

## TOP STORY

# More deaths from accidents at work

## Preliminary figures for first half of 2017 published

In the first half of 2017, 223 people lost their lives due to an accident at work. That's 25 more fatal accidents than in the first six months of the previous year. Even though it's too early to establish the trend for the entire year, these preliminary figures from Germany's statutory accident insurance are a strong reminder: To achieve a world without fatal and serious accidents, more effort needs to be made. As such, the German social accident insurance institutions are launching a new campaign in October. Its goal: to change the culture of prevention in companies and educational institutions.

According to the preliminary figures from the social accident insurance institutions, 433,037 reportable workplace accidents were registered in the first half of this year – a drop of 0.4% compared to the previous year. 6,654 insured persons received a disability pension for the first time due to a reduction in their earning capacity because of an accident. However, the number of reportable commuting accidents rose by 5,617 to 96,915. A total of 2,238 new disability pensions were paid out as a result of commuting accidents, 30 more than in the first six months of 2016. There were 120 fatal commuting accidents, almost the same number as in the equivalent period last year.

'Even though these are low accident rates compared to years ago, we're still not satisfied with the situation', said Dr Joachim Breuer, Director General of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV). Especially when looking at fatal workplace accidents, we can't afford to become complacent. 'Every single one of these accidents is one too many.'

But what is the best way to move forward? Studies conducted by the social accident insurance institutions show that human error is often the cause of serious accidents. Examples of this can be found in a recent analysis carried out by the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the raw materials and chemical industry (BG RCI): personal protective



Photograph: benjaminmolte / Fotolia



Although the current number of fatal accidents at work is comparatively low compared to the last 50 years, figures for the period from 2009 to 2016 show that there has hardly been any change.

Graphic: DGUV

equipment is provided, but not worn; safety rules are not complied with; protective devices on machines are manipulated. 'These are some of the typical incidents that highlight the fact that workplace safety and health isn't always a priority – with dramatic consequences', said Deputy Director General of the DGUV Dr Walter Eichendorf. 'Our new campaign 'kommittensch' takes a new approach: we want to put the focus on the culture of prevention itself. The campaign is being launched on 18 October at the A+A trade fair for safety and health at work in Düsseldorf (see interview in this month's edition).

For more, see the [DGUV Prevention Yearbook 2017](#)

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Dr Joachim Breuer



## Expectations of CETA

Dear Reader,

Since the changes of government and policies in the USA, talk over the extremely controversial TTIP free trade agreement has gone quiet. In comparison, the CETA free trade agreement between the EU and Canada is moving along well. A significant proportion of the agreement has already provisionally come into force. What is expected of CETA? The EU Commission has stated: 'public services will remain public' and 'EU standards will continue to be upheld'. Sounds good. But as everyone knows, when it comes to contracts, the way every sentence is formulated and interpreted is very important.

After first examination, it can be said: The parts of the agreement that deal with safety and health at work take many positive approaches: the precautionary principle has been given highest priority. There is explicit agreement on having a high level of OSH and it being effectively employed. Nevertheless, there are still many unknowns. For example, we'll be closely monitoring the role of newly established bodies such as the CETA Joint Committee. Its task is to interpret and further develop the agreement. This sounds like it will have significant sway over the agreement; the only thing that remains open is where the journey is going.

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

# 'Prevention must become a 24/7 issue'

On 18 October, the German social accident insurance institutions launch their new workplace safety and health campaign called **kommmitmensch**. The goal: to promote a culture of prevention in companies. DGUV Kompakt spoke with Dr Walter Eichendorf, Deputy Director General of the DGUV, about the new campaign, why prevention is worthwhile and what roll managers play in establishing a new prevention culture.

**What does prevention culture actually mean?**

Prevention culture describes the way safety and health is dealt with in an organisation or company. Does prevention have a value? Do managers and employees consider safety and health to be an indispensable part of their thoughts and actions? Does protecting life and health take precedence over other goals? This is what prevention culture is about.

**It sounds a little abstract. Why has prevention culture been made the focus of a campaign?**

Because we are striving for a world where there are no longer any serious or fatal work accidents and occupational diseases. This is called Vision Zero and you might have heard about it from road safety. We've already achieved a lot towards this in the past. The number of fatal work accidents in recent decades has declined enormously. But this also means that every accident is increasingly becoming an isolated event, which makes it difficult to learn something new from this accident. That's why we must focus on the culture of prevention itself. We have to make sure that all companies, schools and public institutions make prevention a 24/7 issue for all people, an around-the-clock companion so to speak. That's the goal of our new prevention campaign **kommmitmensch**.

**That's not a goal that's quickly achieved, is it?**

Exactly. A shift in values takes time. That's also the reason why we are running the campaign over a very long period of ten years, including several interim evaluations to optimise the campaign.

The first media umbrella campaign to raise awareness starts on 18 October. Then, starting in March 2018, we'll be going to companies with the first topic of the campaign 'Management Culture'. The individual campaigns run by the accident insurance institutions will also start at this point.

**Why start with management culture?**

Management isn't everything, but without good leadership, nothing else works. If the person at the head of a company or organisation is lax when it comes to safety and neglects their own health, then this has a negative effect on the employees. Leadership makes the difference.

**'Management isn't everything, but without good leadership, nothing else works.'**

**Dr Walter Eichendorf**

**The International Social Security Association (ISSA) has launched a Vision Zero campaign. The first of the seven golden rules of this campaign is: 'Take leadership – demonstrate commitment'. This isn't a coincidence, is it?**

The aim of the ISSA campaign is to encourage companies worldwide to systematically reduce work accidents and occupational diseases by investing in a healthy and motivated workforce. Globally, we are talking about an entirely different level of safety and health than here in Germany. But it isn't a coincidence that leadership has first priority there as well. Because if you, as a manager, don't live and breathe safety and



Photograph: Jan-Peter Schulz / DGUV

The benefits to companies and administrations of a good prevention culture include less time off work and fewer accidents, improved quality, and being more attractive as an employer.

health every day, then you won't be successful – whether you're in Germany or in Pakistan. That's why the road to a prevention culture means that everyone has to 'come with us'. But the **kommmit** mensch campaign in Germany goes beyond Vision Zero and companies alone. It's about parents who wear a bike helmet; a father who explains to his son that failure is also an opportunity; and it's about mutual appreciation. It's about being allowed to make mistakes and learn from them – whether on the job, doing voluntary work, at school or in our private lives. It's about prevention as a value, and values don't stop at the factory gates or when we finish work for the day.

#### Isn't prevention culture more an issue for large companies and less for SMEs?

Many large companies have already done a lot in this area. Their global activities and their experience with serious accidents means they are far more obliged to integrate safety and health into company procedures than SMEs. Not least because of concerns for their reputation. Ultimately though, a small company is hit a lot hard-

er when a serious accident happens. There have now been a number of studies which show that investing in prevention results in about double the return on investment. That applies to SMEs as well. Another issue is that small and medium enterprises have difficulties attracting good employees. And when it comes to deciding for or against an employer, it helps if the company or organisation has a reputation for promoting a culture of prevention.



Sicher. Gesund. Miteinander.

The logo of the new **komm mit mensch** prevention campaign of the German social accident insurance institutions. "komm mit mensch" is a long-term campaign to establish a culture of prevention. The German name of the campaign is a play on words: it can be translated loosely as "hey, come with us", whilst also playing on the English word "commitment".

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

## TOPIC

# Social security at EU level

The European Commission has made a proposal to amend the EU Regulation on the coordination of social security systems. The provisions stipulated in the Regulation guarantee that nobody who moves to another Member State loses their social protection. The German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) has submitted comments on the proposal.

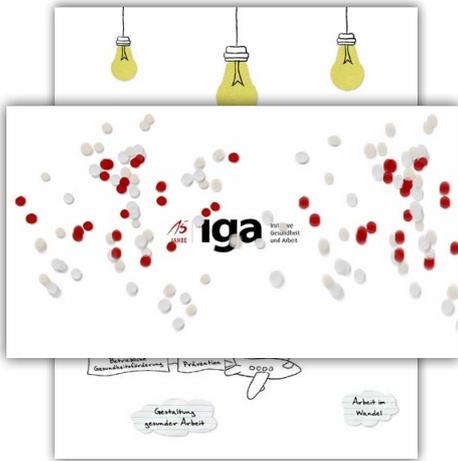
The Regulation on the coordination of social security systems is intended to ensure the free movement of persons between the EU Member States. The proposed amendments include changes to provisions on the posting of workers, unemployment benefits, family benefits and certain technical provisions. The European Commission also wants to introduce a separate chapter on long-term care benefits. The chapter will contain a definition and listing of long-term care services, as well as rules on its coordination. In its comments, the DGUV argued against introducing such a chapter. Long-term care benefits as a result of a work accident or occupational disease should not be coordinated outside of the existing provisions for accident insurance. According to the DGUV, a separate chapter on long-term care would hamper the efficient use of the coordination regulation.

In the interests of legal certainty, the DGUV proposes that university students, trainees and interns also be issued with an A1 certificate of insurance coverage. An A1 certificate means that posted workers who temporarily work in another Member State do not have to make social security contributions in the posted country. These posted workers are still subject to the legislation of their original country of employment.

**Web:** For more including the full statement, [click here](#).

## RECOMMENDED

# iga – 15 years of working together



Healthy work – that’s the best way to sum up the aim of the Initiative Health and Work (iga). For 15 years, the Federal Association of Company Health Insurance Funds (BKK Dachverband), the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), the Federal Association of the AOK (AOK-Bundesverband) and the Association of Substitute Health Funds (vdek) have been working together in the fields of prevention and workplace health promotion (WHP). The iga’s projects develop OSH and WHP procedures which are adapted to meet the latest requirements. They also develop and test new methods for the social accident insurance institutions and the health insurance funds. Special focus is given to encouraging exchange between prevention specialists from the sciences and those who work hands-on. The result is strong cooperation between the private sector, the social partners, self-governing committees and policy makers. To celebrate their 15th anniversary, the Initiative has released a promotional video.

**Web:** [www.iga-info.de/ueber-uns](http://www.iga-info.de/ueber-uns)  
(German only)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

# Vision Zero – First global campaign for zero accidents at work

The International Social Security Association (ISSA) launched the first global campaign to improve safety, health and well-being at work during the recent World Congress on Safety and Health at Work 2017. The aim of the campaign is to eliminate or reduce the causes of accidents, diseases and harm at work by building a strong prevention culture. ‘Vision Zero is the belief that work accidents or work-related diseases aren’t just bad luck or fate, but rather have specific causes’, said Dr Joachim Breuer, ISSA President and Director General of the DGUV. ‘Ultimately, all work accidents and occupational diseases are avoidable.’ This goal can be achieved by systematically integrating prevention into all areas of



The campaign at the XXI World Congress on Safety and Health at Work 2017

business and by going beyond traditional safety regulations and training. The campaign promotes a systematic and integrated approach to prevention and provides seven golden rules, practical checklists and training materials to 320 member organisations from 156 countries. Company owners and managers can check which of the seven golden rules have already been implemented in their company and where there is still room for improvement.

**Web:** [www.visionzero.global](http://www.visionzero.global)



## Wheelchair Basketball

Basketball players with a disability will be showing off their elite talents at the World Championships in Hamburg from 16 to 26 August 2018. The German Social Accident Insurance is supporting the event with activities that encourage participation in sport for all.

**Web:** [www.2018wbwc.de](http://www.2018wbwc.de) (German only)

## IMPORTANT DATES

**6 November 2017**

**Conference ‘Action Plan 2.0 for UN-CRPD’**

**DRESDEN**

[www.dguv.de](http://www.dguv.de) > [Veranstaltungen](#)

**17 November 2017**

**Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth**

**GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN**

[www.socialsummit17.se](http://www.socialsummit17.se)

**21 November 2017**

**Behaviour-oriented OSH**

**FULDA**

[www.sifa-sibe.de/kalender/](http://www.sifa-sibe.de/kalender/)

**23–24 November 2017**

**Work 4.0 – anytime and anywhere?**

**DRESDEN**

[www.dguv.de/iag](http://www.dguv.de/iag) > [Veranstaltungen](#)

## NUMBER OF THE MONTH

# 532,000,000

**Euro ...**

... was spent on compensation benefits covered by student accident insurance in 2016. That’s an increase of 5.41% over the previous year.

## LEGAL INFORMATION

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