



APPOINTMENT

DGUV Chairman on the  
Economic Council

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## TOP STORY

## Challenges for the new legislative period

### Digitalisation and occupational diseases are on the agenda

How do we want to work in the future? How to structure social security? Digitalisation poses fundamental questions anew – also from the perspective of statutory accident insurance. This is not just about new forms of work and the associated new types of risks for occupational safety and health. It is about basic definitions of ‘work’ and ‘employment’. In the upcoming legislative period, policy makers will have to find answers, including answers on how legislation on occupational diseases should be further developed.



Illustration: Karo Rigaud

‘Digitalisation is an issue for all political parties’, said Dr Joachim Breuer, Director General of the DGUV, in reference to the election campaign. ‘There is overwhelming consensus that digital transformation offers enormous potential for new workplaces, more flexible forms of work, new products, new mobility concepts and better educational opportunities.’ But the effects of digitalisation still appear to be difficult to grasp. Standard employment relationships are still the norm in the labour market. However, Breuer warns about too much complacency. ‘At the moment, discussions around Work 4.0 are still largely focused on working hours, mobile availability and mental stress. There is no disputing the importance of these issues but the platform economy, with its flexible forms of work, raises even more fundamental questions: How can people who are in non-standard employment work safely and healthily? Is our definition of work still even valid?’ Details on the various parties’ responses to the challenges posed by digitalisation are still vague. ‘There must be concrete answers to these issues in the coming years’, declared Breuer. He expects that the new federal government will continue the dialogue on Work 4.0 that was initiated by

Federal Minister of Labour Andrea Nahles and emphasises the expertise of the German Social Accident Insurance and its competence in finding solutions.

The German Social Accident Insurance has proven this competence, among other things, with its recommendations on how to further develop occupational disease legislation. There needs to be more clarity and transparency in the processes, and changes in the world of work also pose new challenges for legislation. ‘The self-governing committees of the social accident insurance institutions have already submitted a white paper on ‘Occupational Disease Law’ to the legislature which contains ready-to-implement recommendations for bringing the law up to date’, said Breuer. He hopes that the new federal government will take on board and implement these recommendations, which were jointly prepared by employers and insured employees.

**Web:** For more on Work 4.0, click [here](#).

## FYI

### White Paper ‘Occupational Disease Law 2016’

Five points for updating the law

- 1 **Improve identification of the causes**
- 2 **Abolish forced occupational abstinence**
- 3 **Regulate retroactive effect**
- 4 **Embed the Medical Advisory Committee for Occupational Diseases into the law**
- 5 **Encourage more research**



## Challenge

Dear Reader,

The German federal election is just a few weeks away. The tension is mounting. But regardless of which parties are elected into government, some issues are already set for the upcoming legislation period. The chances are high that one of these will be 'digitalisation'. Trendy catchphrase and serious challenge in one. This is more than human-machine interactions, artificial intelligence, big data, smart data and autonomous technology. Technical advancements bring benefits, but what will be the impact of the changing world of work on each and every one of us? How will we balance new, more flexible forms of work with social security? This is also an issue for statutory accident insurance. When job functions and ways of working change, then other things must be adjusted too, such as prevention work. How will we define 'work' in the future and who will be under the protection of the statutory accident insurance system? We will continue to pursue this issue because everyone should be able to work in a healthy and safe way – whether on the company premises, at home or in co-working spaces.

**Dr Joachim Breuer**  
Director General of the DGUV

# 'Everything that can be digitalised, will be digitalised'

With more than five million employees, healthcare is the largest sector in Germany. One of the greatest challenges for healthcare policy, in addition to demographic change, is digitalisation. The federal government has now launched a number of initiatives, including a statute on eHealth. The aim is to take advantage of the opportunities that digitalisation presents for healthcare and to speed up beneficial applications. DGUV Kompakt spoke with Professor Axel Ekkernkamp, Medical Director of the BG Klinikum Unfallkrankenhaus Berlin and Business Unit Manager of Medicine at the Hospital Group of the Statutory Accident Insurance.

### Professor Ekkernkamp, what does the future of medicine look like?

Medicine and IT will continue to converge. We are already working on developments such as eHealth, internet medicine and telemonitoring. I'm certain that the digital revolution will change the demand for health services and the supply of healthcare providers. Health is increasingly being discussed online. This impacts communication between doctors and patients. Hospitals are also networking; this is a way of learning from each other. And digital medical records help to save lives as well. New technologies in medicine offer opportunities to not only make healthcare better and more efficient, but also to help maintain older people's independence. It's no longer just about 'whether' the healthcare system will be digitalised but rather 'how' this will happen. In a nutshell, 'everything that can be digitalised, will be digitalised'.

### Is Germany prepared for the digitalisation of healthcare?

Everyone speaks of the success of Work 4.0. The enormous effort made by the social partners means that a highly modern world of work is emerging in which new technologies and robotics, as well as the human factor, can help to further reduce the number of workplace accidents. For a number of reasons, the Health

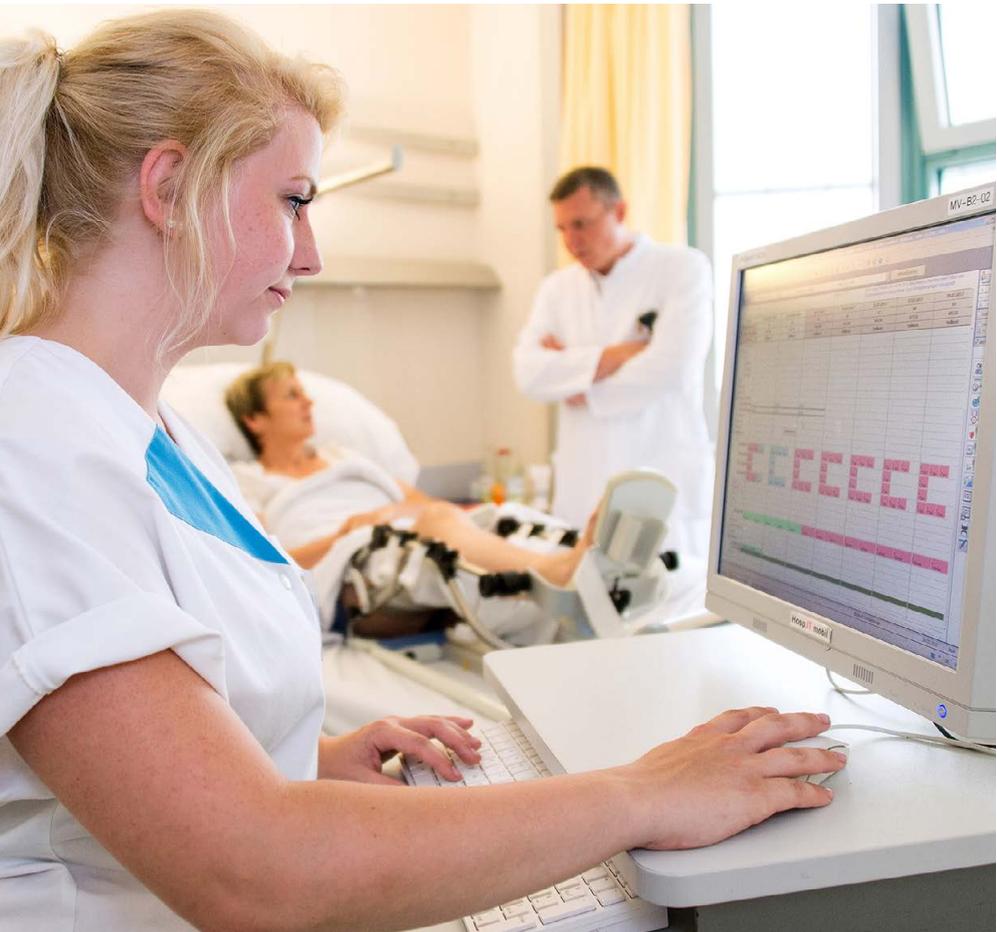
4.0 project is lagging behind. There's a lot of catching up to be done. For example, hospitals in Germany only spend one to two percent of their budget on IT. In comparison, Denmark invests 10 times that amount. The eHealth Act is an important step forwards but that alone is not enough. Before we can benefit significantly from digitalisation in the healthcare sector, we need to make enormous investments. However, individual hospitals or doctors generally cannot do this on their own. The federal government has acknowledged this and signalled that it will provide financial support for building digital infrastructure.

### Where are the BG hospitals in terms of digitalisation?

Digitalisation in the BG Hospitals is already well on the way. We are driving developments forwards and want to continuously innovate. Examples of this are digital hospital rounds, electronic medication management, digital patient records and, in terms of telematics, the provision of emergency medical services to people at sea or on offshore wind farms. Nevertheless, the BG Hospital Group has a lot of catching up to do. The Group's Head of IT has clearly stated our goal: by 2025, we want to be the Number 1 hospital group in the area of digitalisation.

**'New technologies and robotics, as well as the human factor, can help to further reduce the number of workplace accidents.'**

**Professor Axel Ekkernkamp**



Photograph: ukb

Digitalisation is already well advanced in the BG Hospitals. Examples include digital hospital rounds, an electronic medication management system and digital patient files.

### What opportunities does digitalisation offer medicine and healthcare?

The intelligent use of data and networking across sectors mean that illnesses can be more efficiently combated and also save costs. Intelligent, 'thinking' systems greatly improve the work of medical professionals and lessen their workload, freeing them up to spend more time on individual consultations with patients. It also improves the allocation of resources: in the future, a radiologist will no longer have to spend time diagnosing the results of CT images. The diagnosis will be done by software and the doctor can instead work on the therapy. With certain medical indications, robots with highly intelligent microchips are capable of more complex and finer procedures than doctors. The possibility of using 3-D printing to take a person's own stem cells to create organs will be a significant advancement in medicine. Severe facial injuries or deformations caused by large tumours can already be treated extremely well by

Photograph: ukb



**Professor Axel Ekkernkamp**  
 Medical Director of the BG  
 Klinikum Unfallkrankenhaus  
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 Accident Insurance

manufacturing individual implants. Big data is changing all time and space dimensions that we previously knew. It is only now that developments in personalised medicine, for example in the field of oncology, have become possible at all. Data analysis can be used for risk screening. It can be used to calculate the probability of a patient experiencing complications following surgery to a joint. This improves the quality of treatment and benefits both the patient and the social accident insurance institutions as the funding body of the BG Hospitals. Digitalisation with its technologies and algorithms challenges us. To succeed we will have to change. In this case, 'we' means the practitioners and the patients.

## TOPIC

# Industry 4.0: Prevention 'Course Book'

The industrial world of work is transforming into Industry 4.0. This affects all areas of production, logistics and transport. The German social accident insurance institutions and their umbrella association have drawn up a position paper that describes the areas where action needs to be taken due to new risks, as well as new possibilities for working healthily and safely. It serves as a 'course book' for prevention in the coming years.

Around 15 million jobs in Germany depend on the manufacturing industry. These jobs are changing because people, machines, data and, ultimately, products are becoming more closely linked through digitalisation. Cooperative systems consisting of humans and technology, including artificial intelligence, are characteristic of what is known as 'Industry 4.0'. Technology-related issues are at the heart of what the social accident insurance system is thinking about in terms of prevention. Which concepts make it possible to have a reliable risk and hazard assessment of self-organising machines, plant and equipment? What influence do assistance systems have on the risk behaviour of workers? Organisational issues are also a focus of attention. Working conditions need to be assessed more holistically. Selectively taking into consideration single aspects – only safety or only cognitive strain – are no longer suitable for the complex interactions of Industry 4.0. Finally, people themselves offer a starting point for targeted prevention. For example, new competences are needed for managing employees so that it is also possible to manage teams of mixed ages or to manage remotely. Industry 4.0 offers many opportunities but it also carries risks. The position paper identifies specific areas of action and thus provides a basis for all people who are responsible for safe and healthy work.

**Web:** [www.dguv.de](http://www.dguv.de) (Webcode dp1050338)  
 (German only)

## RECOMMENDED

# 'Further Learning' for the World of Work 4.0



As part of the Work 4.0 dialogue process, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) published its third workbook 'Further Learning' in June. The focus of the workbook is on qualification requirements and forms of qualification for the future world of work. Experts from the sciences and the practical world of work discuss the importance of further and continuing education. What skills and qualifications will be in demand in the future? How do companies and organisations have to adapt themselves to a changing innovative and competitive environment? How can we make learning and knowledge available to many people? The aim of the series is to provide an extended platform for experts to exchange information and ideas about the future of work. The main topics of the first two workbooks were digital and societal transformation, and their impact on the world of work.

**Web:** [www.arbeitenviernull.de](http://www.arbeitenviernull.de)

› Dialogprozess › Werkhefte (German only)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

# Better working conditions for seafarers

At the end of July, the EU Commission adopted a proposal for a directive to improve the working conditions of seafarers on vessels flying the flag of an EU Member State. Thus, an agreement between the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) will be transposed into EU law. The directive will better protect seafarers in the event of abandonment in a foreign port.

Under the Maritime Labour Convention, all ships are checked for compliance with working and living conditions. Each country is responsible for the merchant vessels flying its flag. For vessels flying the German flag, these provisions have been implemented with the German Mar-



Photograph: Gerhard1302 / Fotolia

itime Labour Act. The directive is also intended to strengthen the right to compensation for death or disability due to a work accident, illness or hazard. This will improve compensation processes so that it is faster and easier to make a claim.

Seafarers travelling on vessels flying the German flag, regardless of their nationality or place of residence, have full statutory accident insurance under the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the transport industry, postal logistics and telecommunications (BG Verkehr).

**Web:** For more information, click [here](#).

## DGUV Chairman on the Economic Council

Dr Rainhardt von Leoprechting has once more been elected to the National Executive Board of the German Economic Council (Wirtschaftsrates der CDU e.V.). He will represent the interests of the regional economy at federal level for a further two years.

Photograph: Nikolaus Brade / DGUV

## IMPORTANT DATES

12–13 October 2017

**16th European Health Congress:  
Designing a fair and future-proof  
health system**

**MUNICH**

[www.gesundheitskongress.de](http://www.gesundheitskongress.de)

17–20 October 2017

**A+A Congress 2017**

**DÜSSELDORF**

[www.aplusa.de](http://www.aplusa.de)

## CORRECTION

On the cover of the July/August edition, we inadvertently used an incorrect picture. We would like to apologise for this error and wish to point out that it is currently prohibited to wear protective gloves when working with machines that have rotating parts if there is a risk that a glove might get caught in the machine. In order to determine which protective measures must be taken for a machine with rotating parts, a hazard assessment must be conducted.

**Web:** Further information in German is available [here](#).

## LEGAL INFORMATION

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