

DGUV Kompakt



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Talking with Eva M.
Welskop-Deffaa, ver.di
Federal Board Member

TOP STORY

Protecting social security in CETA

Free trade agreement between Canada and the EU nears completion



Photograph: Weissblick / Fotolia

The planned free trade agreement between Canada and the EU – like the other free trade agreements – must not have a negative impact on social security

Canada is already an important partner for Europe. Conversely, the European Union (EU) is Canada's second largest trading partner after the USA. The aim of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is to strengthen trade between Canada and the EU, particularly in key sectors such as energy, telecommunications and services. However, like the other free trade agreements currently being planned – TTIP between the USA and the EU; TiSA to liberalise the trade of services – CETA must not have a negative impact on social security, occupational safety and health, environmental protection or education.

Negotiations over CETA were concluded in August 2014. The agreement must now be approved by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, then ratified by the Member States. The German Social Accident Insurance is of the opinion that, in addition to investment protection and regulatory cooperation, the use of “undefined legal terms” must be closer examined. These result in grey areas that lead to

legal uncertainty. For example, CETA has a reservation for “publicly funded” health services. However, exactly what is meant by “publicly funded” is unclear. The question for the German Social Accident Insurance is whether statutory insurance, which is funded by member contributions, is considered to be publicly funded. Furthermore, the terms can be interpreted differently. “Therefore, it must be ensured that Ger-

man statutory social insurance is protected even when the trade partners have a different understanding of terms and that reservations are clearly and comprehensively formulated”, insisted Dr Joachim Breuer, Director General of the DGUV. The use of undefined legal terms is also problematic with regards to the investment protection provisions contained in CETA and the proposed options for investors to take legal action. “If there is already the danger that trade partners have a different understanding of certain terms, it cannot be ruled out that arbitration will lead to unwanted results. We are also concerned that, in the future, exemptions to liberalisation must be recorded in a negative list”, said Breuer. Starting with CETA, the EU has begun to change its technical approach to concluding free trade agreements. Under CETA, unlike in the past, basically all areas and sectors are to be opened to the market. Exemptions can only be made by explicitly and clearly recording them on the negative list. If a comprehensive exemption is not made, then social insurance could also be opened up to the free market.

“The goal of strengthening the economy by strengthening free trade can only be welcomed by the German Social Accident Insurance”, said Breuer. “However, the path towards this must not have any negative effects on OSH and social security.”

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**Road Safety Day:
 Keeping children safe on the road**



Strategic course

Dear reader,

In recent months, we have often stated our position regarding the proposed TTIP, CETA and TiSa free trade agreements. The reaction we have had to this has confirmed that we must take a clear position whenever the achievements of the German, and also other, social insurance systems are under threat. This is due to the fact that the public are often not aware of these achievements because social security is usually taken as a given and seen as indispensable. However, there are negotiations currently taking place which, under certain circumstances, may have serious consequences for the future. This doesn't always happen consciously or intentionally; the cause is often different traditions, a different understanding of terms and concepts or simply a lack of understanding of the specifics of each system. Our social accident insurance system in Germany, which is funded by member contributions and self-administered as a public body, is unknown in many other countries. This explains why often only social insurance systems that are purely funded by taxes are viewed as "public services" – regardless of their mandate. We must repeatedly point this fact out so that the course being set does not head in the wrong direction.

Dr Joachim Breuer
Director General of the DGUV

“Finger on the pulse”

Talking with Eva M. Welskop-Deffaa, Federal Board Member of ver.di and responsible for labour market and social policy, OSH, self-administration, participation policy and migrants

On 31 May, 2017, the twelfth social insurance's general election will be held. The election determines the composition of the Representatives' Meetings and Committees of the respective branches of the German social insurance system and is considered as democracy in action. Given the relative poor voter turnout in previous years and the low proportion of women in the committees, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs together with the Federal Commissioner for Social Elections have launched a series of initiatives to improve this situation. On "Self-Government Day" on 11 May, the ver.di union chose to highlight statutory accident insurance under the motto "In Good Hands". DGUV Kompakt spoke with ver.di Federal Board Member Eva M. Welskop-Deffaa about the social election and the system of self-government.

Ms Welskop-Deffaa, the focus of this year's "Self-Government Day" was German social accident insurance – why was this?

Self-Government Day has been running since 2011. And since 2014, the ver.di events for Self-Government Day have each focused on one of the branches of social insurance. This is a way of highlighting what the self-governing committees of social insurance have in common and also what is unique about them. Pension insurance and unemployment insurance were the topics for the last two years and this year it was the turn of statutory accident insurance. One thing is clear: social insurance under the administration of social self-government is in good hands. The DGUV's self-government is indispensable when it comes to new ideas for occupational safety and health or ensuring that services and benefits for insured persons are customised to meet their needs. Efficiency and responsiveness, that is, actively staying close to those affected, are not mutually exclusive terms in German social accident insurance.

The social elections are not very popular in Germany. How are you trying to convince employees to go to the ballot box?

Self-government is the institutionalised alignment of social insurance with the interests of those insured. It makes a significant contribution to securing the future of social insurance. The self-government committees need a high level of legitima-

tion in order to have the power to represent interests. Voter turnout for primary elections shows the support for self-government. Insured persons can lend their voices to improving the electoral list of people who bring with them the kind of background experience needed for self-government to work well. They don't even need to go to a ballot booth because the Social Election is a postal ballot.

When I meet people who don't know about self-government, I always have a joker card handy to promote social elections: our cartoon film "Viola, the Insured Elder". Viola is a cartoon character who uses humour to explain her duties as a member of a self-government committee and how social insurance works.

Traditionally, the number of women in self-government committees is low. How can this be changed?

In my experience, women take on honorary positions – whether in self-government or other areas – when they feel that their commitment can make a real difference. The more that the policies of self-government allow things to get done, the greater the number of women who will be willing to run for a position and the more women there will be in the various committees, representing the interests of insured persons with heart and mind.

At the same time, a quota for women helps to create a varied electoral list which



TOPIC

Insured members rate rehabilitation management

How satisfied are clients with the DGUV's rehabilitation management? This was the key question of a two-year survey of insured members. Initial results are now available. They clearly show that the effort put into rehabilitation management by the accident insurance institutions has been worthwhile.

Overall, more than 90 per cent of people are successfully reintegrated into the workforce as a result of rehabilitation provided by social accident insurance following a workplace or commuting accident. The current survey focused on insured individuals who were severely injured at work, on the way to and from work or at school and who then took part in the DGUV's rehabilitation management. Although approximately two-thirds of those surveyed stated that they were off work for more than six months, almost 56 per cent of respondents could return to their old job after their accident. A further six percent changed jobs but within the same company. The results are a building block for quality assurance in rehabilitation management and show, for the first time, the good prospects for those injured.

The DGUV's rehabilitation management coordinates, as early as possible, all measures necessary following a severe work, school or commuting accident in order to eliminate or reduce the damage to a person's health. The aim is the timely reintegration of the injured person into the workforce and society. To achieve this, rehabilitation managers offer individualised advice to clients. Together they create a personalised rehabilitation plan covering all measures needed to improve the patient's life situation. This includes medical services and aids as well as measures to return to work. This survey demonstrates that early intervention from a single source using all suitable means is a crucial factor for successful rehabilitation.

Web: www.dguv.de (Webcode: d1505)

The Social Election determines the composition of the Representatives' Meetings and Committees of the respective branches of the German social insurance system and is considered as democracy in action in social insurance

allows women to get a promising place on the list. At ver.di, we've had some good experiences with this and are well known as the union with a lot of dedicated women who run for office in the social elections.

What do you expect from the self-government of the accident insurance in the future?

I expect the self-government to stay the seismograph for workplace challenges – always with its finger on the pulse. As a self-governing body, the German Social Accident Insurance can continue to spearhead ideas for preventive OSH and continue as a social insurance which is preparing itself for the challenges of Work 4.0, even before science and research have presented recommendations for the upcoming changes.

Explanatory film from ver.di "Viola, the Insured Elder"



The cartoon "Viola, the Insured Elder" explains what self-government is, what it means for the unions and why we definitely need it in the future as well.

Download in Internet:
arbeitsmarkt-und-sozialpolitik.verdi.de
> Videos



Eva M. Welskop-Deffaa
Member of the ver.di Federal Board and responsible for labour market and social policy, OSH, self-administration, participation policy and migrants

Photograph: Christian Schwier / Fotolia

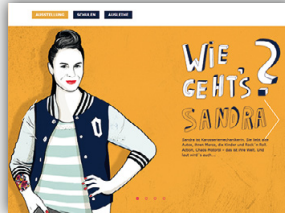
RECOMMENDED

DASA Exhibition: “How are you?”

Starting on 30 June 2016, DASA, in cooperation with the DGUV, will present its new travelling exhibition “How are you? – An exhibition on health in (working) life”. This deals with health hazards in our working and private lives. DASA wants to highlight occupational diseases but in an upbeat way. The exhibition focusses on four characters whose lives visitors can explore: landscape gardener Andrea, car-body mechanic Sandra, industrial manager Christian and hairdresser Nuri. Each character has an interactive discovery trail where visitors can have fun solving puzzles and use their detective skills. This is a fun way of dealing with the topics of prevention and occupational diseases. The exhibition runs until 12 February 2017 and is aimed primarily at adolescents and young adults who are yet to start their professional lives.



Photograph: Laura Laakso



More info about DASA:
www.dasa-dortmund.de/en

www.wiegehts-ausstellung.de

IMPORTANT DATES

21 – 22 June 2016
Safety and Health Expo 2016
LONDON
www.ioshconference.co.uk

15 September 2016
20 Years Occupational Health and Safety Act – requirements and reality of holistic risk assessment
WUPPERTAL
www.institut-aser.de

20 – 21 October 2016
Symposium Man - Machine: Risks for production systems today and in the future?
STRASBOURG
www.machine-system-safety.org

NUMBER OF THE MONTH

107,754

Accidents to or from school ... happened in 2015 according to preliminary statistics – 38 of them were fatal.
www.dguv.de (Webcode: d102294)

LEGAL INFORMATION

Published by: Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Dr Joachim Breuer (Director General); The DGUV is the umbrella association of the German Social Accident Insurance Institutions for the public sector and for trade and industry
Publishing committee: Dr Renate Colella (Chair), Udo Diel, Beate Eggert, Professor Dr med Axel Ekkernkamp, Dr Udo Schöpf, Karl-Sebastian Schulte, Dr Franz Terwey
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Publishers: Helios Media GmbH, Friedrichstraße 209, 10969 Berlin, www.helios-media.de
Printed by: DCM Druckcenter Meckenheim

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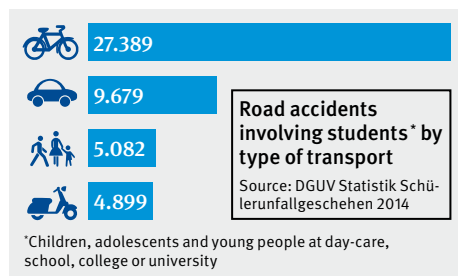
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Keeping children safe on the road

The aim of “Road Safety Day” on 18 June is to raise the awareness of road dangers. This is also an important issue for the German Social Accident Insurance because it is responsible for protecting children and adults on the way to and from work, school or day-care. Road accidents on the way to school are particularly in focus because their number has stagnated for years. Bicycle accidents were the most commonly reported. Therefore, the DGUV strives to raise awareness of road safety in children, adolescents, parents and schools using comprehensive prevention services and events. Road Safety Day is organised every year by the German Road Safety Council (DVR) with support from the DGUV; its aim is to educate peo-



ple about everything to do with roads. “By following the Vision Zero strategy, our goal is a world without road deaths and serious injuries. If our approach to prevention and raising awareness already starts with children then we are well on the way to achieving this goal”, said Dr Walter Eichendorf, Deputy Director General of the DGUV and President of the DVR.

Infographic: christophschmid.com



Photograph: industrieblick/Fotolia

The Pillar of Social Rights strengthens OSH in the EU

European Pillar of Social Rights

► Using a public consultation process, the EU Commission wants to discuss challenges for the world of work and elicit opinions regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights. EU citizens, organisations and public authorities can take part until the end of 2016.

Web: <http://ec.europa.eu>

Search term: “European Pillar of Social Rights”