

**Report on the National Labour Inspectorate's
activity in agriculture in 2017
(for the ILO)**

1. Legal provisions regulating the labour inspectorate's activity in agriculture

- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Economy of 27 June 1997 concerning work safety and health during **storage, processing of cereals and production of feedstuffs of plant origin.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Economy of 12 January 1998 concerning work safety and health during **operation of tractors, machines, tools and technical equipment used in agriculture.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Economy of 26 October 1998 concerning work safety and health during **processing of milk and dairy products.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Economy of 10 March 1999 concerning work safety and health during **animal slaughter and meat processing.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 26 September 2001 concerning work safety and health during **potato processing.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 24 June 2002 concerning work safety and health during **use and storage of plant protection products and mineral and bio-mineral fertilizers.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 10 February 2003 concerning work safety and health in **enterprises processing fruit and vegetables.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 12 May 2003 concerning work safety and health **during operation of ammonia cooling installations in agricultural and food processing enterprises.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Health of 30 December 2004 concerning work safety and health connected with **the existence of chemical agents in the workplace.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Health of 22 April 2005 on **biological agents harmful to health in the working environment and health protection for workers exposed to such agents at work.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of the Environmental Protection of 24 August 2006 concerning work safety and health **during performance of some work tasks in forestry.***
- *Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 4 August 2017 concerning work safety and health during **handling of livestock.***

2. Labour inspectorate's staff in agriculture

81 labour inspectors are competent to conduct comprehensive inspections of farming companies. 103 persons are prepared to carry out preventive and promotional activities in farming (including 79 labour inspectors and 24 specialists who are not inspectors).

3. Statistical data on farming companies subject to inspection and the number of persons working therein (data obtained by the NLI from the Social Insurance Institution)

	2017
number of farming companies	8.1 thousand
number of persons working in those farming companies	67.5 thousand

4. Data on NLI's inspections in farming companies in 2017

In 2017, NLI inspectors conducted 605 inspections in farming companies and in consequence of identifying irregularities, they issued 2 657 decisions, 1 923 instructions in improvement notices and 107 verbal instructions. Fines in the form of 103 penalty tickets were imposed on persons guilty of committing offences against the rights of individuals performing paid work. Requests for punishment were sent to court with regard to 37 persons, and towards 118 persons disciplinary measures were applied (admonition, warning, rebuke). Moreover, in 8 cases the prosecutor's office was notified of the suspicion of a crime. Detailed data on the inspection results are included in the tables.

*Statistical data on the NLI inspections in 2017
and the applied legal measures (by the number of workers)*

Specification	NUMBER OF							
	inspec- -tions	DECISIONS					instructions in improve- ment notices	verbal in- struc- -tions
		total	including:					
			orders to stop work	orders to stop operation of machines	orders to assign other tasks to workers	orders to pay financial benefits		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
TOTAL, including companies with:	605	2657	14	120	12	62	1923	107
1-9 workers	370	1570	7	49	7	15	1193	61
10-49 workers	176	786	3	36	5	40	558	38
50-249 workers	51	278	3	35	0	7	140	6
250 and more workers	8	23	1	0	0	0	32	2

*Statistical data on NLI's inspections in farming companies in 2017
- imposed sanctions (by the number of workers)*

Specification	NUMBER of			
	imposed penalty tickets	requests to penalise the offenders lodged with courts	applied disciplinary measures	notifications to the prosecutor's office of the suspicion of a crime
1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL, including companies with:	103	37	118	8
1-9 workers	56	22	59	4
10-49 workers	34	11	37	3
50-249 workers	10	4	22	
250 and more workers	3			1

It should be pointed out that continued technological progress in the performance of farming work is noticeable. Nevertheless, labour inspectors still identify a considerable number of irregularities and hazards on farms, resulting from improper work organisation and poor technical condition of agricultural machines and equipment, workrooms and production buildings. For that reason, inspections of working conditions in farming companies will be continued in future years.

5. NLI's preventive and promotional activities in private farming

One of the NLI's statutory preventive and promotional tasks are actions serving to develop safe working and living conditions in rural areas and to limit hazards which may cause accidents and diseases in private farming.

The most effective method for safety enhancement are visitations on farms and in places of field works, as they enable inspectors to immediately give instructions and indicate accident risks. The limitation and hindrance in conducting visitations is the fact that a farm can only be entered on consent of a farmer. As a result of obtaining such consent, in 2017 over **2.6 thousand visitations** took place (in 2016 – 4.5 thousand), during which NLI inspectors gave instructions during conversations with almost 3 thousand persons (in 2016 – with 5.9 thousand). They highlighted existing hazards and informed farmers about the methods of eliminating them.

During visitations on farms, they paid attention to: separation of the production area from the residential one, the condition of the surface of farmyards, safeguarding of sewage wells,

technical condition of buildings and livestock facilities, as well as separation of communication routes.

One-to-one meetings gave labour inspectors opportunity to show existing irregularities and then to jointly decide on methods for their elimination, or possibly introduce organisational and technical improvements which would enable farmers to perform farming tasks in compliance with safety rules.

The most important observations: in 31% of the visited farms, the production area was not separated from the residential one, and in almost 20% of farms safe places for children to rest and play were not ensured. Almost 40% of the assessed farming and animal buildings had thresholds in entrances, which is the most frequent cause of trips and falls. Almost one third of the visited buildings were in a state of disorder, and in 40% - the doors were not secured against accidental bumping due to wind blowing.

There were also reservations to ladders which are necessary on every farm. As many as 70% of them failed to meet technical safety requirements. Such a high percentage of dangerous ladders has not been noted for many years.

Tools and equipment: the largest number of shortcomings were identified with regard to safe operation of electrical equipment used during tasks in workshops. In 34% of farms the identified irregularities were most often connected with using tools of one's own design, in poor technical condition, with no protection whatsoever from injuries which may be caused by contact with moving working parts and from high risk of electric shock. Sawing machines used on farms for woodworking are very hazardous; over 58% of the assessed machines did not fulfil the requirements of work safety in terms of installation of safety devices, such as guards on the saw blade and the drive transmission. The majority of noticed irregularities concerned home-made sawing machines, which do not meet any OSH requirements, yet are still used on many farms.

It should additionally be emphasised that when compared with 2016, the number of hazardous and faulty ladders rose by more than 30 percentage points, while in the case of faulty sawing machines, the increase was 20 percentage points. Therefore, NLI inspectors will pay special attention to such types of equipment during visitations and other preventive activities in 2018.

Visitations of field works: NLI employees reviewed the technical condition of agricultural machines and equipment, including about 2.6 thousand tractors, almost 700 combine

harvesters and over 2.2 thousand other farming machines and equipment, for example presses, manure spreaders, mowing machines, sprayers, sowers.

39% of the assessed tractors gave grounds for reservations due to worn-out tyres on wheels, disconnected brake conductors, lack of proper lighting. There are still cases of improper coupling of a tractor with a trailer or a farming machine (shortcomings were revealed in 33% of the assessed combinations). Moreover, fire extinguishers and first-aid kits were missing in tractors.

Moreover, 37% of other farming machines and devices checked during visitations had no guards on articulated-telescopic shafts, and 40% of the inspected combine harvesters had no guards on driving elements of the harvesting unit, or the existing guards were damaged or incomplete. Ladders and handrails serving as access and exit routes for operators of combine harvesters were incomplete. The operators did not use props to protect a person from being crushed when working under a header lifted by a hydraulic system during its repair.

The practice which is hazardous but still noticeable is the transport of persons on trailers (especially loaded with bulky goods), on latches, platforms, steps and mudguards of machines or in cabins of farming vehicles unsuitable for transport purposes, which poses risks to their life and health. In 2017, 220 cases of transporting persons were noticed. In comparison with 2016, when 314 such cases occurred, it was a considerable decrease (by one third).

Despite a noticeable growth in the number of new tractors, machines and pieces of equipment for agricultural production, farmers still use worn-out machines posing risks to life and health of the operators. The identified irregularities were most often caused by excessive worn-out, makeshift repairs, missing or unsuitable guards and safety devices, use of machines produced „in a garage” – of faulty design, with incorrect technical and ergonomic solutions.

As every year, special attention during visitations was given to **the safety of children and teenagers**. Unfortunately, there are still cases of engaging children in work tasks which they should not perform due to the risk of losing health or life.

There were 147 cases of children performing work, including 53 which concerned performance of work tasks forbidden to juveniles; 66 children stayed in a hazardous zone – near working agricultural machines and devices. The scale of that problem decreased by over 30% in comparison with the preceding year.

Participation of the National Labour Inspectorate's employees **in educational activity** conducted for many years has enabled our authority to disseminate necessary knowledge among persons working and living in rural areas. It has to be emphasised that the majority of those activities (about 60%) have been conducted together with representatives of the cooperating institutions, most often with the Farmers' Social Insurance Fund. Last year, NLI employees gave lectures on OSH during 232 training events attended by 5.4 thousand farmers and 101 meetings for almost 2.9 thousand pupils of agricultural vocational schools, as well as 314 talks for over 14 thousand children from kindergartens, primary schools and middle schools in rural areas.

Additionally, NLI employees initiated and jointly organised promotional and popularising activities, thanks to which farmers could broaden their knowledge of work-related hazards of accidents. 1.1 thousand persons working on farms participated in 63 OSH knowledge competitions. 168 contests and knowledge competitions on safe living in the country were organised for children and teenagers from villages; they attracted 11.6 thousand participants. Worthy of notice is a nationwide arts competition for rural children from primary schools titled "Safe on farms", organised together by the Farmers' Social Insurance Fund and the National Labour Inspectorate, under the honorary sponsorship of the Minister of Agriculture. Its seventh edition was conducted under the slogan "The essence is a safe farm – chemical products are not fun". In that edition, 34.3 thousand artistic works from 2.6 thousand schools were assessed. It is an important preventive task, which helps to develop positive behaviour connected with work and life on farms among the youngest ones.

Summing up, it should be stressed that one can notice changes resulting from equipping farms with new machines and tractors. Farmers more frequently implement organisational and technical solutions which take into account the improvement of safety conditions and they admit that such changes are also caused by actions promoting OSH rules in farming, conducted by the National Labour Inspectorate, Farmers' Social Insurance Fund and agricultural advisory centres. The noticeable transformation confirms that preventive and educational activity should be continued in future years. This helps consolidate positive phenomena and develop a safety culture among rural inhabitants of all age groups.

6. Statistical data on work accidents in farming, including their causes

Victims of work accidents in farming according to data of Farmers' Social Insurance Fund (KRUS), Central Statistical Office (GUS) and National Labour Inspectorate (PIP)			2017	Accident causes
KRUS¹	Data on accidents in farming work, reported to KRUS by private farmers (or their families) entitled to receive benefits from social insurance for farmers.	Total number of victims, including fatal ones	18 161 69	The publications include no data on causes of work accidents
GUS²	Data on work accidents reported to GUS by farming companies	Total number of victims, including fatal ones	859 3	<p>Groups of causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorrect behaviour of a worker; • improper condition of a material agent; • incorrect work organisation; • lack, or improper use, of a material agent; • failure to use protective equipment; • improper wilful behaviour of a worker; • poor psychophysical condition of a worker.
PIP³	Data on work accidents reported to the NLI and examined in terms of correctness of the applied preventive measures	Total number of victims, including fatal ones	40 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ignorance of the hazard and paying insufficient attention to the performed activities; • neglecting hazards (risky behaviour); • insufficient experience; • no training in the form of workstation instructions; • no instructions for conducting a technological process; • no instructions on safe operation of machines and equipment and safe use of tools;

¹ data of KRUS; information on the causes is unavailable

² non-final data of GUS refer to Agriculture (PKD groups 01.1-01.6);

³ NLI's data refer to Agriculture (PKD groups 01.1-01.6)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no supervision of workers; • no personal protective equipment; • incorrect coordination of team work tasks; • connivance of the supervising personnel for breaches of regulations and rules of safe work; • incorrect selection of personal protective equipment; • no vocational training; • insufficient professional preparation of workers – lack of necessary qualifications; • lack, wrong selection (or poor technical condition) of technical devices as well as guards which should prevent access to danger zones; • incorrect use of machines and equipment (among others, lack of sufficient strength and stability); • inadequate production parameters of a material agent – technical parameters not meeting the required standard.
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