

EMPLOYMENT, CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND WORK SAFETY: ESTONIA EXAMPLE

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Abstract

The paper presents the characteristics of migrant workers unemployment and their working conditions in Estonia. The main information in the article concerns non-Estonians, half of whom has been born in Estonia and many of them have also Estonian citizenship, working conditions of both first and second generation migrants. A lot of migrants arrive to Estonia during the Soviet Union in order to find a job. At that time, workers came to Estonia after the graduation from the Universities during their prime working ages. In addition, the development of occupational health and safety (OH&S) system in Estonia is described in order to better understand the current situation in this field. The issue of job insecurity and cultural differences with a special focus on the situation in the field of OH&S in Estonia are briefly described. The paper presents recommendations needed for improvement the situation in OH&S for multinational workforce in Estonia as well as suggests that human resources are the important part for facilitating a successful cultural and work adjustment.

Keywords: human resources, occupational health and safety, multinational workers.

Introduction

The world of work is rapidly changing. As part of an organization then, human resources management must be prepared to deal with the effects of the changing world of work. This means understanding the implications of globalization, work-force diversity, mobility, changing skill requirements, organisational downsizing, total quality management, reengineering, the contingent work force, decentralized work sites, and employee involvement. There is important to consider occupational health and safety (OH&S) management within a strategic and tactical human resource management framework especially in the issue of cultural differences and migrant workers. Occupational Health and Safety is a complex area which interacts widely with a broader spectrum of business interests and concerns. Due to complexities of the products, process or equipments used to create the products or services, sudden accidental events could happen at any time and may be too much costly for the enterprises (Jarvis *et al.*, 2007). Globalization generates intense competition for labour that has had a profound effect in both developed and developing countries. In developed countries' economies, there tend to be more jobs available at the high and low ends of the labour market than in the middle. Available or unemployed national workers are unwilling to fill low-status jobs because of poor pay, dangerous conditions, and the existence of alternative welfare provisions (Cholewinski, 2005). The challenge of converting the health and safety systems in Estonia to accommodate migrant workers and multinational/-cultural workforce are not being studied and addressed. Many research and reports refer to the kind of work migrant workers typically perform as the "three-D job": dirty, degrading and dangerous. They experience considerable job insecurity, and the sectors and occupations where they are employed are characterised by less advantageous working conditions (European Report, 2007). Migrant workers face additional health and safety risks due to their relatively short period of work in the host countries as well as lack of effective information and knowledge management in organisations (Eurostat, 2008). Estonia experienced rapid development during the transition period and in last five years; it is now faced with an ageing workforce, workflow mobility, changing technologies and rapid implementation of new information technologies. Migrant workers are who come to the Estonia from abroad and who work permanently, temporarily or seasonally. According to Kaczmarczyk *et al.* (2005), Estonia is characterized as a country with moderate migration intensity. The issue of the safety of migrant workers in Estonia is not studied in depth. Estimates of the number of migrant workers are notoriously unreliable. There is very little evidence on Estonian migrant workers (Karu, 2007). Since 2000 the migration data were not used in the estimation of the population in Estonia because of the low quality of registration of the place of residence.

The objective of the current article is to analyze the social-economical problems related to migrant workers in Estonia, especially connected to the field of OH&S.

Profile of the migrant population in Estonia / Immigrant workers characteristics

Estonia is one of the smallest countries in the enlarged EU. Looking at the migration process across the Soviet Union from 1946 to 1988 Estonian demographers found that Estonia had of the highest rates of migration of the entire Soviet republic. The post-war migration flows have resulted in formation of a numerous foreign-born population which comprised 26.3 percent of total population and such a high proportion of foreign-born is record breaking in Europe (Katus, 1999). More than half (57% according to data from the 1989 census) of Russians is first generation settlers, whose social ties and identity have been strongly associated with the country of origin - Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia. During the years of the country's forced annexation by the Soviet Union, large numbers of non-Estonians, predominantly ethnic Russians, were encouraged to migrate to Estonia to work as workers and administrators. These immigrants and their descendants made up approximately one-third of the total population; about 40 percent of these persons were born in Estonia. Russian minority living in contemporary Estonia consists of three principally different groups: (a) immigrants of the Soviet period (1945-1991), (b) relatively small minority of Russians who have lived in Republic of Estonia before 1940 Russian occupation (by approximate calculation – about 30 000 by 2000) and (c) people born in Estonia. The political transformations that occurred in the 1990s (i.e. Estonia received independence from Soviet Union) have rapidly changed the situation of non-Estonians. Many non-Estonians from former Soviet countries were sent to Estonia by the authorities to work in large industries that supplied the Soviet Union. Now, after regaining independence, many of these workers have stayed in Estonia and continue to work in unskilled occupations (partly because they have not learnt Estonian). These groups have come to hold the status of ethnic minorities and feel discriminated against in terms of job opportunities (European Report, 2007). At the same time, it was not clear, how many of these citizens had left Estonia during last decades. The Statistical Office of Estonia estimated that some 16 000 left Estonia for Russia during 1995-1999 (Kirch, 2001). According to Tammur (2006) 80% of migrants in Estonia are Russians. At present, the only relevant data available about migrant workers is from the Citizenship and Migration Board and its yearbook which has been published in 2002, 2003 and 2006. It contains administrative statistics of the Board including the number of residence and work permits that are valid and that are issued during the respective year. The statistics is based on the registered actions of the Citizenship and Migration Board (applications of residence permits, decisions of granting residence permits) (Karu, 2007). The statistics do not include any information on the sociodemographic characteristics of the migrants. According to the yearbook of the Estonian Citizenship and Migration Board, there were 243,796 persons with a valid residence permit at the beginning of 2006, 94% of which had either undetermined citizenship or were citizens of the Russian Federation. 3% of valid resident permits were issued to citizens of European Union, European Economic Area and Switzerland and this has increased in few last years. Most of the persons with valid residence permit had a permanent residence permit (85%) and 36,348 persons (15%) had a temporary residence permit. Although, 7% of the temporary residence permits were issued on the basis of work (about 1,817 permits), this does not exclude the possibility that persons receiving other types of residence permits have started working in Estonia. Around 34% of Estonian population (age 15-74) define themselves as non-Estonians, although 52% of them are born in Estonia. The distribution of the population of Estonia by nationality is given in Table 1. More than 300,000 of the population are Russians (Table 1). Eurostat data referring to the first quarter of 2006 highlight a significant presence of non-nationals in EU countries.

Table 1. Population by ethnic nationality. Composition of population according to ethnic nationality in Estonia (Karu, 2007)

	2000	2006
Estonians	935,884	921,908
Russians	354,660	345,168
Ukrainians	29,259	28,321
Byelorussians	17,460	16,316
Finnish	11,974	11,163
Other nationalities	22,834	21,808
Total	1,372,071	1,344,684

In 2007 there are 229 600 persons received a residence permit from Citizenship and Migration Board in Estonia. At the same time, work permits were given to 721 workers in 2007. Majority of the applicants were from Ukraine (627 persons), Russia (31), India (14) and China (10) (Citizenship and Migration Board, www.mig.ee). In Estonia the percentage of foreigners within the total population was relatively high (16.2%) compare with other Baltic countries (European Report, 2007). Estonia is an exception in Eastern Europe in this respect, which is mainly due to the presence of a large migrant population who entered the country during the Soviet period; the influx comprised a significant proportion of Russian nationals and an even larger share of people with undetermined nationality. At the same time, only 400 illegal foreigners were discovered in Estonia in 2005. The employment rate of Estonian and non-Estonians is presented in Table 2 (years 2000-2007).

Table 2. Estonians' and non-Estonians' employment rate, year (Statistics Estonia, www.stat.ee)

Age: 15-74	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Estonians' employment rate, %	55.5	56.1	57.1	58.3	58.5	58.7	62.8	63.2
Non-Estonians' employment rate, %	53.2	53.4	53.5	53.7	53.8	56.3	59.2	61.5

The data on age group for 2007 have been revised on 15.09.2008.

Occupational health and safety during Soviet times

Several major reforms having conflicting objectives have affected Estonia's OH&S activities within the 20th century. During this time, Estonia experienced several significant political and economical transformations, the conflicting objectives of which had dramatic impact on its OH&S activity. Three institutions were dealing with the complex issue of OH&S until Estonia was annexed by the Soviet Union: Trade Unions (safety inspectors have arranged the state supervision of compliance with the OH&S requirements labour relations), Sanitary Epidemiology Service (the area of activity included the safety of drinking water, noise and illumination at workplaces etc.) and Work Safety Services which have operated under within the area of government different Ministries. Although the governmental supervision over compliance with OH&S requirements of legislation was an effective and the OH&S requirements (standards, rules, guidelines) were strict, at that time the working conditions were poor mainly due to level of technology and machines which did not meet the necessary safety requirement. The first structural changes in OH&S field were launched before independence was regained in 1987 when majority of Trade Unions started disintegrate and many Ministries with Work Safety Services were destructed. Bigger and basic structural changes in the Estonian OH&S started after independence in 1991. The Estonian Labour Inspectorate founded under the Work Ministry in 1990 and it was reorganized in 1992. At the same time, the first Working Environment Act was adopted. There were systems of compensations for work in dangerous conditions which based on law, rules or collective agreements. Many workers received fringe benefits (compensations, half-holiday (shorter working time), additional vacation and breaks, extra salary for working in dangerous conditions, special food and drinks, early retirement). This situation has changed when Estonia passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1999 that provides comprehensive basis for safety and health at work at both policy and practical levels. The Act transposes well the principles of the Framework Directive 89/391/EEC into national legislation including among others: systematic workplace risk assessment, company level OH&S policy, employees' representation at enterprise level, internal control of safety, occupational health services (OHS), surveillance of health of workers etc. Systems of so called "compensations" did not follow preventive approach of the Framework directive and the use of risk premium for hazardous working conditions was basically abolished. Fast improvements have been done in the field of OH&S in Estonia during last years and even though many kinds of measures have already been implemented, there are still a lot of challenges left in this field. Changes in world economy, globalization, workflow mobility and new technologies have implicit effects on OH&S, presenting new challenges also for Estonia. The development of the effective OH&S system of migrant workers as well as the maintenance of their work ability is still in the need to development.

Working conditions and unemployment rate among non-Estonian workers

Unfortunately there are no accurate figures on the number of migrant workers who are injured, killed or made ill through work in Estonia. At the same time, a number of studies discuss the poor safety of migrant

workers all over the world. Foreign-born workers are disproportionately represented in such dangerous industries as construction, agriculture and manufacturing (Hárs, 2004). Several reports and studies point to discrimination in access to the labour market, higher unemployment rate, discrimination during recruitment and career development, that migrants receive lower pay (even when experience, education, etc. are taken into account). In addition, migrant workers are disproportionately represented among temporary workers, part-time workers and workers in the informal economy (Karu, 2007; Castañeda *et al.*, 2007; McKay *et al.*, 2006). It is obvious that the issue safety of migrant workers urgently needs attention also in Estonia, because there are many non-Estonians and migrant workers living and working there. Since there is no exact information available about migrant workers and their working conditions in Estonia, the authors decided to assess the working conditions of non-Estonians, some of whom have born in Estonia. There are substantial differences between the working conditions of Estonians and non-Estonians, who experience higher rates of unemployment and are more often allocated to low-paid jobs that do not match their skills. However, as the migrant worker population is highly differentiated, it would be incurred to generalise: those who migrated to Estonia recently differ from those who migrated the Soviet era; the reasons for migrating and the occupations chosen differ; and attitudes towards Russian-speaking immigrants and immigrants from Western Europe differ. Moreover, migrant workers from the EU, and most immigrants arriving in recent years, come to work as specialists, rather than as unskilled workers (European Report, 2007).

Working hours and unemployment

Ainsaar (1999) concluded that unemployment in Estonia does influence the migration. Karu (2007) stated that non-Estonians have higher unemployment rate, they have lower education and concentrated more on unskilled jobs, but the educational and occupational segregation is weakening. Non-Estonians tend to work more on unsocial hours, shift-work and on fix-term contracts but less part-time (Table 3, 4). Estonians worked on average 39.7 hours and non-Estonians 40 hours during the week (LFS, 2004; Karu, 2007).

The trade union membership is higher among non-nationals. Language skills and citizenship are being regarded as one of main reasons for differences in employment conditions and position of non-Estonians (Karu, 2007).

Table 3. Working hours of Estonian and non-Estonian men and women in 2004, %

	Male	Female	Average	Male	Female	Average
	Estonian			Non-Estonian		
Full-time	83.4	87.4	90.5	96.2	88.2	92.1
Part-time	6.6	12.6	9.5	3.8	11.8	7.9

Table 4. Work at unsocial hours (Karu, 2007)

Diffusion of work at unsocial hours among Estonians and non-Estonians in 2004, %

	Nationality	Yes, sometimes	No
Working at evenings (6-12)	Estonians	35.8	64.2
	Non-Estonians	37.9	62.1
Working at night (after 12 am)	Estonians	11.7	88.2
	Non-Estonians	18.4	81.6
Working at Saturdays	Estonians	38.5	61.5
	Non-Estonians	42.3	57.7
Working on Sundays	Estonians	25.8	74.2
	Non-Estonians	29.4	70.6

A number of surveys related to migrant workers were carried out in Estonia during the 2004-2006 years, but they do not address real working conditions of migrant workers. Vetik *et al.* (2005) conducted a cross-sectional survey of the conditions of non-nationals in Estonia. This research primarily outlines the achievements in terms of strategic goals set up in the national integration program and the process of integration of migrants into Estonian society. The study concentrates mostly on attitudes and does not include many questions on real working conditions. It is not possible to distinguish first- or second-generation migrant workers in this data. The other survey covers the working conditions in Estonia was in 2004 - the Estonian Labour Force Survey (LFS). It deals with nationality, the citizenship, country of birth and year of moving to Estonia; however, no analysis is performed upon the data. Migration is touched on, in

that nationals and non-nationals are distinguished according to their self-reported nationality; thus, it includes data on second-generation migrants. Statistics Estonia has conducted the LFS every year since 1995; since 2000, it has been quarterly study, covering about 15,000 individuals. The results of the survey are representative of the Estonian labour force and the concepts used are developed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). This is one of the main data sources of Statistics Estonia. Several researches called the Working Life Barometer were performed by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2001 and 2005, which assess the attitudes of workers' and employers' toward to OH&S. There is similar active research going on at the Ministry of Social Affairs at present which is dealing with aspects of the working Estonian population and industrial relationship. A distinction between Estonians and non-nationals is made, but because of the small sample size (about 1,000 individuals out of which about 30% are non-nationals), much of the relevant questions on working life cannot be broken down by nationality. The survey's findings are discussed in the Foundation report working conditions in Estonia. This survey evaluates the public opinion and was conducted by the social and market research company Saar Poll in March 2006: 980 non-Estonians (selected using proportional random sampling) aged between 18 and 74 years were interviewed (Saar Poll, 2006). Report on the Migration of Non-Estonians is a survey on the current situation of non-Estonians and their possible emigration to other countries (European Report, 2007). This national-level study (Saar Poll, 2006) uses a wider definition of migrants, describes the non-Estonians' attitudes toward their work (three-quarter of non-Estonians stated that they have jobs that they are qualified for), the level of job satisfaction (60% of respondents were satisfied of their job), living conditions but no data available about the well-being at work and working conditions of migrant workers. The current situation of migrant workers (their integration, language ability and employment) was also analysed by Tammur (2006) without assessment and evaluation of the working conditions.

Some research analysed the intention of people from Estonia to immigrate to other countries. For example Võrk *et al.* (2004) tried to assess the intention of Estonian health physicians to change their place of residence in hope of getting better job. The results from the study estimated that 5% of health physicians have had intention to go abroad in order to increase their wages and to improve working conditions (Võrk *et al.*, 2004).

People's behaviour is strongly influenced by their subjective sense of contentment. There are several reasons why people are coming to Estonia. One possible reason could be studying. Several universities (Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn University, Tartu University, Estonian Business School, etc) in Estonia offer educational programmes in English for international students. Other reasons for external and internal migration in Estonia were studied by some researchers (Kulu, 2000, 2004; Sjöberg *et al.* 1999). Kulu *et al.* (2000, 2004) studied the determinants of internal migration in Estonia, a multicultural society, during the transition period (1989–94) and showed that both personal and contextual (potentially time-varying) factors are important.

In the current article the latest unemployment data (Table 5), available from the Estonian Labour Market Board are presented, which provide the number of unemployed persons registered as either unemployed or as unemployed jobseekers, the number of registered vacancies, and active and passive labour market measures. These statistics are valuable mainly because of their comprehensiveness (monthly published data) and the fact that they include regional aspects of unemployment as well.

In 2007, 40 247 unemployed persons were registered at the Labour Market Board, 23 438 of them are women and 16 809 are men, 1575 of them unemployed students. In Estonia nationals record a 5.5% unemployment rate, compared with 13.1% of (self-declared) non-Estonians; this gap has been increasing since 1997. Among non-Estonians, those born in the country are less exposed to the risk of unemployment.

Risk group consists of longstanding (12 months or more) unemployed persons; disabled workers; pregnant women and workers over 55 years of age. In 2007, 26 154 unemployed persons or 65 % of all unemployed persons registered in the Labour Market Board during the year belonged to the risk groups listed in §10 (5) of the Labour Market Services and Support Act (Labour Market Board, report 2007, www.tta.ee). During the year the proportion of unemployed persons belonging to the risk group was the highest in Ida-Viru County (77.7 %), followed by Valga County (67.9%), Võru County (66.8 %), and the proportion of unemployed persons belonging to the risk group was the lowest in Pärnu County (54.7 %); as of 1 January 2008, the proportion of unemployed persons belonging to the risk group was still the highest in Ida-Viru County, followed by Valga County. The number of registered unemployed persons not speaking Estonian during the year was 9 180 or 22.8 % of all unemployed persons registered during the year (Labour Market Board, report 2007).

Table 5. Persons with Estonian and other citizenship unemployment rate by age, %
 (according to Statistics Estonia, www.stat.ee)

Age		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
15-24	Estonians' unemployment rate, %	16.2	19.6	21.8	15	17.6	17	9.5	9.6	8.5
	Non-Estonians' unemployment rate, %	25.7	30.8	22.9	22.7	26	30.9	29.4	18.5	13.7
25-49	Estonians' unemployment rate, %	9.8	10	9.2	7.3	6.4	5.6	4.9	3.5	3.1
	Non-Estonians' unemployment rate, %	16.5	17.6	16.9	14.3	12.9	14.3	12.2	9.8	6.9
50-64	Estonians' unemployment rate, %	7.7	10.9	9.1	7.9	5.7	4.7	4.9	3.2	2.8
	Non-Estonians' unemployment rate, %	11.6	11.5	12.4	12.7	17.2	13.8	8.8	7.1	5
65-74	Estonians' unemployment rate, %	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Non-Estonians' unemployment rate, %	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

The data on age group 50-64 for 2007 have been revised on 15.09.2008.

Worker's training and awareness about occupational health and safety

Language and cultural factors may be barriers to training. Migrant workers are at risk because of poor health and safety (H&S) training. Many employers are risking migrant workers' wellbeing by not providing adequate H&S training (Castañeda et al., 2007). It said many non-Estonian speaking migrant workers are especially at risk as H&S training is usually delivered in Estonian language. More than a half of the 102 registered at the Ministry of Social Affairs H&S and first aid training companies stated that their H&S training did not address how non-Estonian (for example, Russian) speaking workers were informed, instructed or trained in H&S issues and practices and training not provided in other than in Estonian language (source: The Ministry of Social Affairs, <http://osh.sm.ee>). The Estonian Occupational Safety and Health Act stipulate that all workers must get adequate H&S training. Migrant workers are entitled to the same protection as other workers regardless of whether or not they work illegally. There is no data available how many migrant or non-Estonian workers received proper H&S training at the workplaces in Estonia.

Foreign employers' awareness of occupational health and safety

In order to assess the foreign employers' knowledge about OH&S the semi- structured interview (30-45 min) was carried out with three Estonian labour inspectors. The objective of the interview was to gather information about the working conditions of migrant workers, the worker's and employer' knowledge of the occupational risks connected to their occupation, possible work-related occupational hazards, attitudes towards safety routines and standards; their awareness about the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The labour inspectors were randomly selected from Tallinn and Harjumaa County Labour Inspectorate. The investigation gave results as follow:

- There is an absence of any information about working condition of migrant workers at the Labour Inspectorate. Besides that, there is no data about occupational accidents occurred with immigrant workers, because the Estonian National Labour Inspectorate does not collect and analyse such data.
- There is also little known about foreign employers' awareness about the Estonian Occupational Health and Safety Act. Mainly, employers from Italy, India, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia are working in Estonia. According to the labour inspectors, majority of foreign employers are not interested in OH&S. There is a lack of knowledge among employers concerning the Estonians National Policy on the Working environment and their awareness in OH&S is insufficient. As a result, many employers ignore the standards and requirements from the safety legislation.
- At the same time, different opinions were given by Labour inspectors on development of safety culture at the enterprises where the employers are from abroad. Labour inspectors stated that some of foreign employers have brought to Estonia not only their production but also their strong safety

culture. These employers understood that OH&S constitute an essential element in their business. Good safety and health are a part of good company management, and good management is the key to productivity.

- The results from the interview revealed that the main problems related to OH&S at the enterprises where the employer is foreigner and a lack of the written safety policy and other health and safety documents (risk assessment, internal control, safety guidelines, etc).
- In addition, there was insufficient work collaboration and contracts between employers with Occupational Health Services (OHS) as well as health and safety training provided to workers.
- There was absence or weak procedure of reporting and investigation of occupational accidents and diseases not only among foreign but also local employers in Estonia.

As can be seen, there is little from the legislation for employer to deal with OH&S. For instance, most of the work injuries are not registered, because of the little benefit from the reporting due to absence of compulsory Insurance Act of Occupational Accidents and Diseases. At present, the coverage for occupational accidents and occupational diseases are integrated into the Estonian health insurance (temporary loss of work ability) and pension insurance (permanent loss of work ability) schemes. The system of occupational disability and occupational accidents insurance is voluntary in Estonia (Järvis et al, 2007). Problems related to labour relations were mainly caused by insufficient foreign employers' knowledge of Estonian legislations (i.e. what kind of contact should be made, in which language should be made an agreement, etc). Labour inspectors reported about difficulties in communication experienced by Estonian employer and migrant workers, because of insufficient level of Estonian or/and English languages (i.e. there is insufficient level of written English needed for the compilation of an official documents and contracts that would be completely understandable for all parts (employer and workers) involved). Some questions concerned the differences in legislations between countries, for example, which compensations and how long vocation should be provided and used. The biggest problems were related to the discontinuation of the employment agreement, to procedure of arguing about illegal discontinuation of the employment agreement or in a case when the work permit is already expired, about paying the wage without employment agreement.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the beginning of 1990s radical economic and social changes in East European countries created new preconditions for migration. There is possible to conclude that the issue of safety for migrant workers is not discussed and studied in Estonia. There are several reports and researches about migration population in Estonia that demonstrated their problems related to living and integrating, but no data available about working conditions of migrant workers. Even though, fast improvements have been done in the field of occupational health and safety (OH&S) for last decades, several researchers stated that the present OH&S infrastructure in Estonia is still weak (Järvis *et al.*, 2007; Martimo, 2004). The main problems related to the effectiveness of the present OH&S system in Estonia are mainly caused by insufficient coverage of the Occupational Health Services, low quality of Risk Assessment, lack of political commitment and knowledge management, the low priority given to safety and health in the workplace, ineffective Social Dialogue and weak Trade unions, as well as the lack scientific activities, limited interest in 'good practice' voluntary initiatives and corporate social responsibility outside of larger firms, the absence of compulsory Insurance Act of Occupational Accidents and Diseases and absence for safety strategy for migrant workers. Migrant workers must have the same safety and health protections as Estonian workers. Therefore, there is urgent need for develop OH&S strategy for migrant workers and to provide more information about job safety rights, job hazards and available protection. In order to ensure safety for migrant workers in Estonia several approaches may be useful, the following special aspects should be considered:

- There is need to strengthening of effective cooperation between institutions such as: Labour Inspectorate, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Estonian Labour Market Board, Integration Foundation, etc.
- Further research in the area of OH&S with special focus on safety of migrant workers is important. It would be helpful to get a comprehensive an overview about the current situation as well as to have better information about the working conditions of migrant workers. In addition, such kind of data would allow compile the safety strategy for migrant workers, to increasing an effectiveness of the OH&S monitoring system to include quantitative as well as qualitative data. OH&S monitoring should support knowledge-based administrative decisions on legislation, law enforcement, research

and setting of priorities, monitoring changes and identifying emerging risks, as well as designing and setting up corrective and better preventive measures for migrant workers.

- To be able to improve the working conditions of migrant workers, it is necessary to strengthen their weak and vulnerable position, through associations, organizations that provide legal assistance, more streamlined grievance and dispute settlement procedures, stopping exploitation of the migrants.
- It is also crucial to provide materials, publications, information and safety training in the primary languages of major immigrant worker populations.

In order to achieve the positive results, there is need to strengthening of national OH&S system in Estonia as well as awareness of the public through tripartite collaboration, and this includes legal provisions, enforcement, compliance and labour inspection capacity and capability, knowledge management, information exchange, research and support services for migrant workers.

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