



HELLENIC REPUBLIC



HELLENIC STATISTICAL AUTHORITY

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PRESS RELEASE

Accidents at work and other work related health problems LABOUR FORCE SURVEY – AD HOC MODULE 2013

The purpose of the survey was to gather information on accidents and health problems associated with work. In addition, the survey collected information on the presence in the workplace of factors that negatively affect the physical or mental health of workers.

In particular, the target of the survey was to:

- estimate the number of cases and days lost because of accidents at work and the number of cases and days lost because of work-related health problems
- analyse the differences in the occurrence of accidents at work and health problems in relation to factors associated with the worker's characteristics (sex, age, occupation, etc.), as well as factors associated with the employer's characteristics (economic activity, size of the company, etc.)
- assess the occurrence of factors at work that can adversely affect the physical or mental health of the workers
- analyse the evolution of the above characteristics since 2007, taking into account the results of corresponding survey that was carried out in 2007.

A. Accidents at work during the last 12 months

Off all the persons that were working (or had a job from which they were temporarily absent) during the reference week, or they have worked during the last 12 months (3,933,317) it is estimated that 68,850 persons (1.8%) had at least one accident at work. The work accident rate appears to be higher in males than in females (2.4% and 0.9% respectively). Also, 11.3% of accidents are road accidents, which also involve men more than women (see Table 1).

Table 1. (Number of accidents at work by sex during the last 12 months)

	TOTAL		Males		Females	
TOTAL	3,933,317	100%	2,288,406	100%	1,644,911	100%
Had at least one accident	68,850	1.8%	54,606	2.4%	14,245	0.9%
<i>Road traffic accident</i>	7,758	11.3%	6,779	12.4%	980	6.9%
<i>Other</i>	61,092	88.7%	47,827	87.6%	13,265	93.1%
Had no accident	3,586,919	91.2%	2,082,640	91.0%	1,504,279	91.5%
No answer	277,547	7.1%	151,160	6.6%	126,387	7.7%

**percentages for the type of accidents refer to persons reported at least one accident*

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Accidents at work do not seem to be serious for almost half (47%) of the 68,850 persons who reported an accident, as they resulted only to one-day work loss or no work loss at all. As regards the rest of the cases, the vast majority of accidents at work (41.7%) resulted in a work loss ranging from two days to two weeks, while 10% of the cases refer to more serious accidents, which resulted in work loss of two weeks and over, It also seems that the loss of workdays appears to be more frequent for men than for women, especially in less serious cases (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of working days lost due to accident at work during the last 12 months, by sex

	TOTAL		Males		Females	
TOTAL (had at least one accident)	68.850	100%	54.606	100%	14.245	100%
Returned to work the same day	27.972	40.6%	20.766	38.0%	7.205	50.6%
One day	4.396	6.4%	4.150	7.6%	247	1.7%
From 2 days to 2 weeks	28.725	41.7%	23.363	42.8%	5.362	37.6%
From 2 weeks to 6 months	6.177	9.0%	4.845	8.9%	1.332	9.4%
6 months or more or still off work	890	1.3%	791	1.4%	98	0.7%
No answer	691	1.0%	691	1.3%	0	0.0%

The occupational group with the highest rate of accidents at work is clearly “Craft and related trades workers” (4.9%), followed by “Plant and machine operators and assemblers” (3.2%). The majority of accidents in those groups resulted in work loss for at least two days. On the contrary, the occupational groups with the lowest accident rates are “Professionals”, as well as “Clerical support workers”. Furthermore, “Managers” have a low accident rate (1.1%) and in addition their accidents appear (79.1%) to result in no loss of workdays (Table 3).

Table 3. Accidents at work and number of working days lost by occupation

	TOTAL	Had at least one accident	Period off work because of the accident				
			No time off	1 day	2 days or more	No answer	
TOTAL	3,933,317	68,850	1.8%	40.6%	6.4%	52.0%	9.0%
Managers	192,844	2,124	1.1%	79.1%	8.2%	12.7%	0.0%
Professionals	730,384	4,674	0.6%	39.1%	12.6%	42.9%	7.3%
Technicians and associate professionals	297,152	3,032	1.0%	53.0%	0.0%	47.0%	5.2%
Clerical support workers	401,809	2,036	0.5%	42.1%	0.0%	57.9%	0.0%
Service and sales workers	829,706	9,246	1.1%	37.6%	3.6%	58.9%	13.0%
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	468,628	10,748	2.3%	55.3%	10.0%	34.7%	6.0%
Craft and related trades workers	415,568	20,516	4.9%	36.3%	3.3%	59.3%	9.0%
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	249,299	7,946	3.2%	25.2%	11.0%	60.9%	12.2%
Elementary occupations	284,997	6,326	2.2%	27.2%	8.4%	64.5%	16.0%
Other unclassified persons	60,966	240	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
No answer	1,964	1,964	100.0%	72.0%	7.2%	20.7%	0.0%
<i>% among respondents had at least one accident</i>							

B. Work related health problems during the last 12 months

Off all persons that were working during the reference week, or have worked in the past (7,083,877) it is estimated that 605,392 persons (8.5%) suffered from health problems that were caused or aggravated by work during the last 12 months. The most common problems are related to bones, joints or muscles, mainly affecting the upper and lower extremities or the back. More specifically,, problems in the back amount to 26.7% of the reported problems whereas problems in the lower and upper extremities to 18.6% and 14.0%, respectively. Problems concerning the heart or the circulatory system in general are the second most common type of problem (13%), followed by stress/depression/anxiety and breathing /lung problems (6.8% and 6.3%, respectively). The remaining types of problems lie in lower levels ranging from 4.3% (stomach, liver, etc) to 0.6% (hearing), whereas 3.4% of persons report other types of problems not covered by the list.

There is almost no difference in the overall health problems rate between males and females. However, it should be noted that females seem to suffer more from problems in the

extremities and males report more frequently problems in the heart/circulatory system (Table 4).

Table 4. Work related health problems by type and sex during the last 12 months

	TOTAL		Males		Females	
TOTAL	7,083,877	100%	3,931,887	100%	3,151,990	100%
Suffered work related health problem(s)	605,392	8.5%	331,386	8.4%	274,006	8.7%
<i>Bone, joint or muscle problem which mainly affects neck, shoulders, arms or hands</i>	84,942	14.0%	37,091	11.2%	47,851	17.5%
<i>Bone, joint or muscle problem which mainly affects hips, knees, legs or feet</i>	112,525	18.6%	49,766	15.0%	62,759	22.9%
<i>Bone, joint or muscle problem which mainly affects back</i>	161,347	26.7%	91,831	27.7%	69,516	25.4%
<i>Breathing or lung problem</i>	38,213	6.3%	26,510	8.0%	11,703	4.3%
<i>Skin problem</i>	9,130	1.5%	5,587	1.7%	3,543	1.3%
<i>Hearing problem</i>	3,542	0.6%	2,098	0.6%	1,444	0.5%
<i>Stress, depression or anxiety</i>	41,226	6.8%	22,840	6.9%	18,386	6.7%
<i>Headache and/or eyestrain</i>	15,979	2.6%	10,014	3.0%	5,965	2.2%
<i>Heart disease or attack, or other problems in the circulatory system</i>	78,732	13.0%	54,365	16.4%	24,366	8.9%
<i>Infectious disease (virus, bacteria or other type of infection)</i>	12,313	2.0%	5,375	1.6%	6,938	2.5%
<i>Stomach, liver, kidney or digestive problem</i>	26,232	4.3%	15,766	4.8%	10,466	3.8%
<i>Other types of health problem</i>	20,643	3.4%	9,782	3.0%	10,861	4.0%
<i>No answer</i>	568	0.1%	361	0.1%	207	0.1%
No health problem	6,200,938	87.5%	3,449,341	87.7%	2,751,597	87.3%
No answer	277,547	3.9%	151,160	3.8%	126,387	4.0%

* Percentages for health problem type refer to persons who suffered work related health problems

Among the occupational groups, “Craft and related trades workers”, “Plant and machine operators and assemblers” and “Elementary occupations” seem to be those who suffer most from work related health problems (9.2%, 8.8% and 8.3% respectively). On the contrary, the lowest occurrence of work related health problems is observed for “Professionals” and “Clerical support workers” (4.3 and 4.2% respectively) (Table 5).

Table 5. Work related health problems by occupation during the last 12 months

	TOTAL	Suffered work related health problem(s)	
TOTAL	7,083,877	605,392	8.5%
Managers	240,695	13,821	5.7%
Professionals	881,367	37,494	4.3%
Technicians and associate professionals	398,813	25,996	6.5%
Clerical support workers	573,968	24,229	4.2%
Service and sales workers	1,127,161	61,764	5.5%
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	618,616	40,598	6.6%
Craft and related trades workers	686,316	63,182	9.2%
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	351,652	30,990	8.8%
Elementary occupations	421,882	35,121	8.3%
Other unclassified persons	75,797	1,266	1.7%
No answer	1,707,610	270,931	15.9%

C. Exposure to factors affecting physical or mental health

Persons who had a job during the reference week were asked about whether or not they consider they are exposed at work to certain factors that could affect the physical or mental health. As regards the physical health, off the estimated number of 3,535,005 people, the factor most frequently mentioned as the most dangerous was difficult postures or movements (14.6%). Men seem to be mostly exposed to difficult postures/ movements, heavy loads, chemicals/dust and accidents, whereas women seem to be mostly exposed to difficult postures/movements and strong visual concentration. In addition, nearly half of the persons (more men than women) report one of the six factors included in the questionnaire list as risky for physical health. (Table 6).

Table 6. Most risky factor at work for physical health by sex

	TOTAL		SEX			
			Males		Females	
TOTAL	3,535,005	100.0%	2,076,453	100.0%	1,458,552	100.0%
Difficult work postures or work movements	515,723	14.6%	279,364	13.5%	236,359	16.2%
Handling of heavy loads	330,905	9.4%	252,793	12.2%	78,112	5.4%
Noise or strong vibration	61,813	1.7%	49,273	2.4%	12,540	0.9%
Chemicals, dust, fumes, smoke or gases	293,351	8.3%	204,396	9.8%	88,955	6.1%
Activities involving strong visual concentration	360,597	10.2%	195,342	9.4%	165,255	11.3%
Risk of accidents	267,666	7.6%	213,052	10.3%	54,613	3.7%
None of the above	1,503,654	42.5%	767,961	37.0%	735,693	50.4%
No answer	201,295	5.7%	114,272	5.5%	87,024	6.0%

Approximately three out of ten people said they are exposed to factors that affect mental health, whereas time pressure/overload of work is reported by the vast majority (27.9% of the total) as the most dangerous factor. On the contrary, physical or verbal abuse, as examined in terms of violence/threats and harassment/bullying, is mentioned by only 2% of the respondents. The results are slightly different when broken down by gender: men seem to be a little more exposed not only to time pressure/overload of work but also to violence/threat of violence than women (Table 7).

Table 7. Most risky factor at work for mental health by sex

	TOTAL		SEX			
			Males		Females	
TOTAL	3,535,005	100.0%	2,076,453	100.0%	1,458,552	100.0%
Time pressure or overload of work	961,034	27.2%	582,642	28.1%	378,393	25.9%
Violence or threat of violence	69,490	2.0%	51,684	2.5%	17,806	1.2%
Harassment or bullying	56,356	1.6%	29,916	1.4%	26,440	1.8%
None of the above	2,246,829	63.6%	1,297,940	62.5%	948,890	65.1%
No answer	201,295	5.7%	114,272	5.5%	87,024	6.0%

D. Comparisons with the 2007 ad hoc survey

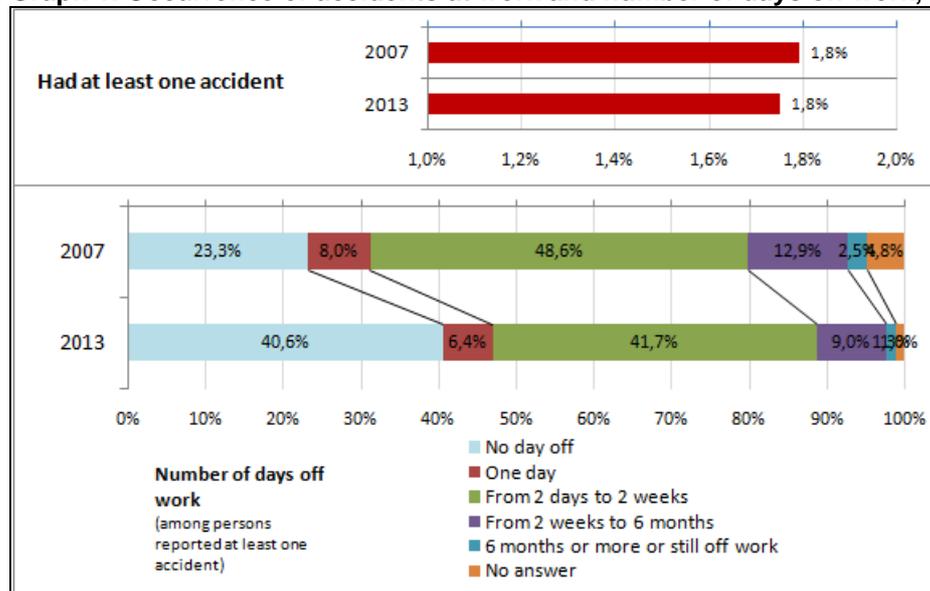
The survey results are compared with those of the corresponding 2007 survey. The latter have been revised in accordance with the latest revision of the population, on the basis of the 2011 population census and with the corresponding adjustment of the weights of the Labour Force Survey¹.

The overall accident at work rate has remained stable, amounting approximately to 1.8% for both the 2007 and the 2013 survey. Nevertheless, absence of workers from work seems to

¹ Concerning the revision of population estimates based on the 2011 census, see http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0101/PressReleases/A0101_SJO01_DT_Q_Q_01_2014_01_F_EN.pdf

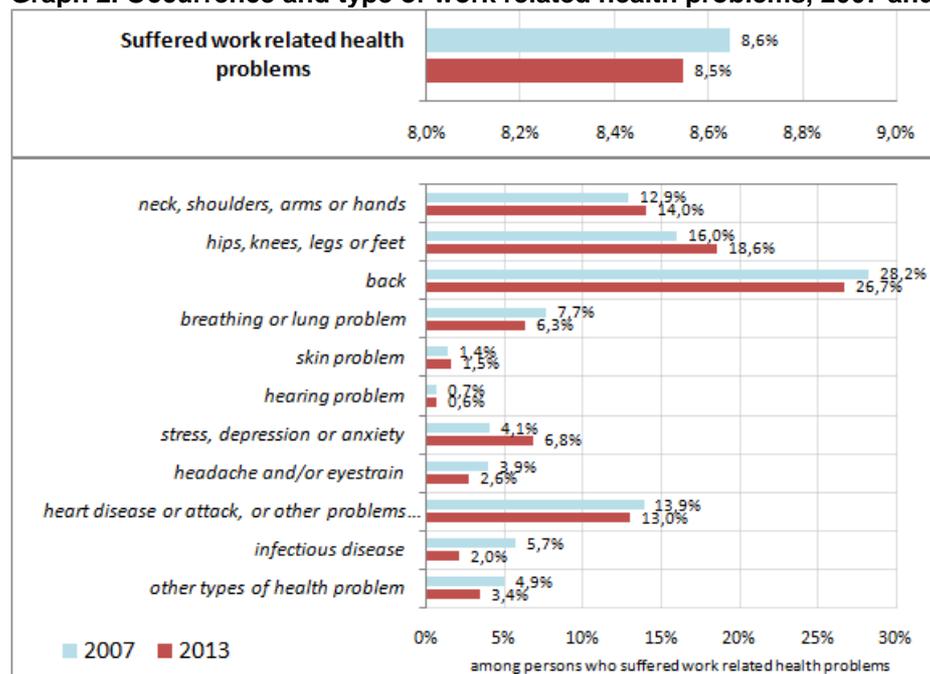
have generally decreased in 2013. More particularly, it is observed that the frequency of absence from work, even for one day, is lower since the share of workers that reported having returned to work the same day was 40% in 2013, while the corresponding share in 2007 was 23.3% (Graph 1).

Graph 1. Occurrence of accidents at work and number of days off work, 2007 and 2013



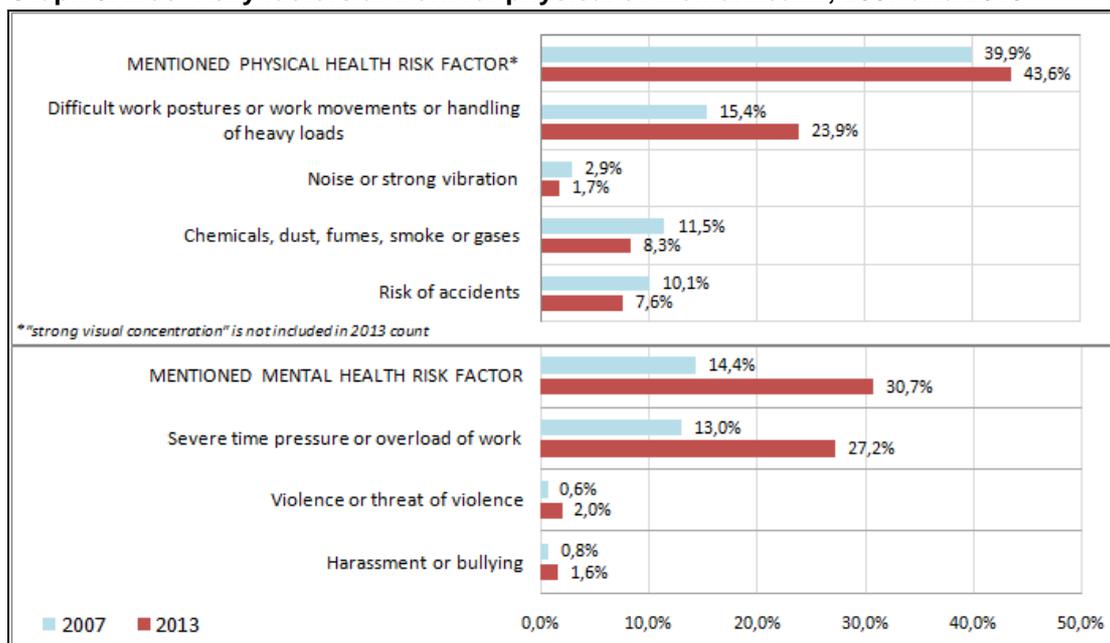
- The overall work related health problem rate has remained stable. There are only minor changes regarding the type of the most serious health problem reported. Indicatively, it is observed that the share of problems in the upper or lower extremities is slightly higher in the 2013 ad hoc module in comparison with 2007, whereas an opposite trend is observed for problems in the back. Reports over stress/ depression/ anxiety have slightly increased. In 2013 in comparison with 2007. In contrast, infectious diseases appear to have decreased significantly in 2013 in comparison with 2007 (Graph 2).

Graph 2. Occurrence and type of work related health problems, 2007 and 2013



- Finally, differences are observed in both factors affecting physical and mental health. Firstly, the overall reporting rates have been increased in 2013, especially as regards the factors affecting mental health.. Moreover, as regards physical risks, in 2013 there has been a significant growth in the share of difficult postures / heavy loads in comparison with 2007, In contrast, the remaining risk factors recorded a decrease.. As regards mental risks, the share of severe time pressure / work overload has increased more than double in 2013 compared with 2007, whereas the remaining mental risk factors have recorded only a slight increased. (Graph 3).

Graph 3. Most risky factors at work for physical or mental health, 2007 and 2013



EXPLANATORY NOTES

Survey on accidents at work and other work related health problems The ad-hoc survey on “Accidents at work and other work related health problems” was conducted on the 2nd quarter of 2013 along with Labour Force Survey. Its main objective was to investigate the occurrence of accidents that occur at work and illnesses caused or exacerbated by it. Information on the presence of factors in the workplace that negatively affect the physical or mental health workers was also collected.

Legislation The specifications of the survey, i.e. timing, main objectives and characteristics to be surveyed, were laid down in Commission Regulation No 220/2010 of 16 March 2010.

Reference Period The reference period for the key variables of the survey is the last 12 months before the reference week.

Coverage Target population of the Quarterly LFS comprises of all persons that are living in private households. The ad hoc module on “Accidents at work and work related health problems” was addressed to subsets of that population, and in particular:

- **Accidents at work:** Persons aged 15 and over that were working (or had a job from which they were temporarily absent) during the reference week, or they have worked during the last 12 months
- **Work related health problems:** Persons aged 15 and over that were working during the reference week, or have worked in the past.
- **Physical or Mental risk factors:** Persons aged 15 and over that were working during the reference week

Definitions **Accident at work:** a discrete and unforeseen event or occurrence which leads to physical harm to the respondent and that occurred whilst engaged in an occupational activity or during the time spent at work.

Work related health problems: include all health problems which are considered by the person to have been caused or aggravated by work (past or current).

Exposure to physical health risk factors: it can mean executing body movements or sensory functions, coming into contact with materials or environmental factors or being aware and threatened by the risk of accidents, but always at a frequency and intensity that this is perceived as a risk or has led to physical health problems.

Severe time pressure or overload of work: demands concerning either the time during which or by when the work needs to be executed or demands concerning the amount of work to be executed and these demands going beyond the abilities and resources of the person and as such leading to a decrease in mental well-being.

Violence and threat of violence: physical force used by another person or group that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm, all three leading to a decrease in mental well-being. Both real experiences of such actions and a feeling of the threat of such actions are covered.

Harassment and bullying: intentional use of power used by another person or group that can result in harm to physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development leading to a decrease in mental well-being. (the term “psychological violence” is also used and is included in this category).

At work: the usual environment where a person carries out his/her work activities. In most of the cases it is the local unit or establishment, but for certain workers that work outside the local unit (e.g. builders, firemen, etc) it is the general environment where the work is usually carried out.

Methodology The estimates of the 2013 ad-hoc survey estimates (accidents, health problems etc) are produced by means of a suitable unbiased estimator which takes into account: a) the probability of selection of every sampled household, b) the response rate in every primary sampling unit, c) the estimated population, allocated by NUTS 2 areas, gender and age group).

References More information (tables, methodology) about the Ad-hoc module can be found at http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-themes?p_param=A0102