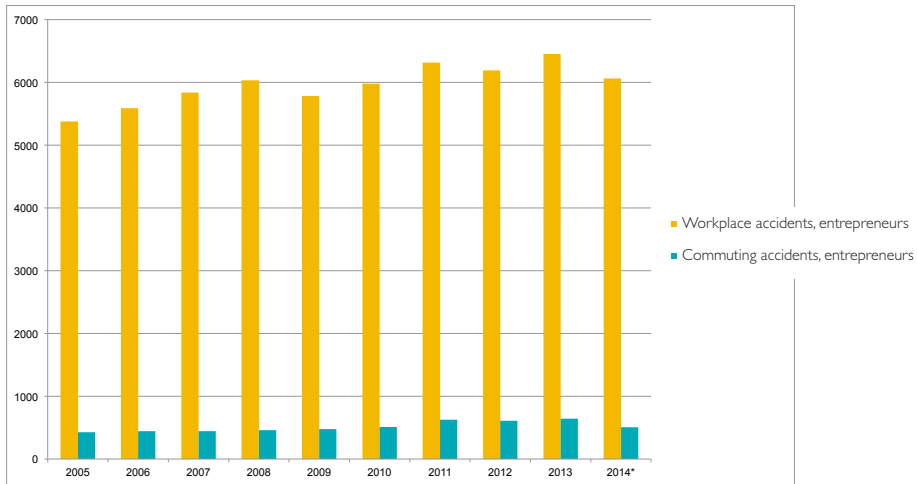
Source: Finnish Workers' Compensation Center

Figure 8. Workplace accidents among wage earners, by occupation, 2014 (advance data).



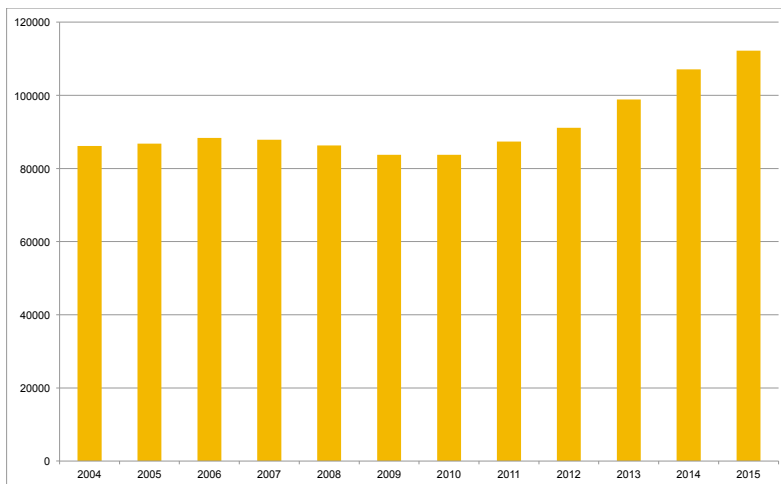
Source: Finnish Workers' Compensation Center

Figure 9. Entrepreneurs' workplace and commuting accidents, 2005–2014.



Source: Finnish Workers' Compensation Center

Figure 10. Recipients of rehabilitation services from the Social Insurance Institution, 2004–2015.



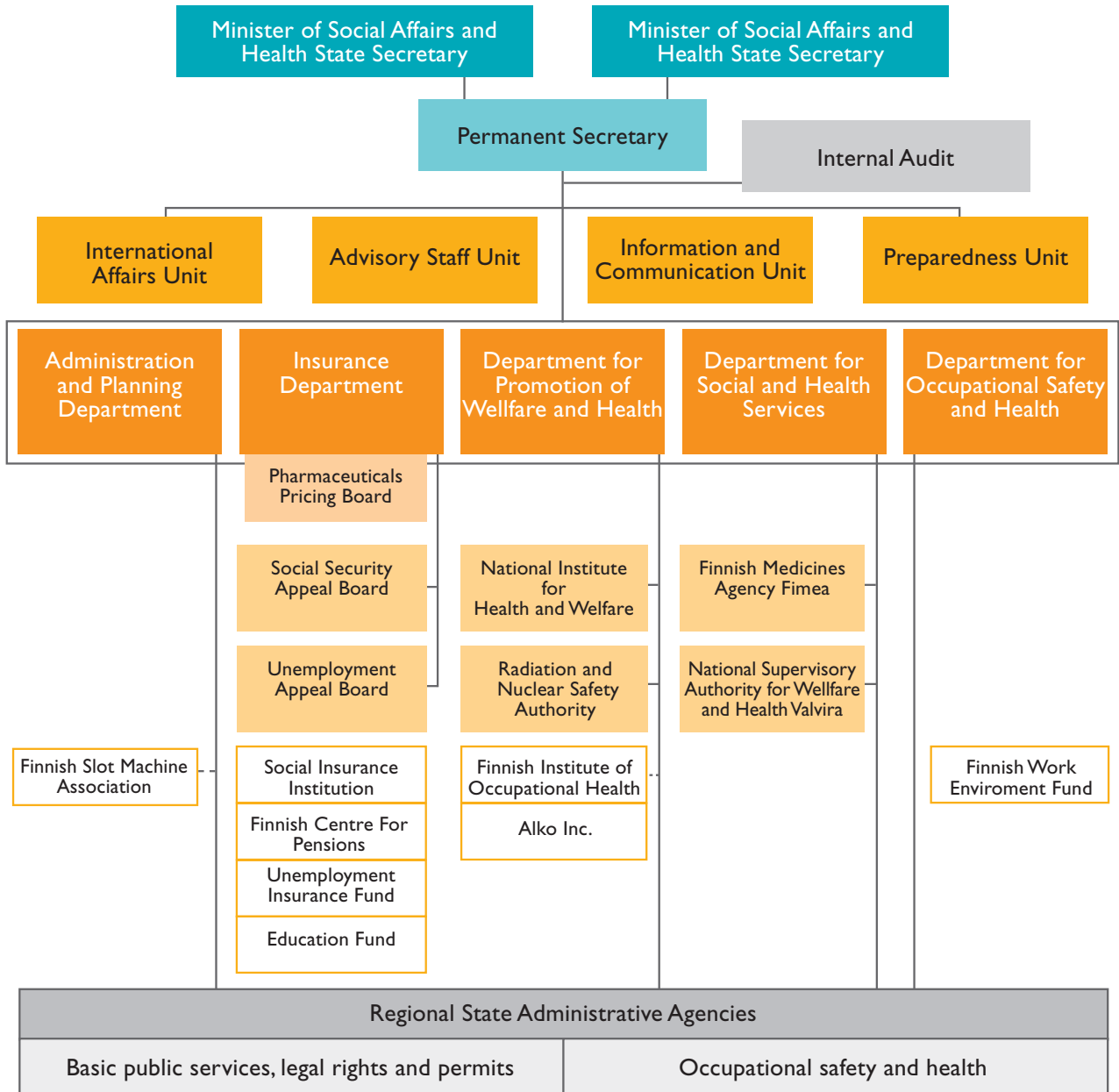
Source: Social Insurance Institution (Kela).

Figure II. Retirement age expectancy for employees aged 25 and 50, 1996–2014



Source: Finnish Centre of Pensions

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the institutions and agencies in its administrative branch



Finnish labour market in a nutshell

- In 2014, Finland's population was about 5.5 million. Life expectancy at birth was 78.17 years for men and 83.87 years for women.
- The GNP was EUR 205.3 billion in 2014, or about EUR 37,576 per capita.
- In 2014, the labour force comprised some 2.7 million Finns, of whom some 2.4 million were employed. Of these, about 86 % were wage earners and 14% were self-employed entrepreneurs and their family members.
- The employed labour force consisted of 1,193,000 women and 1,254,000 men. The employment rate was 67.9% for women and 68.7% for men aged from 15 to 64. In 2014, an average of 377,000 people, or 15.4% of the employed labour force, had part-time jobs. About two thirds of these were women.
- In 2014, an average of 72% of the employed labour force worked in the private sector. Services, the forest and technology industries were the principal production sectors in Finland. The number of employees was 839,000 in public, other social and personal services; 528,000 in industry and construction; 290,000 in trade; 343,000 in financing, insurance and business services; 140,000 in transport, and storage; and 109,000 in agriculture, game, forestry and fishing.
- There were 363,587 businesses in Finland, of which small and medium-sized enterprises comprised about 99.9%. About 94.7% of them were businesses employing fewer than 10 people, and the majority of them employed fewer than 5 persons.

In 2014, a total of 107,107 persons used rehabilitation services, 27% of them suffering from a musculoskeletal disorder and 44% from mental health problems. (Figure 10)
- The working population is ageing. Persons over the age of 55 accounted for more than 18% of the labour force. In 2014, the retirement age expectancy in the earnings-related pension scheme was 61.2 for an employee aged 25 and 62.8 for an employee aged 50. (Figure 11)

(Source: Statistics Finland; Statistics Finland Labour force survey; Statistics on rehabilitation services and benefits provided by the Social Insurance Institution Kela)

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 co-determination. The principal responsibility for improving the working conditions rests with the workplace.

The brochure Occupational Safety and Health in Finland is an introduction to occupational safety and health. The brochure also introduces OSH legislation and the responsibilities and division of work between the OSH organisations.

www.stm.fi/julkaisut.

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