

REGULATION AND SUPERVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Review Paper

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to present the existing system of regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety in the Republic of Croatia and to present opinions on possible improvements to that system. Occupational health and safety is an integral part of Croatian legislation and health protection of working people, which is reflected in numerous laws and ordinances. Regulating issues related to occupational safety means prescribing the rights, obligations and responsibilities of all entities participating in the implementation of measures aimed at preventing occupational risks and their harmful consequences. Understanding the theoretical settings is necessary for the implementation of a systematic analysis of the occupational health and safety management process model. Therefore, the paper presents the theoretical settings of occupational health and safety and the basic elements and key components of the regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety. At the same time, an opinion is presented on the challenges brought by the future of work and the need to adapt and improve the arrangement and supervision of occupational health and safety. Based on the analysis carried out, the conclusion states the possibilities for improving the field of regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety in the Republic of Croatia.

Keywords: improvement, occupational safety and health, regulation, supervision.

1 Introduction

1.1 The importance of occupational health and safety

Every year around two million workers around the world lose their lives, get injured or get occupational diseases while doing their job. According to the data of the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance, in the past 15 years in the Republic of Croatia, an average of 40 workers are killed at work per year, and an average of 17,844 workers are injured at work (Croatian Institute for Health Insurance).

Effective management of occupational health and safety (in the continuation of the text: OHS) is the goal of every employer, including the state. Occupational health and safety can be defined as a set of measures implemented to prevent the impact of harmful factors of the work process and/or environment on the health and life of workers/employees, as well as other material and non-material damages at work.

The OHS management system is part of the overall business system that realizes the management of health and safety risks inherent in the organization's business activities. The OHS system includes the organizational structure, planning, responsibility, practice, procedures, processes, resources for the development, application, implementation, review and maintenance of the health and safety protection policy of the organization (Palačić, Mudri, 2014).

According to Kacian (1998), occupational health and safety is an interdisciplinary scientific and professional field (it leaves the domain of the existing system of basic sciences and scientific disciplines) as well as a multidisciplinary field (because it forms a new field in which there are many scientific disciplines that touch and overlap).

Occupational health and safety can also be defined as a system of technical, health, legal, psychological, pedagogical and other activities, which are used to detect and eliminate dangers and hazards that can threaten the life and health of people at work (Palačić, 2006).

According to the regulations, OHS is part of the organization of work and execution of the work process, and it is achieved by performing OHS tasks and applying prescribed, contracted, as well as recognized OHS rules, the employer's ordered measures and instructions (Palačić, Živković, 2014).

The employer is responsible for organizing and implementing OHS on the basis of objective responsibility, regardless of whether he employed an occupational safety expert for this purpose, or organized an OHS service or contracted cooperation with an authorized company (Palačić, 2011).

Occupational health and safety is an integral part of Croatian legislation and health protection of working people, which is reflected in numerous laws and ordinances. Regulating issues related to OHS means establishing, or prescribing the rights, obligations and responsibilities of all subjects participating in the implementation of measures aimed at preventing occupational risks and their harmful consequences (Šokčević, 2010).

OHS should be a constructive and indispensable part of every business organization, regardless of its type, size or activity that a business entity is engaged in. The key factor in the quality implementation of OHS is the level of awareness of one's surroundings and the level of knowledge of the subject matter, work tasks and workplace. The higher this level is among occupational safety experts, the higher the level of awareness of possible dangers and risks. Therefore, OHS should be seen as the benefit of all subjects of a business organization, and not as unnecessary fatigue or unnecessary expense, as many people unfamiliar with this profession often superficially articulate.

Applying and adhering to the rules and safety measures at work protects the health and life of employees, and for employers, the risk of fines, misdemeanor orders, criminal proceedings, but also damage to the reputation of the business organization and themselves is significantly reduced.

Based on the theoretical settings of process management, process approach and OHS organization, a model of the OHS management process in the Republic of Croatia was established (Lalić et al., 2019).

OHS processes are defined by national regulations and international norms in this area. OHS process is part of the organization of work and the execution of the work process, and it is achieved by performing OHS tasks and applying prescribed, contracted, as well as recognized occupational safety rules and the employer's ordered measures and instructions. In this sense, depending on the number of employees, it is possible to organize the performance of OHS tasks in several ways (Palačić et al., 2020).

At the national level, occupational health and safety processes based on regulations determine which elements they consist of. At the national level, the goals are set by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, based on adopted strategies (Učur, 2016). The National Council for Occupational Health and Safety monitors the achievement of goals. At the level of the employer, each of the employers sets its own safety objectives at work and ensures that they are achieved. In the event that the measures taken

to achieve the goals do not produce the required results, corrective actions should be taken at each level. The State Inspectorate, the Labor Inspectorate, is responsible for supervising the implementation of the occupational health and safety process and its compliance with legal requirements.

1.2 Aim and purpose of the research

The aim and purpose of the paper is to present the existing system of regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety in the Republic of Croatia and to present opinions on possible improvements to that system.

Given that the process of regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety in the Republic of Croatia is affected by changes in regulations, the purpose of the research is to analyze and collect information on the current compliance of the regulation and supervision process with current guidelines, and to stimulate discussion about possible improvements.

1.3 Research tasks

In accordance with the set goal, the research tasks are:

- analyze and present the basic theoretical assumptions of occupational health and safety
- analyze and present the legal requirement for occupational health and safety in Republic of Croatia
- analyze and present the regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety in the Republic of Croatia
- present the impact of individual elements of regulation and supervision on occupational safety
- present opinions on possible improvements.

1.4 Methods

On the basis of the established problem, the set goal and tasks of scientific research, suitable scientific methods were chosen that make up the work methodology. The theoretical settings of regulation and supervision of OHS are analyzed from selected scientific and professional literature. The contents of valid regulations are also analyzed. The analysis method analyzes the arrangement and supervision of OHS, after which the most important properties are described and displayed using the description method. After the analysis and comparison, essential properties are synthesized and conclusions are drawn.

2 Regulation and supervision of occupational health and safety

2.1 Constitution and legislation of the Republic of Croatia

The fact that it is directly mentioned in the fundamental legal act of the Republic of Croatia, i.e. in the Constitution, tells how important OHS is. In the article. 65. it is stated: "Children may not be accepted for work before the age specified by law, nor may they be forced to work that adversely affects their health or morale, nor may such work be allowed to them. Youth, mothers and people with disabilities have the right to special protection at work."

Legal rules and regulations of general and special laws are important for regulating labor relations and working conditions. These are, above all, the Labor Law (N.N. no. 93/14, 127/17, 98/19, 151/22), the Law on Compulsory Health Insurance (N.N. no. 80/13, 137/13, 98/19), the Law on on health care (N.N. no. 100/18, 125/19, 147/20, 119/22, 156/22), Criminal Code (N.N. no. 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 101/17, 118/18 , 129/19, 84/21) and others.

The Labor Law (N.N. no. 93/14, 127/17, 98/19, 151/22) defines that the employer is obliged to acquire and maintain plants, devices, equipment, tools, the workplace and access to the workplace, and to organize work in a way that ensures the protection of workers' lives and health, in accordance with special laws and other regulations and the nature of the work which is performed. The employer is obliged to familiarize the worker with the dangers of the work that the worker performs and train him to work in a way that ensures the protection of the worker's life and health and prevents the occurrence of accidents.

Generally speaking, there are minimum requirements that the employer must comply with in the implementation of safety at work. They must not be reduced or denied. Protection at work is not a political option and does not belong to the state. The state must create the conditions for its arrangement, realization and improvement. Protection at work is the right of a working man. Norms of the right to protection at work are an integral part of the general legal system of the state (Šokčević, 2014).

All the mentioned regulations are an integral part of the implementation of OHS through legal obligations, but also of sanctioning the negative consequences of superficial and poor implementation of OHS. Due to the extensiveness of OHS, it is regulated by a special law, i.e. the Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18). On the basis of the Occupational Safety and Health Act itself, a number of ordinances have been published that regulate individual areas of OHS in more detail.

The legal regulations are very extensive. Due to the large amount of regulations, we can say that the OHS is over-standardized (excessive). In practice, this results in attempts to find loopholes in the law and the implementation of most activities only in a formal way without the effect they should have. Some requirements of the ordinances in some parts are in conflict with the requirements of other ordinances. By reviewing the regulations, it can be concluded that certain areas of OHS are vague and can be interpreted in different ways. Practice shows that even occupational safety inspectors interpret certain provisions of the regulations differently, which is certainly not good. Employers are often not sure how to implement certain requirements from the regulations. For the further development of OHS, it is necessary to standardize the attitudes of occupational safety inspectors through education. Also, it is necessary to create modern legislation that will support the introduction of new effective measures and procedures such as those required by the application of international standards (eg ISO) and reduce bureaucratization and vagueness.

2.2 Directives of the European Union

The Republic of Croatia has an exhaustively developed system of legal rules and norms that regulate minimum requirements in the form of health and safety protection of workers. The system of legal rules has already been almost completely harmonized with the legal acquis of the European Union, especially with Croatia's entry into the European Union in 2013. With that event, a whole series of legal regulations and directives became binding for Croatian legislation, including in the field of occupational health and safety.

This means that directives as legal acts of the European Union require member states to achieve a certain result without dictating the way to achieve that result. Directives usually leave some freedom to Member States as to the exact rules to be adopted.

The most important directives of the European Union in the area of OHS that are applied in the Republic of Croatia:

- Council Directive 89/391/EEC of June 12, 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage the improvement of the safety and health of workers at work (OJ L 183, of June 29, 1989)
- Directive 2007/30/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of June 20, 2007 amending Council Directive 89/391/EEC, its individual directives and Council Directives 83/477/EEC,

- 91/383/EEC, 92/29/ EEC and 94/33/EC in relation to the simplification and rationalization of reports on practical implementation (OJ L 165, dated 27/06/2007)
- Council Directive 92/57/EEC of 24 June 1992 on the application of minimum safety and health requirements on temporary or mobile construction sites (eighth individual directive within the meaning of Article 16, paragraph 1 of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L 245, 26 August 1992)
 - Council Directive 91/383/EEC of June 25, 1991 on amendments to measures to encourage improvements in occupational safety and health of workers in fixed-term and temporary employment (OJ L 206, dated July 29, 1991)
 - Council Directive 92/85/EEC of October 19, 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (the tenth individual directive in the sense of Article 16, paragraph 1 of Directive 89/ 391/EEC) (OJ L 348, dated 28 November 1992)
 - Council Directive 94/33/EC of 29 June 1994 on the protection of young people at work (OJ L 216, 20 August 1994).

The application of directives is mandatory, but what Croatia needs is effective implementation of occupational health and safety. As already emphasized, the existing legal system is outdated, and it is evident that many activities are carried out only to fulfill the legal form.

2.3 Rules and principles of occupational health and safety

The employer is obliged to implement the necessary measures to protect the health and safety of workers, including planning, preparation and implementation of the work process, respecting the highest possible level of protection of workers and the environment and including protection from occupational diseases, ensuring the necessary protection and technological conditions (Šokčević, 2010).

According to the regulations, protection at work as an organized activity includes a system of rules. In order to eliminate hazards at work, there are three types of rules: basic, special and recognized rules of safety at work.

The basic rules of safety at work have the priority of application. They reduce or eliminate hazards on work equipment (i.e. work processes). The basic rules of safety at work contain requirements for work equipment.

If the basic rules of safety at work cannot neutralize the hazards to the safety and health of workers, then special rules of safety at work are applied. They apply to employees and the way of performing work procedures. Special rules contain conditions in the form of age, gender, professional education and training, state of health, and mental and physical abilities, which must be met by workers when performing tasks with special working conditions.

If in the legal system of the Republic of Croatia there are no legal rules of occupational health and safety that the employer should apply for the safety and health protection of workers, recognized occupational safety rules are applied. They include standards, rules of the profession or methods proven in practice, which eliminate or reduce risks at work and prevent the occurrence of injuries at work, occupational diseases, work-related diseases and other harmful consequences for workers.

In addition to the rules, the general principles that the employer is obliged to implement at the workplace, i.e. during the work process, are also defined. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18), the employer is obliged to implement safety at work based on general principles of prevention:

- risk avoidance
- risk assessment

- prevention of risks at their source
- adapting work to workers in connection with the design of the workplace, the choice of work equipment and the way of working in order to alleviate monotonous work, work with an imposed rhythm, work by performance in a certain time and other efforts with the aim of reducing their harmful effect on health
- adapting to technical progress
- replacement of dangerous by non-dangerous or less dangerous
- development of a prevention policy for connecting technology, work organization, working conditions, human relations and the impact of the work environment
- giving priority to collective protection measures over individual ones
- adequate training and notification of workers
- free prevention, i.e. occupational safety measures for workers.

The rules and principles are well defined. However, the practice of implementing OHS in Croatia shows that, in addition to the above, it is necessary to apply some other business principles, such as mentoring, motivation, leadership, teamwork, empathy, constant learning, the application of best global practices, and others. All of the above can very rarely be found in the context of the application of occupational safety and health in Croatia.

2.4 Implementation of occupational health and safety

2.4.1 Risk assessment

The risk assessment is carried out in accordance with the Ordinance on risk assessment (N.N. no. 112/14, 129/19). The assessment must be carried out according to a defined method, which is very general and therefore insufficient. A risk assessment is carried out exclusively for routine activities, while the risks of non-routine worker activities are not assessed at all. The risk assessment method is outdated and serves no real purpose. It is mostly made only to meet the legal requirements for making a risk assessment, and has no practical purpose. The risk assessment is prepared as a very extensive document without real practical application.

Practice shows that in most cases occupational safety experts do not have enough knowledge to prepare a high-quality risk assessment, so an authorized company is hired for its preparation. The market of occupational safety services functions according to the model of the lowest service prices, which directly results in a very low quality of services provided in the field of occupational health and safety.

It is necessary to modernize the risk assessment procedure and allow the application of better risk assessment techniques, as is the case in other more developed countries, and it is necessary to encourage the education of experts in the application of individual assessment techniques.

2.4.2 Jobs with special working conditions

According to Article 3. paragraph 16. of Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18), jobs with special working conditions are jobs in the performance of which, in addition to the general conditions for establishing an employment relationship, the worker working on these jobs must meet the prescribed special conditions related to age, professional qualification, state of health, or mental capacity.

The employer refers the person with whom he intends to enter into an employment contract to perform tasks with special working conditions for an examination by an occupational medicine specialist, with

a referral containing information on the nature or type of work and other circumstances affecting the assessment of his ability to perform these tasks and the possible impact of harm from the workplace to the health of workers.

This area is regulated in detail by the Ordinance on jobs with special working conditions (N.N. no. 5/84), which is outdated, does not take into account new risks, does not contribute to the effective implementation of safety at work, and it is necessary to adapt it to the modern understanding and implementation of OHS.

2.4.3 Occupational health and safety trainings

The training of workers to work in a safe manner consists of two parts, the theoretical part that the worker is obliged to learn, and the practical part of the training that is carried out and evaluated at the place of work. Workers on individual jobs must be professionally trained to perform those jobs. Also, the employer is obliged to train and improve the employer's authorized representatives and workers' commissioners for occupational safety and occupational safety experts.

Although the Ordinance on occupational health and safety training and professional examination (N.N. no. 142/21) regulating occupational health and safety training is relatively new, it is not up-to-date. The requirements of the original document do not follow modern trends in the implementation of education in the field of occupational safety, so very often only formal implementation of education is observed, without the actual acquisition of knowledge by the participants of the education.

2.4.4 Obligation to inform and consult

The employer and employee are obliged to strictly comply with the requirements defined by laws, collective agreements, regulations, as well as all other legal acts in force in the Republic of Croatia. Accordingly, the employer is obliged to inform and consult with the workers, that is, their representatives on issues of occupational safety in accordance with the applicable law and general labor regulations. There is no obligation for workers to appoint their occupational health and safety commissioner, which in many companies results in the absence of such a commissioner. This allows the employer to carry out occupational safety independently without the influence of the worker, very often to the detriment of the worker.

2.4.5 Particularly sensitive groups of workers

Particularly sensitive groups of workers for whom the employer is obliged to provide special protection at work are minor workers, pregnant workers, workers who have recently given birth, workers who are breastfeeding, workers suffering from an occupational disease and workers who have been found to have a reduced and remaining capacity for work or who are at immediate risk from the reduction of working capacity. In order to implement special protection at work, the employer is obliged to indicate jobs that are potentially risky for particularly sensitive groups of workers in the risk assessment.

2.4.6 Measures and means of occupational health and safety

Occupational health and safety measures are requirements in the form of health, physical, psychological and other abilities of workers, facilities, organizational procedures and devices, in order to achieve or ensure an adequate level of OHS. Requests can be viewed from several points of view, for example according to scope, according to time, where they originate, etc.

According to these points of view, there are several divisions of occupational health and safety measures. According to time, these are previous and current measures. According to the scope, these are basic and supplementary measures.

In addition to occupational health and safety measures, the means of occupational health and safety with which many of these measures are implemented are also very important. Therefore, means of OHS are necessary for successful regulation and supervision of OHS in practice. Means of OHS are considered:

- devices, appliances, equipment and similar means and premises in construction facilities
- devices and appliances on work equipment (tools, instruments, machines, devices, etc.)
- devices, appliances and equipment on means of transport and communications
- devices, appliances and other means for preventing the harmful effects of noise and vibrations, electricity and dangerous radiation, as well as the effects of dangerous and harmful substances
- devices, appliances and equipment for providing first aid, rescue and fire protection
- personal protection means and equipment.

In addition to the means of protection at work, there is an obligation to maintain these means and to test them so that only the correct means of protection at work are used.

2.4.7 Organization of occupational health and safety

The organization of OHS depends on the characteristics and size of the company, and is prescribed by the Ordinance on the performance of occupational health and safety activities (N.N. no. 126/19, 154/22). The Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18) divides employers into small, medium and large. This division depends on the number of employees that a certain company has and the risks, so according to this criterion, the method of organizing the performance of occupational safety tasks is prescribed.

An employer who employs up to 49 workers can perform OHS tasks himself or his authorized representative, if he meets the conditions prescribed by the Ordinance on the performance of occupational health and safety activities (N.N. no. 126/19, 154/22).

The employer can contract the performance of occupational safety tasks with an authorized person for occupational safety in the case of objective and justified reasons, which are also defined in the same Ordinance.

In the case of an employer employing from 50 to 249 workers, OHS tasks must be performed by at least one occupational safety expert II. degree. If at least 80% of the employer's workers perform only tasks with low risks, OHS tasks can be performed by at least one occupational safety expert I. degree.

At an employer employing from 250 to inclusively 499 workers, OHS tasks must be performed by at least one occupational safety expert II. degree and one occupational safety expert I. degree, and for every next 500 workers at least one more occupational safety expert II. degree.

Due to the ambiguity of certain provisions of the Ordinance on the performance of occupational health and safety activities (N.N. no. 126/19, 154/22), practice shows a number of irregularities in the organization of OHS activities, especially by authorized companies that in this way secure additional work for themselves. It is evident that small employers do not understand how to organize the performance of OHS activities in accordance with regulations.

2.4.8 Employee commissioners

The OHS expert and the OHS service are responsible for advising employers and authorized representatives as well as employee commissioners. The relationship between the employee commissioners and the engaged authorized companies that perform occupational health and safety professional work is also important.

Workers have the right to elect a employee commissioner for occupational health and safety. Considering that there is no obligation, in a number of situations it is evident that the employer avoids allowing the workers to choose their commissioner for OHS.

2.4.9 Committee for occupational health and safety

If the employer employs 50 or more workers, he must appoint the Committee for Occupational Health and Safety as his advisory body. Committee for Occupational Health and Safety is composed of the employer, the employer's authorized representatives, workers' commissioner, occupational medicine specialists, labor inspectors and occupational safety experts. The chairman of the Committee is the employer or his authorized representative. The committee operates in the form of a tripartite social dialogue.

In accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18), the Committee must meet at least twice a year. Considering that a number of activities in OHS are carried out only formally, it is a very common experience that the meetings of the Committee are only formally recorded. However, there are also organizations in which the Committee for Occupational Health and Safety has a real and very important function.

2.5 Internal and external supervision of occupational health and safety

2.5.1 Obligation of the employer

There are internal and external supervision of the implementation of OHS. The implementation of internal supervision is the responsibility of the employer and the person hired by the employer, that is, an occupational safety expert within the occupational safety service or independently. Also, it can be an external authorized company. By carrying out internal supervision, the employer learns about all irregularities in a timely manner, which can then be effectively removed. Considering that the implementation of OHS is the responsibility of the employer and his authorized representatives, it is extremely important to remove all irregularities in a timely manner and to reduce the risk of injuries at work. The implementation of internal supervision can be controlled by the worker's commissioner, who performs it in the interest of the worker. To put it simply, the implementation of internal supervision in order to eliminate irregularities and increase the level of safety at work is in the interest of the employer and the employee. The consequences of not implementing supervision or poor supervision can cause an increase in risk and great damage.

2.5.2 Work inspection

External supervision is carried out by the State Inspectorate, Labor Inspection. Inspection supervision is carried out on the basis of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18) and related regulations. Inspection supervision can be regular or extraordinary based on a report or due to an injury at work or death at work. The inspector can make a decision on the prohibition of the use of work equipment, that is, on various prohibitions or an order by which the employer must remove the worker from the workplace if the worker's life is in danger. Prohibition measures can also be applied to work equipment that is defective. In certain situations, the employer must notify the labor inspection bodies within the prescribed period of an injury or death at work. In case of non-implementation of safety at work in accordance with the regulations, the inspector is authorized to impose fines, i.e. to file misdemeanor and criminal charges. The work of labor inspectors is determined by the Law on the State Inspectorate (N.N. no. 115/18, 117/21).

Considering the economic situation in Croatia, the problem of the work of the Labor Inspectorate is evident. Namely, the State Inspectorate currently employs a small number of inspectors, so the staffing is currently such that due to overload, regular inspections are almost never carried out, and a large number of Inspectorate employees have left the service. This weakens the external supervision of the

application of OHS, which can ultimately result in a deterioration of the state of occupational health and safety in the Republic of Croatia. The work of the Labor Inspectorate needs to be strengthened by hiring younger and professional inspectors.

2.5.3 The National Council for Occupational Health and Safety

The establishment of the National Council for Occupational Health and Safety is foreseen on the basis of Article 6, paragraph 3 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.N. no. 71/14, 118/14, 94/18, 96/18) for the purpose of advising the Government of the Republic of Croatia in determining, proposing, implementing and reviewing the policy of occupational health and safety and encouraging the harmonization of legislation.

The National Council does not have the authority to directly supervise the occupational health and safety, nor does it have a strong influence on the regulation of the field of OHS. As the most important advisory body of the Government, it can significantly influence the improvement of the state of occupational health and safety.

Unfortunately, the National Council for Occupational Health and Safety has so far not had a significant impact on the improvement of OHS regulations, which would result in an improvement of the situation.

2.5.4 Ministry of labour, pension system, family and social policy

The Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy is the central body of state administration in the Republic of Croatia, which performs administrative and other tasks related to the scope of work. Among other things, the Ministry performs tasks related to the improvement of the occupational health and safety system (Lalić et al., 2019). Within the Directorate for Labor and Occupational Health and Safety, a Sector for Occupational Health and Safety was formed. The Sector performs a range of different professional tasks in connection with the preparation of proposals for regulations, coordination, notification, supervision of authorized companies for OHS. The efforts of the officials of Sector for Occupational Health and Safety to improve the existing system of occupational safety are visible. Despite that, the influence of the Sector for Occupational Health and Safety would have to be more significant. Occupational health and safety must not depend on political options.

3 Conclusion

Every year in Croatia, on average, slightly more than 20,000 workers are injured, and around 50 workers die at work. For such a small country, these are very significant losses. Due to the global crisis, migration and other economic influences, Croatia cannot and must not allow such significant losses and temporary and permanent incapacity for work. These events are the result of ineffective and poorly implemented OHS measures at work, which in some cases were not implemented according to the rules or were not controlled at all by authorized persons. It can be clearly concluded that regulation and supervision of safety at work is a key area in which a solution to this problem needs to be sought and should be considered a priority. Regulation of occupational health and safety is the responsibility of the state, which must first of all modernize the legislation, increase the efficiency of implementation and strengthen the implementation of supervision. The impression is that the existing legal provisions are outdated, and the implementation of OHS in most cases is just a matter of satisfying the form.

Occupational health and safety supervision is mostly restricted to supervision by the Labor Inspectorate. Internal supervision, which should be carried out by the companies themselves, is rare, and accordingly, the state and the effectiveness of OHS is generally poor.

The implementation of OHS must not be neglected by employers, as well as by workers. Safe work should be equally important to all workers in order to consciously and safely approach their daily

work, so they should also follow the safety instructions. Otherwise, the level of quality of life and work is very low and makes normal development impossible.

With additional engagement, key participants in the process of regulation and supervision of occupational safety must influence the improvement of the implementation of occupational safety at all levels and in all organizations. It is necessary to redesign and modernize the OHS system in Croatia in order to create all the necessary prerequisites for effective supervision and implementation of occupational safety by regulating OHS area. This process implies the simplification of certain procedures, changes in information technology, different types of education, redefining the organization of OHS, etc.

In order to determine the views of all participants in the regulation and supervision of occupational safety and the need for changes, it is proposed to launch research with this goal. The results of this research could be used to further improve the process of regulation and supervision by occupational safety in the Republic of Croatia and to improve the effectiveness of occupational health and safety.

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