



TOP STORY

Number of serious and fatal accidents only slightly declining

Germany's social accident insurance puts focus on road safety

Accident figures are stagnating. This is the conclusion of a recent survey carried out by the German social accident insurance institutions and published by the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) at the beginning of September. The study shows that the number of workplace and commuting accidents hardly changed compared to the previous year. Specific prevention priorities aim to further reduce these figures.

877,198 reportable accidents at work were registered by the German social accident insurance institutions last year; an increase of 0.42% over the previous year. 188,527 insured persons had a reportable commuting accident, a drop of 2,441 accidents. 730 insured persons lost their lives due to accidents (731 in 2017), 420 of which were the result of work-related accidents and 310 due to commuting accidents. Dr Stefan Hussy, Director General of the DGUV, explains: 'For us there is no acceptable level of residual risk. Every accident is one too many'.

The figures show that over 40% of fatal accidents occur on the commute to or from work. Hussy is appealing to employers, employees and politicians to improve road and transport safety. 'Everyone can contribute more to road safety. Managers who refrain from calling their staff when they know they are behind the wheel. Policy makers by ensuring the roads are safe, especially for more vulnerable road users. And each and every one of us by avoiding distractions; put simply, by using our mobile phone less or not wearing headphones.

This is also an issue addressed by the *kommitmensch* prevention campaign currently being run by the German social accident insurance institutions. The campaign was started in order to establish a culture of prevention in all companies and institutions.



Photo: Tomas Rodriguez

The banner campaign being run by the German social accident insurance institutions encourages people to pay more attention on the road.

In the coming months, the campaign will focus on two specific areas, starting with road accidents and then moving on to accidents as a result of falling. 'By concentrating on these specific types of accidents, we want to raise awareness and educate people in a targeted manner and, over the long term, reduce the number of work-related and commuting accidents,' said Hussy. For this to work, all the campaign's fields of action must be interlinked. In terms of road safety, this means that managers must want there to be road safety, communication must be on equal footing and employees must be involved in road safety. This works best with a fair culture of error-management and a company climate that values safe driving.

Web: www.dguv.de > **Webcode:** dp1317520
(German only)

STICHWORT 2018 figures

Of the 420 work-related fatal accidents in 2018, 125 occurred on the road. Of the 310 fatal commuting accidents, 285 were road-related. Road accidents are accidents in which people are injured or killed on public roads and areas.

Web: www.dguv.de
> **Webcode:** e38888



Photo: Jan Röhl, DGUV

Mutual respect

Dear Reader,

If you look at the current debate on public roads, you could be forgiven for thinking that it's a warzone on the streets. Who does the road belong to? Who has right of way? Following the debate, you might get the impression that road users only speak from one angle, but who among us is only a pedestrian, only a cyclist or only a driver? Not many. In our role as accident insurance providers, we keep everyone in mind, from the young child who rides their training bike with their parent to day-care through to the worker who travels to work by train or car. Everyone should be able to travel safely to and from work, school, university or day-care centre. This is our mission and we promote road safety by teaching people, providing information and making them aware of the issue.

Road safety is a major challenge for policymakers, because they have to try and reconcile numerous interests. As part of the discussions that still need to be held in order to find good answers, I want to remind everyone that the first basic rule of the German Road Traffic Regulations is mutual respect. It may seem a little old-fashioned, but it makes a difference. If we take care and occasionally put ourselves in the other person's shoes, we make it easier for ourselves and others to get ahead. Just take off the blinkers and don't always insist that you are right. On that note, be considerate and stay aware.

Dr Stefan Hussy

Director General of the DGUV

'Driving ahead with the European Pillar of Social Rights'

A newly elected EU Parliament, a Commissioner-designate with a new team – there has been a lot of movement in Brussels recently. DGUV Kompakt spoke with Ilka Wölfle, Director of the European Representation of the German Social Insurance, about the importance of social policy in the new legislative period, about the EU Commission's attempts to accelerate social policy and about the German EU Council Presidency in 2020.

Ms Wölfle, the discussion on Europe's social dimension was a clear focus of the outgoing EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. After the European elections and under the new presidency of Ursula von der Leyen, will social policy continue to be a focus area?

I'm certain that Europe's social dimension will continue to play a key role. Ms von der Leyen made this very clear in her speech to the European Parliament. In a modern economy, she wants to reconcile the 'social' with the 'market'. To do this, she has announced an action plan to fully implement the European Pillar of Social Rights and has already announced a number of initiatives. However, its specific implementation remains to be seen.

Prior to the European elections in May 2019, the Commission had presented several initiatives for the practical implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. What's likely to happen next?

Some initiatives were finalised before the election of the new Parliament, such as the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers or the Directive on transparent and predictable working conditions in the European Union. Work has also been completed on the Regulation establishing a European Labour Authority. The Council agreed on Bratislava as the seat of the Authority, which is expected to be up and running as soon as possible and reach full capacity by 2024. Other initiatives, such as the Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed, which the Commission intends to use to fill

existing gaps in social protection, have not yet been entirely implemented.

Before the European elections in May, one of the last official acts of the previous Commission was to launch a discussion on more efficient decision-making in the Council concerning social policy. What does that exactly mean?

The EU Commission wants to have a faster way of finding policy solutions to changes in living conditions and circumstances. This is understandable, because our world, and especially the world of work, is changing faster than ever. The majority of initiatives in social policy are already adopted by qualified majority and with the participation of the European Parliament. Exceptions are sensitive areas such as 'social security and social protection of workers', 'protection of workers where their employment contract is terminated', and 'representation and collective defence of the interests of workers and employers'. In these areas, the Council must make decisions unanimously. This is provided for in the European Treaties.

What's the reason behind this?

Organising and financing social security systems are primarily the responsibility of the Member States. Only unanimous decisions in the Council can ensure that there is no interference with the core elements of social security. That is a matter for the individual Member States. Europe's various social security systems are as diverse as the Member States themselves. This is reflection of funding, economic conditions and traditions. Social policy decisions often af-



Photo: DGUV / Jan-Peter Schulz

Ilka Wölfle has been Director of the European Representation of the German Social Insurance since 2016. Her goal: to pool interests, build networks and actively shape European health and social policy.

fect people directly. Unanimous decisions may take longer, but they guarantee wider acceptance. Putting pressure on 'weaker' Member States through majority-based recommendations is likely to be counter-productive when it comes to promoting acceptance of EU decisions in these Member States and by their citizens. Therefore, the German Social Insurance is clearly opposed to this initiative and has published a position statement to this effect.

Looking ahead to next year – in July 2020, Germany will take over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. What topics are on the agenda?

One of the social policy issues Germany will address during its presidency will be the future of work. It's not a new topic, but it's important, because it is related to the question of how people can also work healthily and safely in new and different working conditions and how they are protected against life risks such as accidents, old age and illness. Good, safe working conditions and social security are also

gaining in importance internationally. As such, sustainable supply chains will also be an important issue.

How will the European Representation of the German Social Insurance be involved in the Council Presidency?

We will, of course, be active behind the scenes due to the demand for our expertise and where we can represent the interests of the various branches of Germany's social security system. But we will also provide a platform for discussions and the exchange of ideas on the future of work and artificial intelligence, which are two fascinating topics and where there is a lot happening. We're planning our own special event in Brussels in autumn 2020. Artificial intelligence has a great deal of potential for social security, but there are still a lot of unanswered questions. Insured persons will only accept artificial intelligence if there is transparency and trust. We want to help achieve this.

Web: www.dsv-europa.de

TOPIC

Disability Strategy review

In November 2010, the European Commission presented its European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe. As the current strategy period comes to an end, the Commission wants to assess its implementation using a public consultation. The DGUV will also participate in the consultation.

According to EU Commission estimates, one fifth of the EU population is expected to be affected by some form of disability by 2020. The figures are expected to rise as the EU population ages. The EU Commission launched its strategy in 2010 with the aim of achieving a barrier-free Europe. People with disabilities should be able to participate fully in society and on an equal basis with others.

The aim of the consultation is to assess what has actually been achieved or improved in the period 2010-2020, but also what factors may have restricted the strategy's implementation. For example, the DGUV has identified a lack of political commitment and public awareness as inhibiting factors. The DGUV also believes that there should be a better understanding of issues relevant to the disabled among policy makers. It also refers to its strategy paper 'UN-BRK 2025'. Following the principle of 'inclusion is not an exception, it is the rule', the German Social Accident Insurance has set itself the goal of establishing inclusion as a managerial and cross-sectional task. The DGUV also wants to increase awareness among the public and policymakers of its role as an institution with competence and expertise in the field of inclusion and accessibility.

The aim of the public consultation is to collect feedback from the broadest possible range of stakeholders in the evaluation process. The consultation ends on 23 October 2019.

Web: www.dguv.de > **Webcode:** d133311 (German only)

Good health and flexibility



Photo: iga

iga.Report 39 shows how workplace health promotion can also succeed with flexible forms of employment.

How can workplace health promotion reach workers in temporary, casual or marginal employment? This is a question that many companies are asking themselves. iga.Report 39

from the Initiative Health and Work presents the 'seek-out' approach to promoting good health. This approach integrates health initiatives directly into everyday working life. In the sense of actively taking a break from work, the following terms are often used: active break, movement break, relaxation break, express break or express health. The advantage is that time and location barriers are reduced to a minimum. Easy-to-do exercises and advisory services make it easier to motivate employees to take part. Good-practice examples from various industries show how good intentions can be implemented as quickly as possible.

Download the report at:
Web: www.iga-info.de (German only)

NEWS IN BRIEF

One high is enough – Living without addiction

The German Social Accident Insurance's prevention programme 'Jugend will sicher-leben' (Young People Living Life and Living Safely) has launched a campaign against addiction for the current vocational school year. The WHO estimates that between 20 and 25 percent of all accidents at work occur under the influence of alcohol or other addictive substances. Thus, the aim of the campaign is to provide information to apprentices and trainees about risk perception and how to improve their risk competence. In terms of occupational safety and health, consuming alcohol or cannabis just a single time at work can be enough to endanger oneself and others. However, the campaign will also focus on non-substance-related addictions such as gambling. Teachers at vocational schools



Photo: DGUV

JWSL is the largest cross-industry prevention programme for apprentices and trainees. It reaches up to 800,000 young employees.

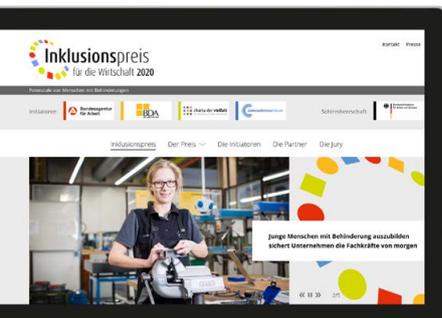
will be provided with a range of training materials. The JWSL Creative Contest is the centrepiece of the campaign. Vocational schools can submit entries until 29 February 2020. Creative entries can be submitted as videos, comics, rap songs, posters, etc. on addiction, consumption or abuse related to safety and health at work.

Web: www.jwsl.de (German only)

Inclusion as a competitive factor

Entries are still open until 31 October 2019 for the 'Inclusion Awards for Industry 2020'. Companies can be nominated or enter themselves. The Awards are presented for outstanding examples of training or employing people with disabilities.

Web: www.inklusionspreis.de (German only)



IMPORTANT DATES

5-8 November 2019

A+A – International Trade Fair for Occupational Safety and Health
DÜSSELDORF
www.aplusa.de

12-14 November 2019

Vision Zero 2019 Summit
HELSINKI, FINLAND
www.ttl.fi/visionzero19

4 December 2019

25 Years Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardization (KAN)
BERLIN
www.kan.de

NUMBER OF THE MONTH

1,224,858,701

... euros were spent on prevention by the German social accident insurance institutions in 2018. This is 2.3% more than in the previous year.

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