

# **Occupational Health and Safety Requirements for Workplaces<sup>1</sup>**

Regulation no. 176 of 14 June 2007 of the Government of the Republic

This Regulation is established on the basis of subsection 4 (4<sup>5</sup>) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

## **§ 1. Scope of application**

(1) These requirements shall be applied to the workplaces of all areas of activity except for construction work, extraction of mineral resources, on fishing vessels, in vehicles and on the arable or forestland belonging to a company.

(2) If changes are carried out in the working environment that are related to the placement of workplaces, change or upgrade of technology, use of working equipment or materials, they shall conform to the requirements of this Regulation.

(3) The characters of the working environment, the workplace and the type of work shall be taken into account when applying these requirements.

## **§ 2. Working position and movements of workers**

(1) Workplaces shall be designed such that workers can change their positions and find a suitable working position.

(2) The amount of free space in workplaces shall be considered such that workers can perform their work duties with sufficient freedom of movement. If this is not possible due to special conditions of the workplace, sufficient space for moving in the vicinity of their workplaces shall be provided for workers.

(3) The placement of the chair and work desk or the working level shall ensure an ergonomically correct positioning of the body of the worker. The construction and other properties of the work chair shall conform to the type of work. The height of the work chair shall generally be adjustable and the height and angle of the backrest shall be changeable.

## **§ 3. Buildings and workrooms**

(1) Buildings and workrooms shall be of a structure and solidity corresponding to their purpose of use.

(2) The height and area of workrooms shall be sufficient for workers to perform their work without damaging their health. There shall be at least 10 m<sup>3</sup> of airspace in the workroom per worker (up to 3.5m of the height of the room shall be taken into account when calculating the airspace).

(3) Workrooms shall be sufficiently thermoinsulated from the outdoor environment, taking into account the type of work being performed in the room. The building and finishing material of workrooms shall be safe to health and can be easily cleaned.

(4) Workrooms and work equipment shall be kept clean.

## **§ 4. Doors and gates**

(1) The location, number, dimensions and the materials used in the construction of doors and gates shall be determined by the purpose of their use. Doors and gates shall be protected against breakage and they shall function in such a way that there is no risk to workers.

(2) Revolving doors and swing doors and gates shall be transparent or have a sight-glass. Transparent doors shall be clearly indicated.

(3) Sliding doors shall be fitted with a safety device to prevent them from being derailed. Doors opening upwards shall be fitted with a mechanism to secure them against falling back.

(4) If it is dangerous for pedestrians to cross gates intended for vehicle traffic, there shall be gates for pedestrian traffic in their immediate vicinity. Such gates shall be kept free of obstructions at all times.

(5) Power-operated doors and gates shall operate safely and shall be fitted with an emergency stop device that is at an easily identifiable and accessible location.

(6) If power-operated gates do not open automatically in the event of a power-cut, it shall be possible to open them manually.

(7) Workrooms shall be located such that opening of the doors is not obstructed. When open, doors shall not be positioned so as to constitute a hazard to workers.

(8) Opening of doors located in the vicinity of the traffic routes shall not constitute a hazard to workers.

#### **§ 5. Windows, walls, ceilings and surfaces of workrooms**

(1) If the windows of the workroom can be opened, it shall be possible to open, close and adjust them in a safe manner. When open, windows shall not be positioned so as to constitute a hazard to workers. It shall be possible to cover the windows facing the sun from direct sunlight and thermal radiation if necessary. The cleaning of windows, including skylights, shall not endanger the workers carrying out this work or other workers.

(2) Transparent walls shall be made of a safe material or safe from breakage and be clearly indicated.

(3) Devices or constructions placed on walls or on the ceiling shall be fixed in a safe manner that eliminates the possibility of their falling down.

(4) The surfaces shall be firmly installed, shall not be slippery and shall have no dangerous slopes.

(5) Surfaces that may be exposed to fluids or other substances that increase slipperiness during the working process shall be of a sufficient coarseness.

(6) Access to roofs constructed of materials of inadequate solidity shall be restricted unless devices for ensuring the safety of work performed there can be used.

#### **§ 6. Traffic routes, loading bays and ramps and escalators**

(1) Traffic routes, including stairs, fixed ladders, loading bays and ramps located at the territory of the company or in workrooms shall be of a suitable size and be positioned such as to ensure safe traffic of pedestrians and vehicles and the safety of persons working in their vicinity.

(2) Stairs, maintenance platforms and pedestrian overpasses shall be firmly installed, shall not be slippery and shall have barriers that prevent persons from falling down.

(3) Routes used for pedestrian traffic and hauling of goods shall be dimensioned in accordance with the number of potential users and the type of activity concerned.

(4) If vehicles are used on traffic routes, a sufficient safety clearance or adequate protective barriers shall be provided for pedestrians. Traffic routes shall be clearly indicated if it is necessary to ensure the safety of workers.

(5) Loading bays and ramps shall be safe in order to prevent workers from falling down and suitable for the dimensions of the loads to be loaded. Loading bays shall have at least one exit point.

(6) Escalators shall operate in a safe manner. They shall be equipped with necessary protective devices and fitted with easily identifiable and accessible emergency shutdown devices.

## **§ 7. Ventilation**

(1) It shall be seen to that there is sufficient fresh air in workrooms. The required level of fresh air shall be determined having regard to the number of workers in the room, the physical demands placed on the workers, the size of the workroom and the amount and the specifics of the equipment used.

(2) The workroom and workplaces shall be equipped with an exhaust ventilation system if during the working process dangerous substances or dust that could be harmful for the health of a worker erupts. Any sediments or extraneous matter that could directly put the health of workers at risk by polluting the air shall be immediately removed.

(3) Ventilation installations shall not substantially increase the level of noise in the working environment. The ventilation system being used shall be maintained in good working order and it shall not cause draughts. It shall be possible to clean and regulate the ventilation system.

(4) The ventilation system shall be equipped with an automatic control system that notifies of every failure if it is necessary for protecting the health of workers.

## **§ 8. Lighting**

(1) Workplaces shall be adequately lit. Natural daylight shall be preferred when planning lighting. It shall be presumed that the requirements for the interior lighting of workplaces are met if part 1, "Indoor Work Places" of the standard EVS-EN 12464-1:2003 "Light and Lighting – Lighting of Workplaces" has been used as the basis for the lighting of workplaces. The lighting of a workplace shall be increased if necessary according to the age of medical status of a worker.

(2) The lighting shall be properly channelled, it shall not create shadows or dazzle directly or via reflection. Flickers in luminous flux originating from the source of lighting and big contrasts in brightness when workers are moving from one room or from a part of room to another shall be avoided.

(3) Workrooms where workers are exposed to risks in the event of failure of artificial lighting shall be provided with sufficient emergency lighting.

(4) Workplaces and traffic routes that are located outdoors shall be equipped with artificial lighting if daylight is not sufficient.

### **§ 9. Restrooms and/or accommodation areas**

(1) Changing rooms shall be sufficiently large and be equipped with seats and lockers. There shall be separate lockers or sections for working and casual clothing if the work is dusty or dirty, related to dangerous chemicals or substances that contain them, also in other events if the circumstances so require. Every worker shall be provided a place to store outerwear if changing rooms are not necessary for workers. Men and woman shall have separate changing rooms or provision shall be made for use of changing rooms at separate times.

(2) A drying chamber or drying box that is large enough and well ventilated shall be provided for drying of wet or damp working clothes, towels and footwear. The moist air coming from the drying chamber or drying boxes shall not enter other rooms.

(3) Showers with hot and cold water shall be provided for workers if the nature of their work so requires, for example if the work is dusty or dirty, related to dangerous chemicals or substances that contain them, or it is physically strenuous or performed at high temperatures. In other cases, workers shall have the possibility to use washbasins with hot and cold water. Men and women shall have separate washing facilities or provision shall be made for use of washing facilities at separate times. The washing facilities shall be in the vicinity of the changing rooms.

(4) Provision shall be made for separate lavatories for men and women if possible. Lavatories shall be located close to workplaces, changing rooms and washing facilities. It shall be possible to wash and dry hands in the lavatory.

(5) If interruptions of work are provided due to the type of work and there is no restroom, there shall be other rooms for that purpose, if that is necessary for the interests of the safety and health of workers. Smoking shall be prohibited in rooms meant for resting.

### **§ 10. Eyewash**

An eyewash that is located at an easily accessible and clearly indicated location shall be provided if there is a danger of a foreign body or a chemical coming into contact with eyes in the workplace.

### **§ 11. Outdoor work**

(1) Measures shall be implemented at outdoor work to protect workers from slipping and falling, possible falling objects, harmful noise and harmful gases, vapours and dust.

(2) Workers shall be protected against atmospheric influences that could affect their safety or health.

(3) Outdoor work shall be organised such that in the event of an accident, it shall be possible to help the worker as fast as possible.

### **§ 12. Implementation of requirements of Regulation**

Workplaces shall conform to the requirements specified in this Regulation within three months of the entry into force of the Regulation at the latest.

### **§ 13. Repeal of Regulation**

Regulation no. 402 "Occupational Health and Safety Requirements for Specific Areas of Activity" (RT I 1999, 100, 881) of 21 December 1999 of the Government of the Republic is repealed.

<sup>1</sup> Council Directive 89/654/EEC concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the workplace (first individual directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJEC L 393, 30.12.1989, pages 1-12).