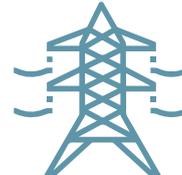


# Analysis of Work-related Injury and Illness 2001 - 2014

## Industry Sector

A plain  
English guide

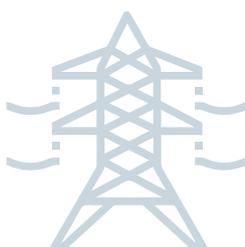


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# Analysis of Work-related Injury and Illness 2001 - 2014

## Industry Sector

Sectoral Analysis No. 3: Industry Sector  
by O. Kenny, B. Maître and H. Russell (April 2018)



# Analysis of Work-related Injury and Illness 2001 - 2014

## About this report

This report is a summary of the longer document named in the title above. It focuses on the **Industry** sector findings of earlier reports that examined work-related injury and illness across the economy as a whole. The industry sector includes manufacturing, mining and quarrying, energy supply (for example, electricity, gas, steam) and water, sewerage and waste management industries.

All injuries and illnesses reported by workers are included regardless of whether or not they were absent from work, as many people continue to work while sick or injured.

## Why is this report necessary?

The rate of work-related injury in industry rose during the boom period to a peak of 41.2 per 1,000 workers in 2007 and fell with the recession to a low of 14.9 in 2009. Since then, the injury rate is on the rise again as the economy recovers. The rate of work-related illness in the industry sector also followed this pattern.

It is important, therefore, to examine and analyse these trends and patterns in the sector with a view to improving worker health and wellbeing.

## How was this report completed, and what research information does it cover?

We used information from the Central Statistics Office's (CSO) Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) to inform this report. Specifically, we used information gathered in the annual special module on work-related accidents and illnesses. The module is restricted to those who are employed at the time of the survey, or who are not currently employed but had worked during the 12-month reference period.

For example, in 2015, in the case of injuries, respondents were asked:

'How many, if any, injuries did you incur at work (excluding commuting) during the period January 2014 to December 2014?'

For illnesses, the following question was asked:

'How many, if any, illnesses or disabilities have you experienced during the 12 months January 2014 to December 2014, that you believe were caused or made worse by your work?'

Respondents were also asked how many days they had taken off work as a result of these injuries or illnesses.

The QNHS is carried out in private households and the responses are unconnected to any workplace reporting.

Using the survey information, we analysed it and applied it to the sector under the following headings:

- Worker and job characteristics and risk of injury
- Worker fatalities in the industry sector
- Work-related illness in the industry sector
- Days lost due to illness and injury
- Inspections

The findings for each section are presented below.

## Worker and job characteristics and risk of injury

In this section, we examined the relationship between the risks of injury among industry workers and a range of factors such as personal and job characteristics – for example, gender, age, nationality, job composition and so on.

The significant findings were:

- The 1.9% injury rate during the recession years (2008 – 2011) is significantly lower than the 3.2% rate of the boom years (2001 – 2007).
- The injury rate for women was 1.6% which is about half the male rate at 3.1%.
- In terms of age, those aged 65 and over have a significantly lower risk of injury (0.6%) than other age categories (2.4% to 3.1%). The risk of injury for workers with less than six months' experience in the job is about three times greater than for workers who have more experience.
- Those working shifts or night hours had a slightly higher risk of injury – 3.2% compared to 2.5% for those with normal working days.
- There was no significant difference in the injury rate between Irish and non-Irish workers.

## Worker fatalities in the industry sector

Analysis of the information regarding worker fatalities over the period in question yielded the following findings:

- The fatality rate rose in the boom years (2001 – 2007) but there is a longer-term downward trend for the whole period of 2001 – 2014.
- There were 62 fatalities in the industry sector in the boom years, but this figure fell to 39 in the following seven-year period (2008 – 2014).

## Work-related illness in the industry sector

In this section, we examined the association between illness and time period (the boom years 2001 – 2007; recession years 2008 – 2011; and recovery years 2012 – 2014), together with the characteristics of those working in the industry sector and their job structure.

Over the period 2002 to 2014, illnesses experienced by workers in the industry were mainly due to musculoskeletal disorders at 52% – just above the rate of 47% for all sectors.

The significant findings were:

- For the period in question, 52% of illnesses experienced by workers in this sector were mainly due to musculoskeletal disorders.
- The illness rates did not fluctuate as much as the injury rate across the boom, recession and recovery years.
- The risk of illness does not vary significantly by gender, age, nationality, contract type, or shift pattern.
- Those working fewer than 30 hours a week have the highest risk of illness.
- The risk of illness for workers with less than six months' experience in the job, at 6%, is significantly higher than those with more experience.

## Days lost due to illness and injury

In this section, we examined the information in terms of two timeframes – the boom years of 2001 – 2007 and the recession and recovery years of 2008 – 2014. The main findings are as follows:

- In the boom years, the average rate of days lost to injury per 1,000 workers was 559, which was much **higher** than the average of all other sectors combined (387).

- The average rate of days lost to illness per 1,000 workers in the boom years was 450, which was also **higher** than the average of all other sectors combined (433).
- The average number of days lost to injury fell dramatically to 282 per 1,000 workers in the recession and recovery years. This represents three times the drop in the rate found in all other sectors.

## Inspections

In this section, we examined the impact of health and safety inspections in relation to the rates of injury and illness. The main conclusions were as follows:

- Inspection rates in the boom years ranged from 7.5 to 11.3 per 1,000 workers. The rate peaked at 13.7 per 1,000 workers in 2009.
- Inspection rates in this sector have been consistently higher than the rate across all other sectors for the period 2003 – 2015. (Figures are not available for 2001 and 2002.)
- The overall economy-wide research found that higher inspection rates were associated with a lower risk of work-related injury and illness.

## Where can I get more information?

You can get the full version of this document on the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) website [www.esri.ie](http://www.esri.ie)

Also, you can download the following documents:

*Trends and patterns in occupational health and safety in Ireland.*

*Work-related musculoskeletal disorders and stress, anxiety and depression in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS 2002–2013.*

These are ESRI publications and are available on their website at [www.esri.ie/publications/](http://www.esri.ie/publications/)

You can also access plain English summaries of these publications on the Health and Safety Authority's website at:

[www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications\\_and\\_Forms/Publications](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications)

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safe and  
productive  
lives'*

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