

2023 Workplace Accidents Monitor

Summary of the 2023 Workplace Accidents Monitor, translation into English Netherlands Labour Authority, August 2024

The Netherlands Labour Authority wants to prevent workplace accidents. To achieve this, it uses information collected by inspectors during accident investigations. Based on this, the Labour Authority produces information products on accident characteristics, which are used for interventions to enhance occupational safety.

One such information product is this annual Workplace Accidents Monitor, which the Labour Authority uses to provide insight into completed accident investigations. This report includes numbers, trends and background characteristics of companies and victims. The numerical overviews in the annexes are used for conversations on occupational safety with industries. In addition, the Workplace Accidents Monitor contributes to increasing knowledge on accident types and accidents among vulnerable groups. This year, special attention is being paid to accidents involving migrant workers in the Register of Non-Residents (Registratie Niet-ingezetenen, RNI).

Number of accident investigations

In 2023, the Labour Authority completed 2,448 accident investigations involving 2,386 victims¹, 69 of whom were fatal. That comes to 27 victims per 100,000 jobs. Almost one-fifth of accidents result in permanent injuries and 3% of accidents are fatal. Most accidents per 100,000 jobs occur in the Water Companies and Waste Management sector, followed by the Construction and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors. This pattern matches 2022 and earlier years.

As in previous years, 'Falling' is the most common accident type. Looking at all accident investigations, some common work equipment are forklifts/pallet lifts and ladders of all kinds. Furthermore, men are relatively more likely to be victims, also adjusted for sector. Older workers (55+) are also more likely to be victims, but in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, for example, it is young people (<25) who are more likely to be victims.

Migrant workers in the RNI

The Labour Authority suspects that workers from the group of migrant workers in the RNI are relatively frequent victims of accidents. For migrant workers often do unskilled, low-paid and temporary work, and then also in sectors where the risk of accidents is already relatively high,

¹ The number of accident investigations completed in 2023 exceeds the number of victims. This can be explained by the fact that some incidents are reported to the Labour Authority as workplace accidents, which are later found not to have been workplace accidents because there are no victims. An example is an explosion in a machine, where no one gets harmed. In the Labour Authority's registration system, such cases are marked as accident cases. Therefore, these kinds of cases are also included in the figures published in this report.

such as the Construction, Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and Industry sectors.² Furthermore, experience shows that migrant workers may in some cases misunderstand instructions and warnings due to language and cultural differences. There may also be a potential situation of dependence on the employer, making them less likely to complain about unsafe conditions. If the employer is negligent in properly assessing the related risks and taking action accordingly, these factors can potentially be the cause of a workplace accident.

Among other things, the RNI is intended for people who are staying in the Netherlands for less than four months and want to work here. When these persons have a non-Dutch nationality and are involved in a workplace accident, they are considered migrant workers in the RNI in this study. So in this study, a selection was made based on these two characteristics: non-Dutch citizenship³ and registration in the RNI without a temporary address at the time of the accident. Accidents involving this group were compared with accidents involving the remaining group of other victims (hereinafter: the residual group), which includes Dutch workers, and also migrant workers who are registered with a municipality.

There is a relatively high number of accidents involving migrant workers in the RNI: the number of accidents per 100,000 jobs is 37, where it is 26 for the residual group. On top of this, migrant workers in the RNI are also slightly more likely to be involved in serious accidents. This can be seen in the higher death rate among that group: of all accidents involving migrant workers in the RNI (N=208), 4% is fatal, while among the residual group 2% is fatal. Accident investigations involving migrant workers in the RNI also result in a fine being imposed more often than in the residual group (82% versus 75%). The results further show that accidents involving migrant workers in the RNI occur more often in the Industry (especially manufacture of metal structures and slaughterhouses) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors. Victims from the group of migrant workers in the RNI are more likely to be temporary agency workers, younger and very briefly employed at the time of the accident.

² ABU/NBBU (2023). Migrant workers in the Netherlands 2023. Consulted from [ABU NBBU Factsheet Arbeidsmigranten 2023 A3_08.indd](#)

³ Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) provides for the basis for processing the nationality of victims of workplace accidents. The need for the Netherlands Labour Authority to process nationality (in the sense of citizenship) in this situation lies in the fact that the Labour Authority has an explicit statutory task or a task of general interest of integral cooperation in combating abuses involving citizens of other EU member states and thus EU citizens or migrant workers from outside the EU.