



## The situation of women in the labour market is improving

**Studies carried out by advisory and statistical firms indicate that the situation of women in the labour market is increasingly good; however, they are paid an average 7.7% less than men. Women's and men's pay could be rendered equal by 2021 at the earliest.**

In certain industries the stereotypes on women's and men's capabilities for many professions are still quite evident. The results of the surveys carried out by the DELab UW research centre and commissioned by the Foundation for Women's Entrepreneurship have shown that the most 'masculine' jobs according to the respondents are: driver (66%), automatics engineer, robotics engineer (65%) and energy engineer (64%). At the same time the most 'feminine' jobs include above all: interior designer (53%), pharmacist (52%) and social worker (50%).

Another study by Aon Best Employers 2017 shows that Polish women less frequently than men say they have career development opportunities at their companies (37% of women vs. 42% of men), despite the knowledge of career paths in their respective organisations is equal for both sexes at 43%.

The Polish market sees a clear gender pay gap reduction trend – from 11.4% in 2008 down to 7.7% in 2015. However, the gap could only be eliminated by 2021.



## Safe exploitation of cargo slings

**An industrial facility in which transportation processes are carried out and cargos moved around at every stage of production exploits various kinds of cargo slings.**

Strict compliance with the terms of use set out in the attached manual and regular checks guarantee that the slings are used safely.

There are three types of sling checks performed during its use:

1. Initial check before the new equipment is used for the first time. This includes checking the technical documentation from the manufacturer, verification of the sling register, making sure that the sling will be used in accordance with its intended use.
2. Ongoing checks each time before the sling is to be used - a visual check of the state of the sling performed in order to eliminate possible damage or excessive wear and tear.
3. Periodical, typically annual, checks – a thorough check. This includes a visual inspection and measurements of any increased lengths or distorted elements of the sling as well as load tests. Only those slings that have successfully passed the previous checks can undergo this inspection.



## **The government has adopted coal standards**

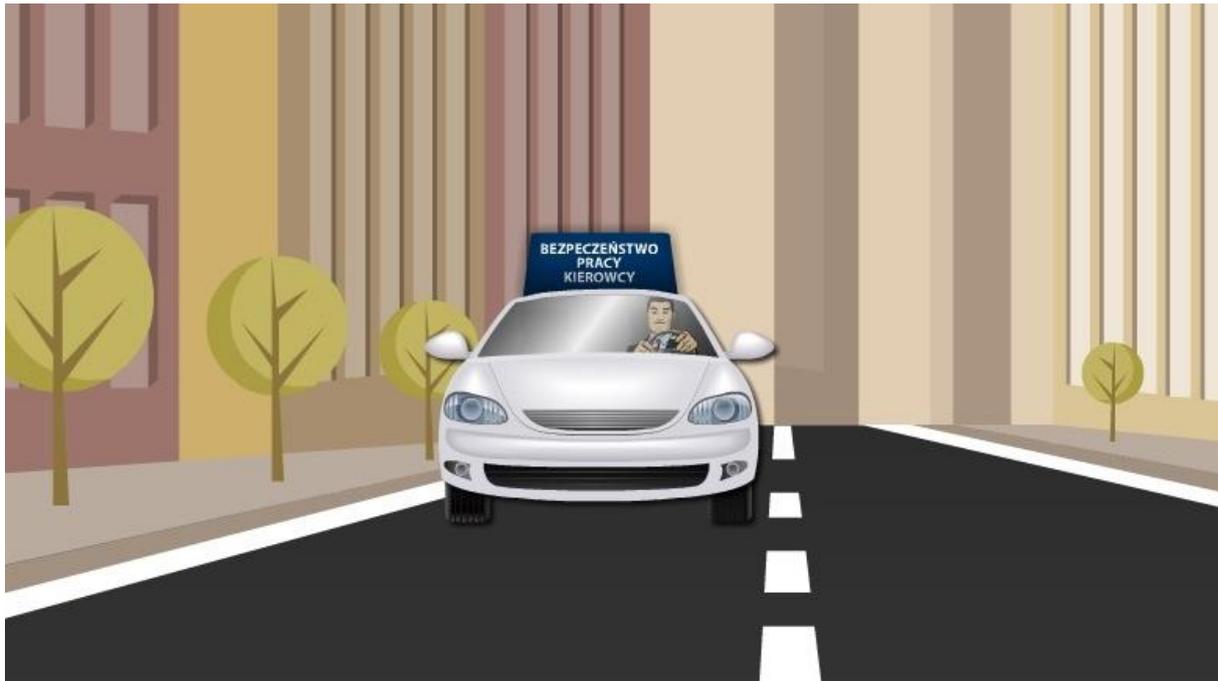
**The Council of Ministers has adopted a draft law on a system for monitoring and controlling the quality of fuels, commonly known as 'coal standards'. Under the new regulations, the poorest quality fuels are to disappear.**

Carbon norms were supposed to be implemented in autumn of last year, together with the act on obsolete furnaces. However, on account of a disparity between the Ministries of Energy and Development, the government delayed the approval of the amendment.

The current bill on a system of monitoring and controlling fuel quality and the bill on the National Treasury Administration states that the poorest quality fuels, such as coal sludge, coal flotation concentrates, lignite and its blends containing less than 85% of coal will disappear from coal yards delivering coal to individuals and heating installation operators of less than 1MW heating power.

According to experts, coal waste accounts for over 70% of PM10 particulate matter emissions, including household stoves - 91 % of pollution, with industry only accounting for 2%. Poland is the only country where every kind of coal, even the most toxic types, can be used in household stoves.

Now the bill will be passed on to the Sejm, and Piotr Woźny, deputy Minister for Air Quality, says it will be voted on even this spring.



## Sales representative - a safe driver

**Sales representatives, due to the nature of their work, often travel on business. They typically use company or private cars to deliver products or company equipment. The greatest hazards at their work include excessive hurry and stress, which may lead to accidents.**

Sales representatives fall into the category, on account of the nature of their work, but also the employer's obligations, of those who are not employed as drivers and yet use cars for business-related purposes.

Police statistics indicate that car accidents are primarily caused by drivers: they are to blame for nearly 80% of all accidents. Learning to drive safely should be an obligation under law, but also one prescribed by the common sense.

Each employee is required to learn the health and safety rules prior to commencing work. It is an obligation of an employer to ensure proper training, as it is the employer that is responsible for the health and safety in the workplace. Another important issue is the document confirming the OHS training, an employee is not permitted to commence work without one.

The technological advances now allow such training to be delivered in the form of e-learning. This means that every employee can undergo such training in a convenient place and time.



## Will it be possible to dismiss a pregnant employee?

**The Labour Law Codification Committee sent its proposed amendments to the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy. The draft regulations include new solutions concerning inter alia pregnant employees. The Committee adopted an assumption that the employer is not required to always bear the costs implied in the protection of parenthood.**

Currently, an employment contract cannot be terminated during pregnancy of the employee, which on the one hand is in line with the social obligation, but from an employer's point of view entails the payment of remuneration for that period, among other things, - also where the position occupied by the pregnant employee is no longer necessary for the company.

*- We propose that the burden implicit in the maintenance of a pregnant employee should be taken over, in certain cases, by the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) or the Labour Fund – said Prof. Arkadiusz Sobczyk, head of the team responsible for drafting a new Labour Code in an interview for TVN24 BiS.*

He also pointed out that if the state does not adopt the responsibility, the Committee's proposals will be obsolete.

Sobczyk explained that the situation of pregnant employees in large businesses would not change. Whereas the legal situation of women employed in microfirms would be somewhat different.



## The safe extinguisher

**Proper selection and situation of fire extinguishing equipment is of paramount importance in the organisation of fire protection. These may affect the efficiency of the activities in the event of fire and the safety of those present on the site.**

The most important knowledge taught at fire protection training is that fire extinguishers are designed to put out fire sources in order to prevent it from escalating. Fire spreading over substantial areas cannot be put out by means of hand-held extinguishers.

Employees are only required to try and stop fire from spreading in the initial phase, i.e. extinguishing the fire, triggering alarms and evacuation.

A proper selection of extinguishers and maintaining them in good technical condition is prerequisite to ensuring relative safety, e.g. on the site or in a vehicle.

In selecting extinguishers one needs above all to analyse the fire risk, which has been initially done and reflected in fire regulations. The regulations set out e.g. various categories of buildings (i.e. ZL, PM, etc.) and impose an obligation to use extinguishers according to the types of fire that may occur, divided into 5 commonly known groups:

A, B, C, D and F.



## Changes to OHS investment subsidies

**Towards the end of last year, changes were made to the manner in which subsidies are awarded for OHS investments. The funds will now be awarded by way of contest.**

The act on social insurance against accidents at work and occupational diseases of 27 October 2017 (Dz.U. 2017, No. 2179) sets out, in Arts. 37a-37h, rules for the organisation and conduct of a contest.

Under the provisions contests will be organised annually and the closing date for applications is 31 December.

The most important changes:

- After an announcement of the contest by the ZUS employers will have one month to complete and submit relevant documentation.
- The documentation submitted for the contest will be assessed both on formal and substantive grounds.
- There are no precise criteria for the assessment of employers.

Elżbieta Rogowska, Deputy President of the Management Board at PW Krystian, member of the Safe at Work Coalition, says that the recent changes will result in a decreased access to the funds under the project.



## Bicycles – safety in commuting

The surveys carried out by CBOS and PAYBACK Opinion Poll in 2017 show that nearly 70% of Poles ride a bicycle and 26 % of those commute to work by bike.

Every road user, including cyclists, must rigorously comply with the **caution or special caution** rule, i.e. avoid any behaviour that could compromise the safety or order in road traffic, hinder it or place anybody at risk of injury or harm.

Cycling safely is possible; one must only remember several fundamental principles:

1. Use a bike that is roadworthy and properly equipped.
2. Wear a helmet while riding.
3. Look around carefully before you set off.
4. Use cycle paths wherever possible.
5. Observe road traffic rules - the also apply to cyclists.
6. Always keep your hand on the brake when approaching crossroads, internal road exits and side streets.
7. Never force others to give way.
8. Indicate properly if you intend to turn.
9. Never cut corners.



## Changes in the heating industry

**Several changes await the heating industry this year required by EU and domestic regulations, such as emission standards. The most important one is the Winter Package – an over 1000-page set of recommendations concerning the energy and climate policies in the European Union for the years 2020-2030.**

Poland offers substantial potential for the development of the heating industry with over 100 mid-size towns still missing a heating and power plant and the heating networks in many cities being in need of a thorough modernisation.

The works on the Winter Package are entering the consultation phase between the European Commission, European Parliament and Member States, which have adopted a common position in December, during EU energy ministers' summit.

Impact on the industry will also have the EU BAT standards adopted in April of last year, which will enter into force in 2021 imposing rigorous criteria for nitrogen, sulphur compound and dust emissions on high combustion units of over 50 MW in power. Equally strict requirements apply to small to mid-size units from 1 to 50 MW – this in turn is a requirement under directive on emissions from medium combustion plants (MCP Directive).

Considerable impact on the heating industry will also be made by the implementation in Poland of the power market and new cogeneration support system, which – in the industry expert's opinion – should be both independent and compatible with the former.

## **BLS – Basic Life Support**

**It is the employer that is responsible for the condition of OHS in the workplace and the organisation of a first aid system and should appoint those to be trained in inter alia basic life support.**

**Basic life support (BLS)** is deviceless sustenance of life processes in the injured, such as the patency of the breathing system and sustaining breathing and blood circulation.

Under the BLS principles, those without prior training should only press the chest. Whereas trained individuals – should accompany chest compressions with rescue breaths. **The 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths sequence.**

This course of action is particularly important while resuscitating children and casualties with cardiac arrest due to oxygen shortage for various reasons, or when it is clear that the medical emergency service will not arrive within several minutes.

Certain BLS elements, such as calling for help, must be performed as part of the alarming and other procedure triggering procedure. In certain cases, on account of the specific threats occurring in a given company, it may happen that other BLS activities required using professional rescue equipment and protective measures.