

SERBIA

the first eight months of the year, the Labor Inspectorate completed 15,927 safety and health at work inspections. Inspectors issued 2,616 decisions on deficiencies in safety and health conditions in the workplace, including 307 decisions barring an employee from continuing to work, which was 41 percent lower than during the same period in 2019. The inspectors filed 594 requests for misdemeanor proceedings against individuals for failure to provide a safe workplace for employees, which was 45 percent lower than the same period in 2019. The Labor Inspectorate employed inspectors and was responsible for worker safety and health, but the number of inspectors was insufficient to enforce compliance.

The government enforced occupational safety and health laws with varying degrees of effectiveness. Penalties for violations were not commensurate with those of similar crimes, such as negligence. Labor inspectors were able to make unannounced inspections and initiate sanctions but were limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Labor Inspectorate, the most common violations of workers' rights involved work performed without an employment contract; nonpayment of salary, overtime, and benefits; employers not following procedures in terminating employment contracts; nonpayment of obligatory pension and health contributions; and employers withholding maternity leave allowances. During the first eight months of the year, the inspectorate recorded 22 workplace accidents in which an employee died. Cases of death and injury were most common in the construction, transportation and storage, agricultural, and industrial sectors of the economy.