



RECOMMENDED
Five forms of
prevention culture
PAGE 4

TOP STORY

Fresh impetus for prevention work

Safety and health in the worlds of work and education – today and tomorrow

At the end of last year, the Members' Meeting of the German Social Accident Insurance adopted a revised position statement on prevention. It describes in ten points the most important ways that social accident insurance contributes to making the changing worlds of work and education safe and healthy.

Over the last two decades, the number of fatal and serious work, school and commuting accidents has fallen by around two thirds. However, this decline has slowed down in recent years. Even though the overall trend is positive and shows how much has been achieved, it also means that there are still serious accidents that result in lifelong impairments for those affected, or even death. In addition, the presence of a suspected occupational disease is often confirmed among many insured persons. Absenteeism due to illnesses influenced by work-related health hazards remains at a high level. The changing worlds of work and education also play their part, with new opportunities and risks that come with these changes. Digitalisation and technological advancements have resulted in new forms of work with greater flexibility in terms of forms of employment, work locations and working time models. What does this mean for the prevention work done by Germany's social accident insurance? 'Prevention work must address these new challenges. Our goal is, and remains, Vision Zero – a world without workplace accidents, occupational diseases and work-related illnesses', said Professor Joachim Breuer, Director General of the DGUV.

Therefore, the position on prevention adopted in 2008 was reviewed and revised by the DGUV in con-

'Safety and health are not side issues. They must be a core part of our lives and all work processes.'

Professor Joachim Breuer



Photo: Syda Productions – stock.adobe.com

Prevention starts at an early age. It is important to promote safety and health skills among children and adolescents. This includes the healthy use of digital media.

junction with the German social accident insurance institutions. A key priority is to promote a culture of prevention in companies and educational institutions. The position statement reaffirms the importance of providing advice and monitoring in partnership. 'We take our mandate to monitor compliance with preventive measures seriously', stated Breuer. In order to establish a culture of prevention, safety and health must always be taken into consideration. 'Safety and health are not side issues. They must be a core part of our lives and all work processes. Our **kommmitmensch** prevention campaign has its origins precisely there', explained Breuer. Culture takes time to develop. That is why it is important to promote safety and health skills at an early age among children, adolescents and young adults. This includes skills for the healthy use of digital media or for ergonomics.

Position of the German Social Accident Insurance on prevention:

Web: www.dguv.de (Webcode: e1179283)

FYI Vision Zero

Vision Zero is the vision of a world without occupational accidents and work-related diseases. Its highest priority is the prevention of fatal and serious work accidents and occupational diseases. The goal of a comprehensive culture of prevention is Vision Zero.

Web: www.dguv.de
(Webcode: e1036651)
Campaign website:
<http://visionzero.global>



Protection for all

Dear Reader,

The 100th anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO) offers an opportunity to put universal social protection for a fair future of work to the test. Since the founding of the ILO, important standards have been introduced worldwide which make work safer and healthier. Nonetheless, on the occasion of its centenary, the ILO is calling for the social contract to be reinvigorated.

At first, that seems surprising. Isn't it enough that the International Social Security Association made Vision Zero a global prevention strategy in 2017? Thousands of organisations and international companies have pledged themselves to Vision Zero, including Germany's social accident insurance system with its **kommmitmensch** prevention campaign.

Although it's clear that this commitment is important, there are still many people who do not benefit, including people in Germany. What protection do people who work in flexible employment relationships or who are own-account workers have? They have to take care of themselves because they are not protected by the social security system.

What the ILO is calling for is justified. We must find new solutions to the issues caused by shifting employment relationships. The DGUV and its institutions are currently discussing how the German social accident insurance system can provide protection to as many people as possible. This is a difficult and demanding challenge which affects the very principles of social accident insurance, but change is essential for the continued existence of social justice.

Professor Joachim Breuer
Director General of the DGUV

'A human-centred agenda'

For 100 years, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been committed to advancing social justice through decent work. To mark its centenary, the ILO's Global Commission on the Future of Work recently published a special report 'Work for a brighter future'. DGUV Kompakt spoke about the report with Dr Annette Niederfranke, Director of the ILO Office for Germany.

Prior to the founding of the ILO, industrialisation was responsible for disrupting the social order in Europe and the USA. Today, we are once more in a process of transformation. Is it time for a new social contract?

The birth of the ILO in 1919, which took place at a time of revolutionary upheavals following the First World War and industrialisation, marked the beginning of an international social partnership. At the same time in Germany, the Stinnes-Legien Agreement saw the start of regulated wage agreements between employer associations and employee associations.

100 years later, we have a well-functioning social partnership that has stood the test of time in the face of crises and disasters. This saw Germany overcome the financial crisis of 2009 faster and more effectively because the right labour market policy measures were put in place through consensus of the social partners. Today, the digital transformation is putting the social contract to the test globally. The future of work is our key concern, together with the task of reinvigorating the social contract.

The human-centred agenda has three objectives: to increase investment in people's capabilities, in the institutions of work, and in decent and sustainable work. How can this agenda be transferred into societies?

'Governments and social partners must assume responsibility at national level, initiate social dialogue and develop guidelines for the labour market of the future.'

Dr Annette Niederfranke

Governments and social partners must assume responsibility at national level, initiate social dialogue and develop guidelines for the labour market of the future. What is the best way to alleviate people's fear of a social decline and build a better future? There needs to be national strategies with proposals for the sustainable investment in decent work. The guiding principle is a world of work where final decisions are made by human beings rather than relegated to artificial intelligence. The ILO wants to be the contact point and initiator for these national strategies.

At international level, multilateral institutions must take on greater responsibility for the proposed agenda. The aim is to have a more systemic and substantive working relationship between the ILO, the World Trade Organization and the Bretton Woods institutions. Everyone must work in unison to include workers' rights in free trade agreements because trade that is both free and fair can only be achieved through decent work. The ILO remains the champion and defender of workers' rights.

The report calls for the establishment of an international governance system for digital labour platforms that obliges all stakeholders to comply with certain minimum rights and protections. How would that work?

The aim is to ensure decent work on digital platforms and to maintain autonomy and control when using artificial intelligence. Because work on digital platforms is done across national borders and international legal systems, effective international standards are needed in the form of an international governance system that is binding on all ILO member countries. This means that platforms, including both operators and clients, will be obliged to respect certain minimum rights and protections. That's nothing new. We can use the world of work on the open seas as a model for this because it already has regulations. In 2006, the Mar-



Photo: Kadmy – fotolia.com

More than 300 million people live in extreme working poverty worldwide. The ILO's report serves as an important basis for the International Labour Conference in June.

itime Labour Convention created a kind of global labour code for seafarers working across different jurisdictions.

The report calls for a Universal Labour Guarantee for all workers, regardless of their employment relationship. What does this mean exactly?

2 billion people work in the informal economy worldwide, 300 million people live in extreme working poverty (less than US\$1.90 per day). The proportion of non-continuous careers and non-standard employment relationships is on the rise, the line between self-employment and waged employment is disappearing, and the proportion of self-employed persons without employees (own-account workers) is growing. Worldwide, the gender pay gap is 20% and a good 36% of people work excessive hours (more than 48 hours per week). All of this has a huge impact on labour rights, occupational safety and health, and thus on the lives and dignity of workers.

The Global Commission on the Future of Work has proposed a Universal Labour Guarantee for workers, regardless of their employment status or contractual agreement. There should be fundamental work-

Photo: Bundespresseamt

‘2 billion people work in the informal economy worldwide, 300 million people live in extreme working poverty.’

Dr Annette Niederfranke

ers' rights (core labour standards) for all. There should also be an 'adequate living wage' (ILO Constitution, 1919) for all workers as well as maximum limits for working hours and the assurance of safety and health at work. The report acts as a guide for moving ahead and will be used as the basis for the preparations for the International Labour Conference in June.

Web: www.ilo.org > Publications > Work for a brighter future



Dr Annette Niederfranke
Director of the ILO Office for Germany

TOPIC

European Labour Authority

On 14 February, the EU Parliament and the Council Presidency reached a provisional agreement on the EU Commission's proposal to establish a European Labour Authority (ELA). The aim of the Authority is to facilitate fair labour mobility within the EU and to support cooperation between national authorities.

Currently, almost 17 million EU citizens work in another EU Member State. Due to this fact, in September 2017, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker proposed establishing a new European Labour Authority. In March 2018, the European Commission submitted a draft regulation for establishing the ELA as part of its Social Justice Package.

Now that consensus has been reached, the ELA is scheduled to commence operations in 2019. Its purpose is to facilitate access to information on rights and obligations regarding cross-border mobility. It will also provide assistance to the Member States with implementing cross-border regulations such as the Directive on the posting of workers.

The German Social Insurance (DSV), which represents the umbrella associations of Germany's social insurance system, welcomes the goal of the ELA to promote fair labour mobility. However, the DSV has criticised the plan to transfer the bodies and tasks of the Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems to the ELA. It fears that there will be a loss of synergies and expertise. The provisional agreement no longer provides for this transfer. The DGUV took part in the consultations initiated by the Commission via a joint position statement submitted by the DSV.

On 20 February, the Permanent Representatives Committee accepted the agreement on the proposal to establish the ELA. The EU Parliament is expected to formally adopt the proposed regulation at its meeting on 16 April.

Web: www.dsv-europa.de > news

Five forms of prevention culture



Photo: GRVBE – Fotografie Erik Schwarzer

The focus on occupational safety and health in German companies varies greatly.

'Forms of prevention culture in German companies' (German only)
Web: www.baua.de > Publikationen

What is the current status of health and safety in German companies and educational facilities? Which factors help or hinder the implementation of statutory OSH requirements? The Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health looked at these questions in its recent study 'Forms of prevention culture in German companies'. The study identified five different forms of prevention culture. According to the study, the most common form of prevention culture in German companies, across all sectors and SMEs, was 'Error Avoidance'. The study serves as a targeted supplement to the **kommittensch** prevention campaign being run by the German social accident insurance institutions. The aim of the campaign is to embed values such as safety and health as a practised culture of prevention in all companies and organisations.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Commuting accidents still a concern

The number of reportable workplace and commuting accidents did not change significantly in 2018. This is shown by the preliminary workplace accident figures published recently by the DGUV. 430 accidents at work were fatal, 21 fewer than in the previous year. In contrast, there were 311 fatal commuting accidents, 31 more than in 2017. 'The fact that we had more fatal commuting accidents last year correlates with the increased number of road victims in Germany. Road accidents are among the five accident hotspots that we identified last year as part of our commitment to Vision Zero. In the future, we want to do even more; for example, as part of our current **kommittensch** prevention campaign', said Professor Joachim Breuer, Director General of the German Social Accident (DGUV).



Photo: Picture-Factory – fotolia.com

There is a positive trend among schoolchildren. The number of accidents on the way to school is getting increasingly smaller.

The trend for school-related accidents is positive. Compared to the previous year, the number of school accidents dropped by 6.5% to 1,133,788. There were also fewer fatal accidents at school and on the way to school. Last year, fewer pre-schoolers, schoolchildren and university students died in or on their way to day-care centres, schools or universities. The number fell from 49 to 34.

Web: www.dguv.de (Webcode: dp1316399) (German only)

IMPORTANT DATES

23-24 May 2019
STAY HEALTHY:
Prevention Congress 2019
BONN
www.gpev.eu

27-29 May 2019
7th Future Congress
State and Administration
DRESDEN
www.zukunftskongress.info

28-29 June 2019
9th Dresden Day-Care Symposium:
good, healthy day-care centres
in difficult times
DRESDEN
www.dguv.de (Webcode: d1181880)

NUMBER OF THE MONTH

3,265

... people were killed on German roads in 2018. That's 85 fatalities (2.7%) more than in 2017.

LEGAL INFORMATION

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Publishing committee:
 Dr Renate Colella (Chair), Udo Diel, Dominique Dressler, Professor Dr med Axel Ekkernkamp, Markus Hofmann, Gabriele Pappai, Dr Udo Schöpf, Karl-Sebastian Schulte
Editorship: Gregor Doecke, Kathrin Baltscheit, DGUV, Glinkastr. 40, 10117 Berlin
Editorial team: Kathrin Baltscheit, Diana Grupp, Anne Schattmann
Translation: Peter Love
Layout: Christoph Schmid, www.christophschmid.com
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Contact

KOMPAKT@DGUV.DE
WWW.DGUV.DE/KOMPAKT



ALKOHOL?
NICHT
AM ARBEITS-
PLATZ!

Alcohol Awareness Week

On 18 May, the German Centre for Addiction Issues kicks off Alcohol Awareness Week across Germany, including a special focus on 'No alcohol at work!'. The DGUV supports Alcohol Awareness Week because the workplace is one of the areas most affected by alcohol consumption and dependence.

Web: www.aktionswoche-alkohol.de (German only)