A tool for decision makers: calculation of cost-benefits of OSH

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In former East, now new EU, countries there has been a transition from state planned to a more capitalistic society. One of the issues in Latvia is the increasing role of cost-benefit calculations used in decision making. For the field of Occupational Safety & Health this field of work is highly underexposed. The State Labour Inspectorate in Latvia thrived to develop calculation tools and enhance the competencies of the inspectors to use them in the field.

TNO has a long track record on calculation of OSH in The Netherlands. Three experts specialized in different levels of calculation of OSH (calculation of interventions, on business level and on societal level) combined their forces to develop custom made tools for the State Labour Inspectorate in Latvia.

The project had three goals:

1. Monitoring & prioritizing: development of methodical instructions for the analyses of working environment in the country;
2. Economic effects of the prevention of occupational accidents: development of methodical instructions for the calculation of costs accidents at work;
3. Economic effects of the prevention of occupational diseases: development of methodical instructions for the calculation of costs of occupational diseases.

In the paper these tools and instructions how to use them will be described and presented. Some information about the specific situation of Latvia will be given to illustrate the use of these tools.