

# Accidents at work - statistics by economic activity

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in October 2025  
Planned update: November 2026*

## Highlights

In 2023, the highest incidence of non-fatal accidents at work in the EU was observed in construction, with 2 899 such accidents per 100 000 employed people.

In 2023, the highest incidence of fatal accidents at work in the EU was observed in mining and quarrying, with 10.8 such accidents per 100 000 employed people.

This article presents a set of main statistical findings in relation to indicators concerning [non-fatal](#) and [fatal accidents](#) at work in the [European Union \(EU\)](#). The statistics presented have been collected as part of the [European statistics on accidents at work \(ESAW\)](#) administrative data collection exercise. This article analyses these statistics according to the type of economic activity in which accidents occur, focusing on selected activities: agriculture, forestry and fishing ([NACE Rev. 2 Section A](#)); mining and quarrying ([NACE Section B](#)); manufacturing ([NACE Section C](#)); construction ([NACE Section F](#)); distributive trades (comprising wholesale, retail and motor trades, [NACE Section G](#)); transport and storage ([NACE Section H](#)); accommodation and food service activities ([NACE Section I](#)); administrative and support service activities ([NACE Section N](#)); public administration and defence ([NACE Section O](#)); and human health and social work activities ([NACE Section Q](#)).

This article is included in a set of statistical articles concerning specific health conditions in the EU which forms part of an online publication on [Health in the European Union – facts and figures](#).

## Developments over time

### Non-fatal accidents

In 2023, there were 2.825 million non-fatal accidents that resulted in at least 4 calendar days of absence from work in the EU (see Table 1). The total number of non-fatal accidents at work in the EU rose between 2013 and 2019, up some 204 000 (equivalent to an overall increase of 7.0%). To some extent, this increase may reflect methodological changes in data collection/compilation in some EU countries. For more information, please refer to the [data sources](#) section of the main article on [accidents at work statistics](#). In 2020, this upward trend was interrupted, as the number of non-fatal accidents fell by 399 000, down 12.7%. This change reflects, at least in part, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on EU labour markets and working conditions. There was a partial rebound in the number of non-fatal accidents, up 151 000 (equivalent to an increase of 5.5%) in 2021 and 81 000 (2.8%) in 2022. However, the number of non-fatal accidents fell again in 2023, down 149 000 (a fall of 5.0%).

In absolute terms, non-fatal accidents in 2023, in the EU were most common in:

- manufacturing – 522 000 (18.5% of the total)
- construction – 365 000 (12.9%)

- distributive trades – 345 000 (12.2%)
- human health and social work activities – 340 000 (12.1%).

Given that the workforces of these activities vary greatly in size, the incidence rate (the number of non-fatal accidents at work for every 100 000 employed people) gives a clearer impression of where workers were more likely to encounter non-fatal accidents.

In 2023, the highest incidence of non-fatal accidents at work in the EU was observed in construction, with 2 899 such accidents per 100 000 employed people. Transport and storage (2 366 per 100 000) and administrative and support service activities (2 043 per 100 000) were the only other NACE sections with incidence rates above 2 000 per 100 000 employed people. The lowest incidence rate among the selected activities was for public administration and defence (1 083 per 100 000 employed people), as shown in Table 1.

There was an overall decrease in the EU's incidence rate of non-fatal accidents between 2013 and 2019 (down 4.2%), reflecting faster growth in the number of employed people than in the number of non-fatal accidents. Among the selected activities, incidence rates for non-fatal accidents at work were generally lower in 2019 than in 2013. This situation was observed for 7 out of the 10 NACE sections for which data are shown. Between 2013 and 2019, there was a notable increase in incidence rates for non-fatal accidents for human health and social work activities (up 9.3%) and smaller increases for agriculture, forestry and fishing (up 2.7%) and public administration and defence (up 0.9%). Note that the changes observed for the EU in some activities may be linked to changes in the coverage of specific activities for some EU countries, for example because of the end of derogations or voluntary data collection.

Focusing just on the latest annual change, the incidence rate of non-fatal accidents fell 7.6% between 2022 and 2023. Among the 10 NACE sections for which information is presented in Table 1, the only increase in 2023 was observed for mining and quarrying (up 3.8%). The largest decrease in the incidence rate of non-fatal accidents in 2023 was recorded for human health and social work activities (down 29.4%).

#### Non-fatal accidents at work by economic activity, EU, 2013–23

Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	(thousands)											(incidence rate)										
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020(*)	2021	2022	2023	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020(*)	2021	2022	2023
<b>Total (all activities)</b>	2 937	3 032	3 030	3 113	3 117	3 125	3 141	2 742	2 892	2 974	2 825	1 686	1 748	1 712	1 743	1 702	1 670	1 616	1 447	1 519	1 507	1 393
Agriculture, forestry and fishing (A)	152	170	163	162	148	144	139	109	123	116	115	1 885	2 274	2 193	2 194	2 124	2 111	1 936	1 500	1 776	1 657	1 610
Mining and quarrying (B)	11	10	9	9	9	8	8	7	8	8	8	1 884	1 748	1 659	1 718	1 855	1 678	1 722	1 538	1 669	1 766	1 834
Manufacturing (C)	613	592	592	601	592	597	586	498	549	535	522	2 094	2 029	1 983	2 013	1 935	1 922	1 861	1 626	1 792	1 753	1 687
Construction (F)	354	352	347	347	353	363	372	341	371	364	365	3 322	3 406	3 354	3 329	3 273	3 334	3 246	2 999	3 165	2 955	2 899
Distributive trades (G)	392	378	380	386	384	377	388	330	358	347	345	1 541	1 509	1 502	1 512	1 470	1 419	1 399	1 208	1 312	1 245	1 215
Transport and storage (H)	255	242	245	243	273	280	282	231	265	262	263	2 813	2 666	2 628	2 579	2 767	2 789	2 663	2 218	2 625	2 445	2 366
Accommodation and food service activities (I)	150	144	151	159	159	163	166	103	115	148	156	1 926	1 820	1 843	1 874	1 798	1 794	1 710	1 229	1 402	1 493	1 468
Administrative and support service activities (N)	237	232	238	256	280	290	287	222	265	262	253	2 619	2 400	2 513	2 427	2 578	2 530	2 459	2 036	2 384	2 142	2 043
Public administration and defence (O)	156	222	217	212	186	195	190	163	154	151	149	1 334	1 775	1 797	1 687	1 475	1 473	1 346	1 208	1 215	1 127	1 083
Human health and social work activities (Q)	280	327	329	339	336	339	345	402	385	470	340	1 502	1 768	1 682	1 758	1 693	1 666	1 641	1 937	1 771	2 134	1 507

Note: non-fatal accidents reported in the framework of ESAW are accidents that imply at least 4 full calendar days of absence from work (serious accidents).

(\*) Break in series.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_01)

**Table 1: Non-fatal accidents at work by economic activity, EU, 2013–23 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_01)**

#### Fatal accidents

In 2023, there were 3 298 fatal accidents at work in the EU (see Table 2), resulting in a ratio of 856 non-fatal accidents for every fatal accident. The total number of fatal accidents at work in the EU was the same in 2019 as it had been in 2013. A quite stable development was also observed in the next 4 years: there were 50 fewer deaths in 2020 (note that there is a break in series), 31 more in 2021, 103 fewer in 2022 and 12 more in 2023.

In absolute terms, fatal accidents in the EU were most common in 2023 in:

- construction, 792 (24.0% of the total)
- transport and storage, 541 (16.4%)
- manufacturing, 443 (13.4%)
- agriculture, forestry and fishing, 426 (12.9%)
- distributive trades, 246 (7.5%)
- administrative and support service activities, 211 (6.4%).

In 2023, the highest incidence rate of fatal accidents at work (the number of fatal accidents at work for every 100 000 employed people) in the EU among the economic activities shown in Table 2 was observed in mining and quarrying with 10.8 fatal accidents per 100 000 employed people. Construction (6.3 per 100 000 employed people), agriculture forestry and fishing (6.0 per 100 000) and transport and storage (4.9 per 100 000) were the only other NACE sections with incidence rates above 1.7 per 100 000 employed people. The lowest incidence rate was for human health and social work activities (0.3 per 100 000).

Across the EU, the decrease in the incidence rate of fatal accidents at work between 2013 and 2019 (down by 10.7%) alongside a stable number of fatal accidents reflected growth in the number of employed people. During the period from 2013 to 2019, there was a larger decrease in the incidence of fatal accidents at work than of non-fatal accidents. While incidence rates for fatal accidents at work – as for non-fatal accidents – were generally lower in 2019 than in 2013 for most activities, increases were observed in the incidence rates of fatal accidents for human health and social work activities (up 25.9%), accommodation and food service activities (up 14.3%) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (up 7.8%).

Focusing on the latest annual change, the incidence rate of fatal accidents in the EU fell 1.8% between 2022 and 2023. The decrease in the incidence rate was in contrast to the 0.4% increase in the number of such accidents, as the number of employed people increased in 2023. Relatively large decreases in the incidence rate were observed for accommodation and food service activities (down 28.0%), public administration and defence (down 26.8%), manufacturing (down 12.8%) and distributive trades (down 11.2%). Smaller decreases were observed for human health and social work activities (down 8.3%) as well as administrative and support service activities (down 2.3%). There were increases for the 4 other economic activities shown in Table 2, the largest being for agriculture, forestry and fishing (up 7.7%) and mining and quarrying (up 5.9%).

#### Fatal accidents at work by economic activity, EU, 2013–23

Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	(number)												(incidence rate)											
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 <sup>(1)</sup>	2021	2022	2023	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 <sup>(1)</sup>	2021	2022	2023		
<b>Total (all activities)</b>	3 408	3 562	3 643	3 337	3 274	3 332	3 408	3 358	3 389	3 286	3 298	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.6		
Agriculture, forestry and fishing (A)	442	507	477	482	408	441	425	365	384	389	426	5.5	6.8	6.4	6.5	5.9	6.5	5.9	5.0	5.5	5.6	6.0		
Mining and quarrying (B)	69	70	70	64	43	52	40	48	36	44	48	11.4	12.2	12.6	12.3	8.3	10.5	8.2	10.1	7.9	10.2	10.8		
Manufacturing (C)	563	558	632	525	472	505	505	489	486	500	443	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4		
Construction (F)	733	740	767	672	679	682	755	691	760	754	792	6.9	7.2	7.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.6	6.1	6.5	6.1	6.3		
Distributive trades (G)	314	306	300	282	283	252	275	282	322	272	246	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.0	0.9		
Transport and storage (H)	486	570	585	562	558	557	511	482	552	514	541	5.4	6.3	6.3	6.0	5.7	5.5	4.8	4.6	5.5	4.8	4.9		
Accommodation and food service activities (I)	55	70	68	56	77	53	78	65	62	81	63	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6		
Administrative and support service activities (N)	206	192	192	175	205	225	232	208	221	215	211	2.3	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.8	1.7		
Public administration and defence (O)	104	93	110	127	85	80	88	117	115	95	71	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.5		
Human health and social work activities (Q)	50	61	63	56	61	71	71	172	106	79	74	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.3		

(<sup>1</sup>) Break in series.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_02)

**Table 2: Fatal accidents at work, by economic activity, EU, 2013–23 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_02)**

## Analysis of non-fatal accidents by sex and age

Men are generally more likely than women to be involved in an accident at work. In 2023, 2 out of every 3 (67.6%) non-fatal accidents at work in the EU involved men (excluding cases where the sex of the victim experiencing the accident was not reported). To some extent, this reflects the fact that more men than women work; this difference is particularly strong in several activities with high incidence rates. Another factor that influences differences is the different types of work that men and women carry out, even within a particular activity.

The difference in incidence rates for men and women in construction was particularly large, with the rate for non-fatal accidents at work 5.7 times as high for men as for women in 2023. Similarly, the incidence rate for men was 5.2 times as high as for women in mining and quarrying. The only activity with a higher incidence rate for women than for men was human health and social work activities (1.1 times as high for men).

### Non-fatal accidents at work by economic activity and sex, EU, 2023

Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	(thousands)			(incidence rate)		
	Total (both sexes)	Men	Women	Total (both sexes)	Men	Women
<b>Total (all activities)</b>	2 825	1 910	914	1 393	1 772	961
Agriculture, forestry and fishing (A)	115	90	25	1 610	1 858	1 089
Mining and quarrying (B)	8	8	0	1 834	2 082	397
Manufacturing (C)	522	431	92	1 687	2 006	964
Construction (F)	365	356	9	2 899	3 233	564
Distributive trades (G)	345	223	122	1 215	1 542	875
Transport and storage (H)	263	212	50	2 366	2 500	1 924
Accommodation and food service activities (I)	156	80	76	1 468	1 602	1 349
Administrative and support service activities (N)	253	174	80	2 043	2 583	1 402
Public administration and defence (O)	149	84	65	1 083	1 333	871
<b>Human health and social work activities (Q)</b>	340	72	268	1 507	1 425	1 529

Note: non-fatal accidents reported in the framework of ESAW are accidents that imply at least 4 full calendar days of absence from work (serious accidents). The sum of the numbers of accidents for men and women does not equal the total because of missing information about the sex of the victim for some accidents.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_01)

eurostat 

**Table 3: Non-fatal accidents at work by economic activity and sex, EU, 2023 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_01)**

Focusing on the 10 activities presented in Table 3, the 4 highest incidence rates for non-fatal accidents at work among women in the EU in 2023 were for transport and storage, human health and social work activities, administrative and support service activities, and accommodation and food service activities. For men, construction, administrative and support service activities, transport and storage, and mining and quarrying had the 4 highest rates (see Table 4).

## Highest incidence rates of non-fatal accidents by economic sector and sex, EU, 2023

Women			Men		
Rank	Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	Incidence rate (per 100 000 workers)	Rank	Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	Incidence rate (per 100 000 workers)
1	Transport and storage (H)	1 924	1	Construction (F)	3 233
2	Human health and social work activities (Q)	1 529	2	Administrative and support service activities (N)	2 583
3	Administrative and support service activities (N)	1 402	3	Transport and storage (H)	2 500
4	Accommodation and food service activities (I)	1 349	4	Mining and quarrying (B)	2 082

Note: top 4 activities among the 10 selected activities analysed in this article.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_01)

eurostat 

**Table 4: Highest incidence rates of non-fatal accidents by economic sector and sex, EU, 2023 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_01)**

Figure 1 helps to identify the activities where workers of a particular age range make up a greater or lesser share of those having suffered a non-fatal accident at work. It should be kept in mind that the age profile of the workforce may vary between economic activities.

Younger workers (those aged less than 25 years) accounted for 12.5% of all non-fatal accidents at work in the EU in 2023. Higher than average (for all economic activities) shares of non-fatal accidents among young workers were recorded in the following sectors:

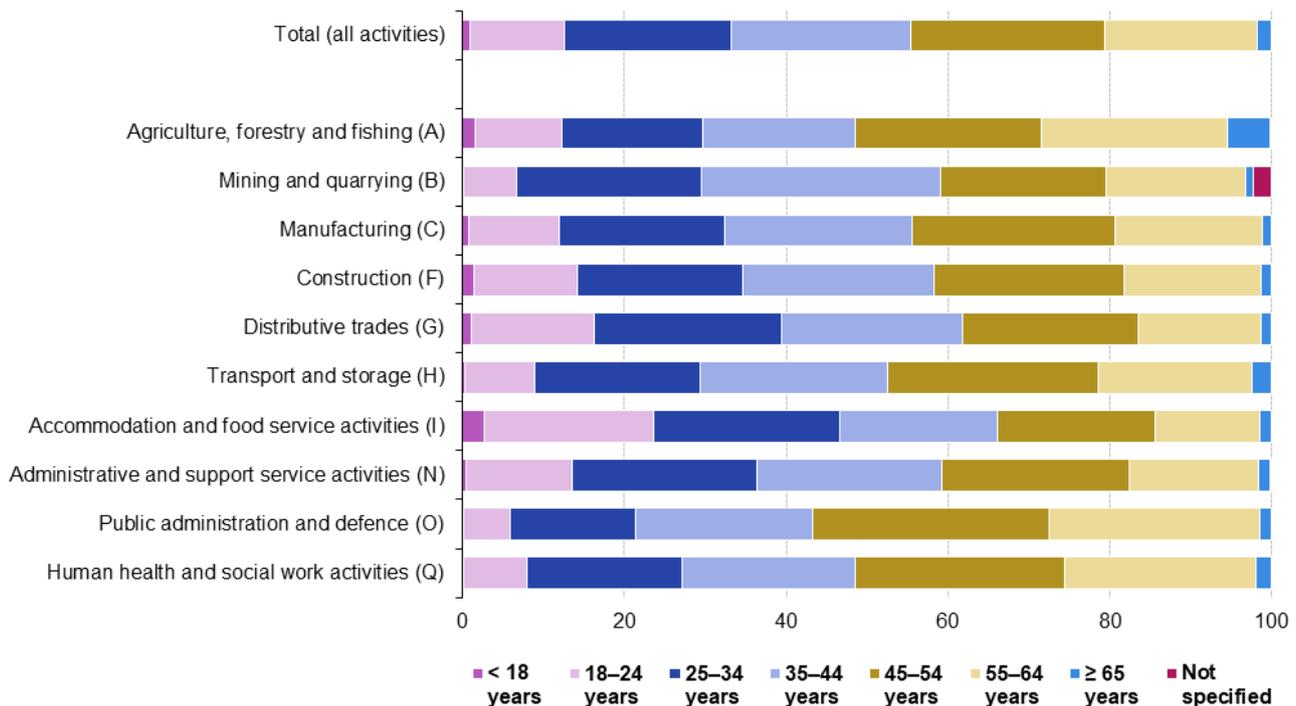
- administrative and support service activities (13.6%)
- construction (14.1%)
- distributive trades (16.2%)
- accommodation and food service activities (23.7%).

Older workers (those aged 55 years and over) accounted for 20.5% of all non-fatal accidents at work in the EU in 2023. Higher than average shares of non-fatal accidents among older workers were recorded for:

- transport and storage (21.4%)
- human health and social work activities (25.6%)
- public administration and defence (27.5%)
- agriculture, forestry and fishing (28.3%).

## Non-fatal accidents at work by age and economic activity, EU, 2023

(% of non-fatal accidents for each activity)



Note: non-fatal accidents reported in the framework of ESAW are accidents that imply at least 4 full calendar days of absence from work (serious accidents).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_03)

eurostat

Figure 1: Non-fatal accidents at work by age and economic activity, EU, 2023 Source: Eurostat (sw\_n2\_03)

## Severity of accidents

The data presented in Figure 2 include information for non-fatal and fatal accidents. This analysis identifies the number of calendar days or months (grouped into several classes) during which the victim was unfit for work, excluding the day of the accident itself, or whether there was a permanent incapacity or death (within 1 year of the accident) as a result of the accident at work.

In the EU, a considerable majority (85.4%) of all accidents at work in 2023 involved the victim being unfit for work for less than 3 months, while some 11.2% were for longer periods (or resulted in permanent incapacity) and 0.1% were fatal accidents. For the remaining 3.2% of cases, the severity (in terms of duration of being unfit for work) was unknown.

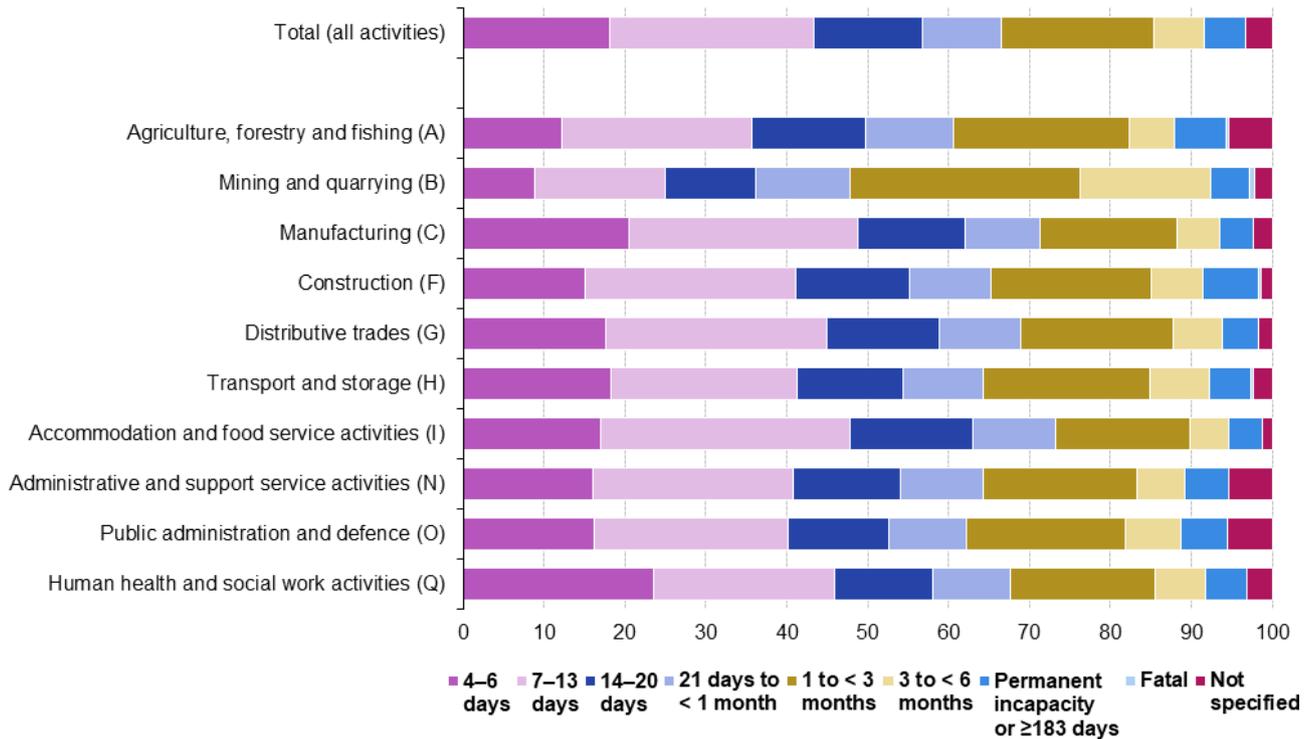
Accidents at work resulting in the victim being unfit for work for less than 3 months made up a relatively large proportion of accidents at work in the EU in 2023 in accommodation and food service activities (89.9%), manufacturing (88.3%) and distributive trades (87.7%).

By contrast, the share of workplace accidents in the EU in 2023 that were non-fatal but resulted in the victim being unfit for work for 3 months or more made up a particularly large share of all workplace accidents for mining and quarrying (20.9%).

Fatal accidents accounted for 0.1% of all workplace accidents in the EU in 2023. Among the selected activities, transport and storage (0.2%), construction (also 0.2%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (0.4%), and mining and quarrying (0.6%) had higher shares.

## Accidents at work by severity and economic activity, EU, 2023

(% of accidents for each activity)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_04)

eurostat

Figure 2: Accidents at work by severity and economic activity, EU, 2023 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_04)

## Analysis by injured body part

The description of an accident at work includes information on the injured body part. The following options are available for recording the body part injured in an accident at work:

- head
- neck
- back
- torso and organs
- upper extremities
- lower extremities
- whole body and multiple sites
- other parts of body injured
- not specified.

Figures 3 and 4 present an analysis of the type of body part injured in non-fatal and fatal accidents.

### Non-fatal accidents at work

For all activities combined, the most common body parts injured in non-fatal workplace accidents in the EU in 2023 were:

- the upper extremities (shoulders, arms and hands), with 39.8% of the total number of non-fatal accidents at work

- the lower extremities (hips, legs and feet) with 30.0%.

The only other type of body

part with a share that was more than a tenth of the EU total was the back, accounting for 10.5% of all injuries in 2023.

**Economic activities with the highest and lowest shares of injury (in non-fatal accidents) to commonly injured body parts, EU, 2023**

Upper extremities			Lower extremities			Back		
Rank	Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	Share (%)	Rank	Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	Share (%)	Rank	Economic activity (NACE Rev. 2 Section)	Share (%)
Highest	Manufacturing (C)	52.3	Highest	Transport and storage (H)	35.4	Highest	Human health and social work (Q)	16.8
2nd highest	Accommodation and food services (I)	50.2	2nd highest	Mining and quarrying (B)	35.3	2nd highest	Public administration and defence (O)	12.6
	<b>All sectors – average</b>	<b>39.8</b>		<b>All sectors – average</b>	<b>30.0</b>		<b>All sectors – average</b>	<b>10.5</b>
2nd lowest	Public administration and defence (O)	30.2	2nd lowest	Accommodation and food services (I)	26.4	2nd lowest	Manufacturing (C)	7.5
Lowest	Transport and storage (H)	28.1	Lowest	Manufacturing (C)	24.9	Lowest	Mining and quarrying (B)	6.8

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_06)

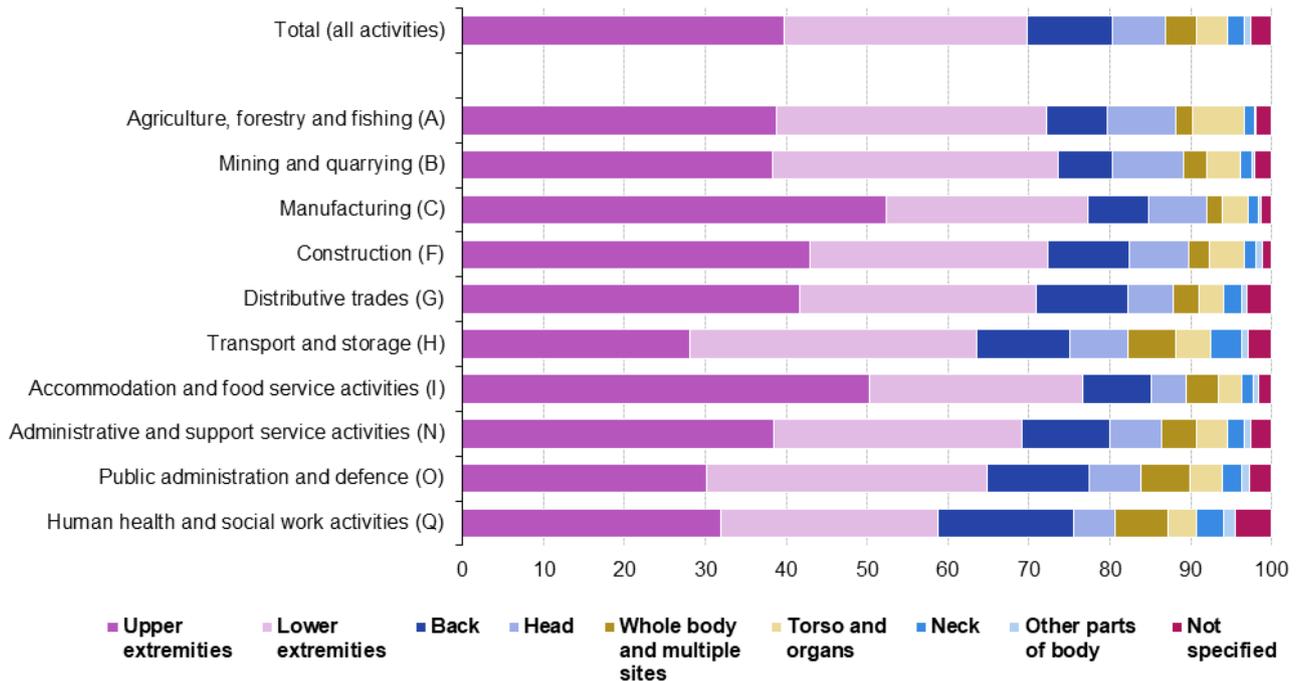


**Table 5: Economic activities with the highest and lowest shares of injury (in non-fatal accidents) to commonly injured body parts, EU, 2023 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_06)**

Looking more closely at data for injured body parts for the individual economic activities analysed in this article (see Figure 3 and Table 5), in 2023 non-fatal accidents at work that resulted in injuries of the upper extremities were particularly common in the EU within manufacturing (52.3% of all accidents in manufacturing) and the accommodation and food service activities (50.2%), but were less common in public administration and defence (30.2%) and transport and storage (28.1%). For injuries of the lower extremities, there was less variation by activity, with the highest shares for transport and storage (35.4%) and mining and quarrying (35.3%), while the lowest shares were for accommodation and food service activities (26.4%) and manufacturing (24.9%). Back injuries were relatively common within human health and social work activities (16.8%) and public administration and defence (12.6%), while manufacturing (7.5%) and mining and quarrying (6.8%) were the activities with the lowest shares.

## Non-fatal accidents at work by part of body injured and economic activity, EU, 2023

(% of non-fatal accidents for each activity)



Note: non-fatal accidents reported in the framework of ESAW are accidents that imply at least 4 full calendar days of absence from work (serious accidents).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_06)

eurostat

**Figure 3: Non-fatal accidents at work by part of body injured and economic activity, EU, 2023** Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_06)

### Fatal accidents at work

Turning to fatal accidents at work, the distribution by the body part that was injured was very different. For all activities combined, 1 in 3 fatal accidents in the EU in 2023 related to injuries of the whole body or multiple sites (33.1%), while just over a fifth (21.5%) were head injuries and a tenth (10.5%) were injuries to the torso and organs – see Figure 4.

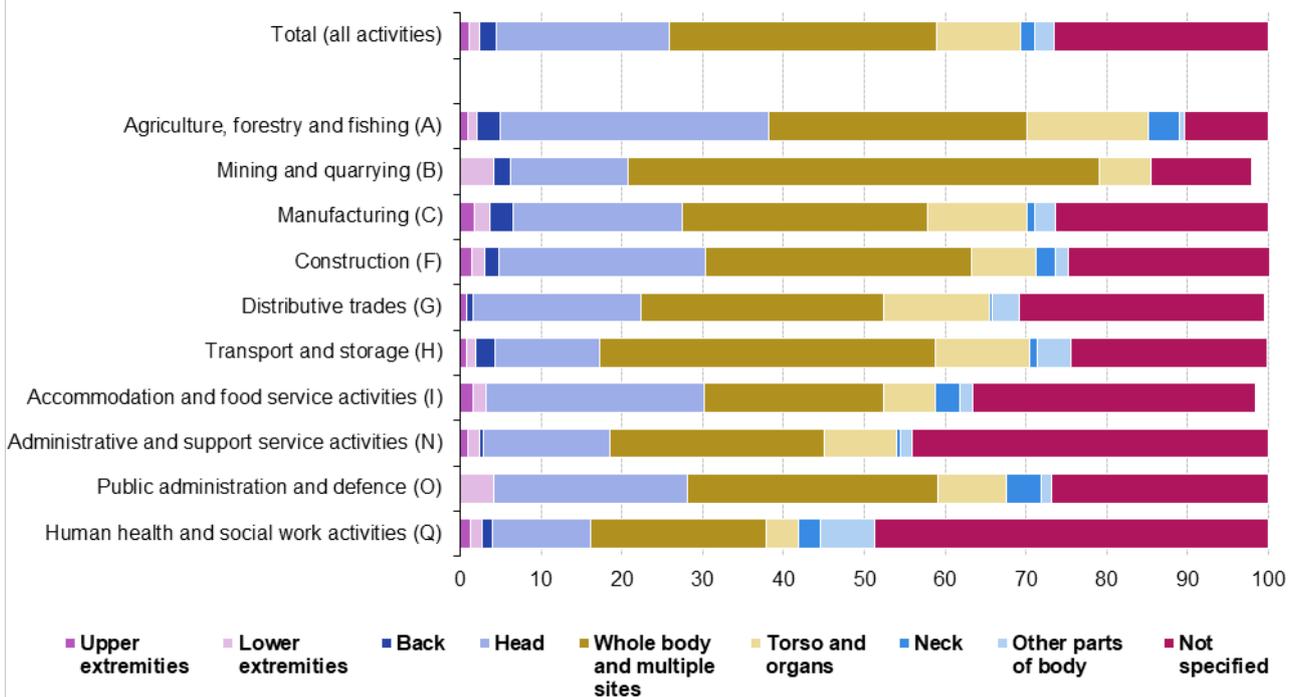
The most common category of injuries in fatal accidents at work in the EU in 2023 concerned the whole body and multiple sites; this was observed for 8 of the 10 economic activities shown (when excluding the residual category of not specified); the exceptions were accommodation and food service activities as well as agriculture, forestry and fishing, for which head injuries were more common. The highest share of fatal accidents at work concerning the whole body and multiple sites was recorded for mining and quarrying (58.3%), while the lowest were human health and social work activities (21.6%) and accommodation and food service activities (22.2%).

Looking at the less common body parts injured in fatal accidents at work in the EU in 2023, activities with relatively high shares included:

- manufacturing, accommodation and food service activities, construction, and human health and social work activities for upper extremities injuries
- public administration and defence, agriculture, forestry and fishing, accommodation and food service activities, and human health and social work activities for neck injuries
- public administration and defence as well as mining and quarrying for injuries of the lower extremities
- manufacturing as well as agriculture, forestry and fishing for back injuries.

## Fatal accidents at work by part of body injured and economic activity, EU, 2023

(% of fatal accidents for each activity)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_06)

eurostat

**Figure 4: Fatal accidents at work by part of body injured and economic activity, EU, 2023** Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_06)

## Analysis by type of injury

Figures 5 and 6 show (for non-fatal and fatal accidents, respectively) analyses of data according to the type of injury sustained when people were involved in accidents. Note that the selected types of injury are similar but not identical in the 2 figures.

### Non-fatal accidents at work

In 2023, the most common injuries in the EU resulting from non-fatal accidents were wounds and superficial injuries (29.2% of the total), dislocations, sprains and strains (26.9%), concussion and internal injuries (20.2%) and bone fractures (11.6%).

Wounds and superficial injuries had the highest share of non-fatal accidents across 7 of the 10 economic activities shown in Figure 5:

- dislocations, sprains and strains accounted for a higher share for public administration and defence
- dislocations, sprains and strains, and concussion and internal injuries accounted for higher shares for transport and storage as well as for human health and social work activities.

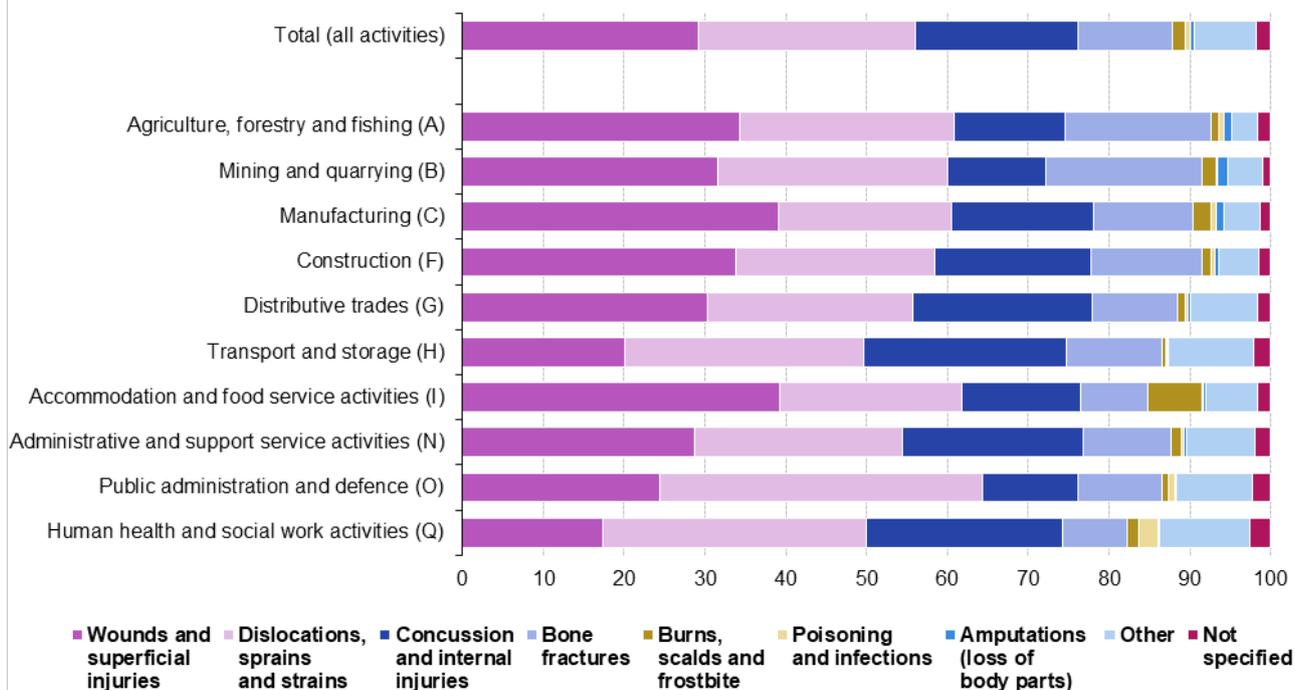
Looking at the less common types of injuries resulting from non-fatal workplace accidents in the EU in 2023, some were quite common in particular activities.

- Bone fractures were relatively common in mining and quarrying (19.5% of all non-fatal accidents in this activity) as well as agriculture, forestry and fishing (18.1%) compared with the average for all activities (11.6%).
- The loss of body parts (amputations) was also relatively common in mining and quarrying (1.2%) as well as agriculture, forestry and fishing (1.0%) and manufacturing (0.9%) compared with the overall average (0.4%).

- Burns, scalds and frostbite were 4.1 times as common in accommodation and food service activities (6.7%) as the average for all activities (1.6%).
- Poisoning and infections were particularly common in human health and social work activities (2.5%), while the next highest share was 0.8% in public administration and defence. These were the only activities among those shown in Figure 5 with shares above the average for all activities (0.7%).

### Non-fatal accidents at work by type of injury and economic activity, EU, 2023

(% of non-fatal accidents for each activity)



Note: non-fatal accidents reported in the framework of ESAW are accidents that imply at least 4 full calendar days of absence from work (serious accidents).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_07)

eurostat

**Figure 5: Non-fatal accidents at work by type of injury and economic activity, EU, 2023** Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_07)

### Fatal accidents at work

For fatal accidents at work in 2023, the most commonly observed injury types across the EU (when excluding the residual categories of other and not specified) were multiple injuries (22.7% of fatal accidents) and concussion and internal injuries (20.5%), followed by bone fractures (9.1%).

- Concussion and internal injuries were the most common type of injury in 2023 for 6 of the 10 economic activities shown in Figure 6: agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, distributive trades, human health and social work activities, administrative and support service activities, and accommodation and food service activities (where the share for multiple injuries was the same).
- Multiple injuries were the most common type of injury for mining and quarrying, transport and storage, construction, public administration and defence, and accommodation and food service activities (where the share for concussion and internal injuries was the same).
- Although having only the third highest share, bone fractures were relatively common for agriculture, forestry and fishing (14.1%) and construction (11.9%).

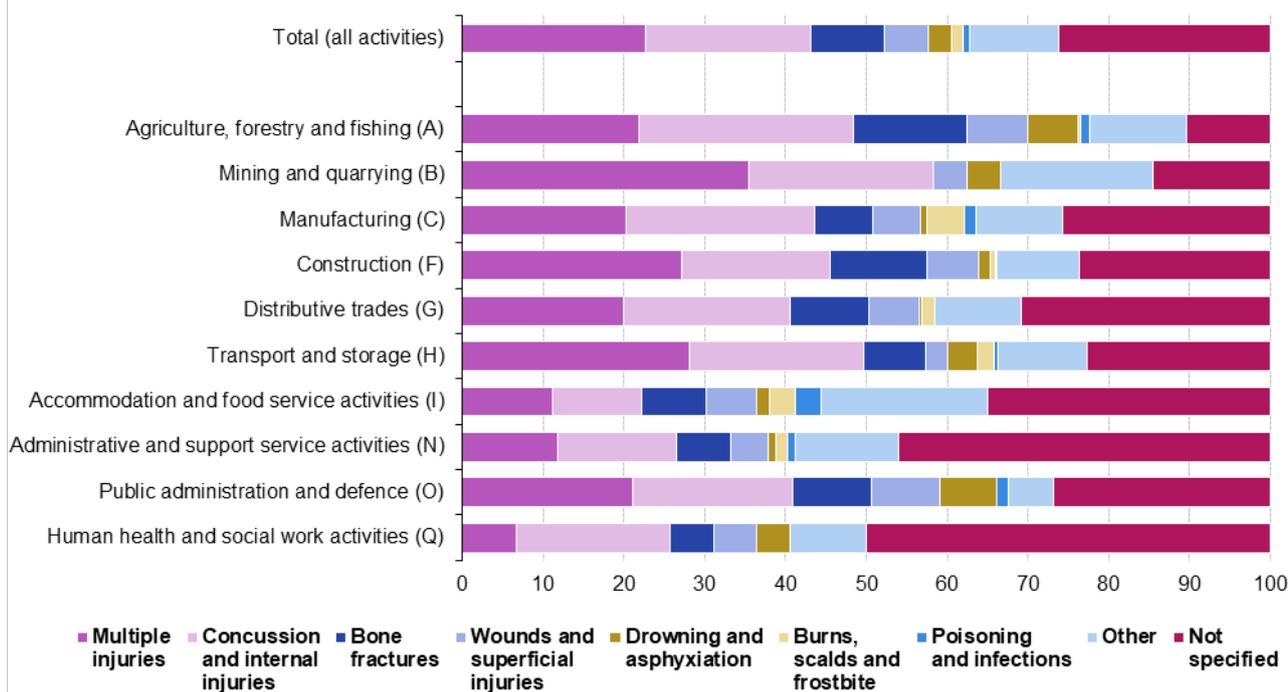
Less common types of injuries resulting from fatal workplace accidents in the EU in 2023 included the following:

- wounds and superficial injuries – these were somewhat more common within public administration and defence (8.5%) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (7.5%) than on average across all activities (5.4%)

- poisoning and infections – these were relatively common types of injuries resulting from fatal workplace accidents for accommodation and food service activities (3.2%), manufacturing (1.6%), public administration and defence (1.4%) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (1.2%), all well above the average for all activities (0.8%)
- accidents involving drowning and asphyxiation – these were much more common in public administration and defence (7.0%) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (6.3%) than the overall average (2.9%)
- burns, scalds and frostbite – these were much more common in manufacturing (4.5%) and accommodation and food service activities (3.2%) than they were across all activities (1.5%).

### Fatal accidents at work by type of injury and economic activity, EU, 2023

(% of fatal accidents for each activity)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_n2\_07)

eurostat

Figure 6: Fatal accidents at work by type of injury and economic activity, EU, 2023 Source: Eurostat (hsw\_n2\_07)

## Source data for tables and graphs

- [Accidents at work by economic activity: tables and figures](#)

## Data sources

In December 2008, the [European Parliament](#) and the [Council](#) adopted [Regulation \(EC\) No 1338/2008](#) on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work. The regulation is designed to ensure that health statistics provide adequate information for all EU countries to monitor Community actions in the field of public health and health and safety at work. In April 2011, a [European Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 349/2011](#) on statistics on accidents at work was adopted specifying in detail the variables, breakdowns and metadata that EU countries are required to deliver – this legislation is being implemented in a number of phases. Note also that a [Commission Decision No 2011/231/EU](#) from April 2011 granted derogations to certain EU countries with respect to the transmission of statistics on accidents at work.

European statistics on accidents at work (ESAW) is the main data source for EU statistics relating to health and safety at work issues. ESAW includes data on occupational accidents that result in at least 4 calendar days of absence from work, including fatal accidents. The phrase 'during the course of work' means while engaged in an occupational activity or during the time spent at work. This generally includes cases of road traffic accidents in the course of work but excludes accidents during the journey between home and the workplace.

An accident at work is defined in ESAW methodology as a discrete occurrence during the course of work which leads to physical or mental harm. Fatal accidents at work are those that lead to the death of the victim within 1 year of the accident taking place. Non-fatal accidents at work are defined as those that imply at least 4 full calendar days of absence from work (they are sometimes also called 'serious accidents at work'). Non-fatal accidents at work often involve considerable harm for the workers concerned and their families and they have the potential to force people, for example, to live with a permanent disability, to leave the labour market, or to change job. Indeed, they may result in a considerable number of working days being lost within the EU's economy.

The statistics presented for accidents at work refer to declarations made to either public (social security administrations) or private insurance schemes, or to other relevant national authorities (for example, those controlling labour or workplace inspections). Indicators on accidents at work may be presented as absolute values, as percentage distributions, as incidence rates in relation to every 100 000 employed people (the denominator being provided by the authorities that are responsible for ESAW data collection in EU countries or by the [EU labour force survey \(EU-LFS\)](#) ) or as standardised incidence rates.

For more information on ESAW data please refer to the main article on [accidents at work statistics](#) .

## Context

A safe, healthy working environment is a crucial factor in an individual's quality of life and is also a collective interest. Governments across the EU recognise the social and economic benefits of better health and safety at work. Reliable, comparable, up-to-date statistical information is vital for setting policy objectives and adopting suitable policy measures and preventative actions.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, preventive measures were put in place with the aim of limiting the spread of the Coronavirus and to combat the pandemic. Among these, some economic activities were either completely stopped or restricted by many governments or employers. In some cases, working remotely or from home became more common. This had a direct impact on all economic sectors. For the economic sectors where the activity was stopped or reduced, the number of accidents decreased. Inactivity or reduced activity in certain sectors resulted in a lower number of workers and/or hours worked, and therefore showed an unusual decrease in reported accidents at work. By contrast, in some sectors the COVID-19 pandemic generated an increase in activity. For example, this was the case for human health activities, residential care activities or social work activities without accommodation. Therefore, the increased activity resulted in generally higher numbers of reported accidents at work, especially when the cases of COVID-19 of occupational origin were included depending on national practice and legislation.

Public services that deal with receipt of notifications, as well as the reporting, investigation and recognition of accidents at work may have functioned with limited capacities during parts of the crisis.

The combined impact of the issues described above led to a decrease in the reported number of accidents at work in the data collection for the reference year 2020 compared with the previous year for the majority of reporting countries. In 2021 and 2022, the number of non-fatal accidents in the EU partially rebounded, before falling again in 2023 (remaining below the level of 2019); the number of fatal accidents also partially rebounded in 2021 but fell slightly in 2022 and increased marginally in 2023 (remaining below the level of 2019).

For more information on health and safety at work policy, please refer to the main article on [accidents at work statistics](#) .

View this article online at [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Accidents\\_at\\_work\\_-\\_statistics\\_by\\_economic\\_activity](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Accidents_at_work_-_statistics_by_economic_activity)

## Explore further

### Other articles

- [Accidents at work statistics](#)
- [Accidents at work – statistics on causes and circumstances](#)
- [Health in the European Union – facts and figures](#) – online publication
- [Health statistics introduced](#)

### Database

- [Health](#) , see:

Health and safety at work (hsw)

Accidents at work (ESAW, 2008 onwards) (hsw\_acc\_work)

Details by NACE Rev. 2 activity (2008 onwards) (hsw\_n2)

Non-fatal accidents at work by NACE Rev. 2 activity and sex (hsw\_n2\_01)

Fatal accidents at work by NACE Rev. 2 activity (hsw\_n2\_02)

Non-fatal accidents at work by NACE Rev. 2 activity and age (hsw\_n2\_03)

Accidents at work by days lost and NACE Rev. 2 activity (hsw\_n2\_04)

Accidents at work by NACE Rev. 2 activity and size of enterprise (hsw\_n2\_05)

Accidents at work by NACE Rev. 2 activity and part of body injured (hsw\_n2\_06)

Accidents at work by NACE Rev. 2 activity and type of injury (hsw\_n2\_07)

### Thematic section

- [Health](#)

### Methodology

#### ESMS metadata files

- [Accidents at work \(ESAW, 2008 onwards\)](#) (ESMS metadata file – hsw\_acc\_work\_esms)
- [2020. Accidents at work and other work-related health problems](#) (ESMS metadata file – lfso\_20\_esms)

#### Publication

- [European statistics on accidents at work \(ESAW\) – Summary methodology – 2013 edition](#)

### External links

- [European Agency for Safety and Health at Work](#)
- [European Commission – Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion – Health and safety at work](#) , see:
  - [EU strategic framework \(2021–27\)](#)
- [European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions \(EUROFOUND\) – Health and well-being](#)
- [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) – Safety and health at work](#)