

December 2018

All of us at EUROGIP wish you a Happy New Year!

Community news

► [Incidence and detection of occupational cancers in nine European countries](#)

Eurogip has published a new report entitled "Incidence and detection of occupational cancers in nine European countries". The data concern Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland.

Cancer cases (reports and recognition) since 2005 have been relatively stable in Denmark, Belgium, France, Italy and Sweden, but have increased in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. For this last group, there are various reasons, such as the inclusion of skin cancer on the national list of ODs in Germany in 2015.

In every country except Germany, cancers due to asbestos dust accounted for the overwhelming majority of cancers recognized as an occupational disease in 2016. For example, mesotheliomas represented more than 30% of occupational cancers in Denmark, 50% in Austria and Italy, 65% in Belgium and around 90% in Sweden.

Comparing the number of cases recognized with the insured population, Germany and France top the list by far, with 15.1 and 11.39 per 100,000 insured respectively. The lowest ratio is posted in Sweden: 0.5. In Germany, cancers account for 32% of recognized occupational diseases. The study also reveals that the off-list recognition system is not the most suitable one for cancers.

The second part of the report discusses programmes designed to detect cancer cases at an early stage in order to improve the chances of healing, and schemes which help victims assert their rights to compensation for an occupational disease. These schemes could be the cross-checking of OD reports with the cancer register for mesotheliomas and cancers of the nasal cavities (Denmark), scouting for a possible work-related origin of lung cancers in a hospital environment (northern Italy), or else targeting and support for the potential victims of a bladder cancer by the OSH insurance organization (France). The report in English will be published in early January (www.eurogip.fr)

► [Understanding and taking action to eliminate occupational cancers](#)

The [ETUI](#) has published a report which brings together the contributions of 28 experts (including Eurogip) on this issue. The aim is to review the current state of knowledge, new prevention practices, legislative changes and the recognition of cancers as occupational diseases.

In the European Union, 8% of cancers are of work-related origin. More than 100,000 deaths each year are attributable to work-related cancers. All these cancers could be prevented by eliminating risks in production processes, according to the ETUI, which considers that this report is timely in the context of the revision of the European directive on the protection of workers exposed to carcinogens. By factual research, the book contributes to the debate aimed at eliminating work-related cancer risks.

[Full text](#)

► [A recommendation on the access of all workers to welfare benefits](#)

In early December, the Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs reached a unanimous political agreement on a draft recommendation by the Council concerning salaried and self-employed workers' access to welfare benefits.

According to the Commission, this is a breakthrough for four out of ten people who have an atypical or self-employed job and who do not always have good social protection.

The recommendation comes within the framework of implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It aims to allow all workers, including the self-employed, to subscribe to social welfare schemes, and to promote adequate and effective coverage. It applies to all branches of the social security system: unemployment, health and medical care, maternity and paternity, disability, pensions and spousal benefits, and occupational injuries and diseases.

The recommendations are non-binding. This facilitates the process of enactment and respects Member States' national competencies and the functioning of their social security systems. Nevertheless, the progress made by the Member States in the application of this legislation will be analysed within the framework of the "European Semester", a cycle of coordination of economic and budgetary policies in the EU.

Recommendation

► Healthy workers, thriving companies - a practical guide to wellbeing at work

This guide, published by EU-OSHA, aims to help micro and small enterprises prevent and manage the two main causes of work-related diseases, according to the statements of European workers: psychosocial risks (PSRs) and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) due to work.

It describes a five-step approach to a better work environment:

- Preparation: Decide who will lead the process, review the available resources, decide how and when you will keep workers informed and involved, and decide what will happen when.
- Assessing risks: Identify psychosocial and MSD risk factors, and set priorities.
- Action planning: Agree what actions will be taken to eliminate or reduce the risks, and set up an action plan.
- Taking action: Implement and monitor the agreed actions.
- Evaluate whether or not you have achieved what you wanted, and review the whole cycle of assessing risks and planning and implementing actions.

To achieve good results, you must start by entering into dialogue and establishing trust. Next, this means doing what works specifically for the firm, involving the workers and, as manager, providing support for action.

Although it is mainly intended for CEOs and managers, the guide is of interest for workers and their representatives and for occupational safety and health professionals, because it provides simple explanations and proposes a selection of exercises for a real and permanent improvement, for the benefit of all.

[Download the guide](#)

Standardization

► Brexit and standardization: A transition period

To guarantee the stability of the European standardization system, and to ensure legal security and technical and political continuity for all the experts taking part in production of the European standards, the CEN and CENELEC decided, at their General Meetings on 23 November, to apply a transition period between the date of Brexit (scheduled for 29 March 2019) and 31 December 2020.

The purpose of this decision is to provide BSI with a derogation from the currently applying criteria so that it may retain its status as Member until the end of 2020. This has several implications:

- BSI will retain all its rights but also its obligations: in particular, the right to take part in the work and to vote on draft standards, and the obligation to transpose them into its national standards system and cancel any conflicting national standards.
- The role of British chairpersons, secretaries, coordinators and stakeholders involved in the work is not brought into question.

The question of weighted voting rules could require further clarification. For example, when, following a weighted formal vote, the final draft is disapproved, the votes are systematically counted a second time. This second count excludes those countries which are not members of the European Economic Area, i.e. currently Switzerland, Northern Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. If the draft standard is

enacted following this second count, the excluded countries which voted against it are exempted from the obligation to transpose it into their national standards system. The purpose of this rule is not to establish different categories of members (the distinction between member and non-member of the EEA appears nowhere else in the statutes or rules), but precisely to take into account the specific features of the EEA where the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons applies. At present, the question as to whether and when the United Kingdom will leave the EEA cannot be confirmed with any certainty. Accordingly, the question of whether or not to include BSI in the second count cannot be settled, whether in relation to the EEA or by derogation. The aim of the deliberations that will begin from 2019 will therefore be to find the right balance between British participation and protection of the fundamental values of the European standardization system.

► [December 2018: What's new in health and safety at work standardization?](#)

New standards publications, new works, registration of new subjects or comity creations... Below is the result of the monitoring that EUROGIP does, as part of its standardization activity in health and safety at work.

Download the "[What's new in OSH Standardization?](#)" of December 2018

To find out more, please write to Saphia Fortassi, fortassi@eurogip.fr

► [Register for the sixth EUROSHNET Conference on standardization, testing and certification](#)

Registration has started for this European conference on the theme "Be smart, stay safe together - Innovative products and workplaces", which will be held from 12 to 14 June 2019 in Dresden (Germany).

The conference is organized within the framework of the EUROSHNET network, a joint project by Eurogip and INRS for France, KAN and DGUV (Germany), CIOP-PIB (Poland), FIOH (Finland) and INSHT (Spain) which brings together occupational health and safety experts involved in standardization work.

Papers, workshops and interactive programmes will give those attending the 2019 conference an opportunity to discuss their experience and communicate concerning what they expect of innovative products and work stations.

The preliminary programme will be published by the end of the year.

[To find out more](#)

Abroad

► [SWEDEN: Online training in OSH for the retail sector](#)

Today, half a million people work in the retail sector. A new version of the free online training session on occupational safety and health ("Your workplace in retailing") will help to offer them a safer and more pleasant work environment.

Shorter, and illustrating more environments, with questions and good examples showing how to solve various problems, the training session is simple, accessible and amusing. The content is adapted to the workplace: office, warehouse or store. According to Fredrik Apelqvist, who works in human resources at Stadium Sweden, "the module presents a content that is easy to understand. Each unit is fairly long and contains an appropriate mix of text, videos and interactive exercises. It is easy to take a break and resume the training when you want".

The training includes modules on the workload, harassment and communication, the physical environment and ergonomics. Its total length is three hours, and it ends with a knowledge test recognized by a certificate attesting that the training has been completed.

The training session was developed by the work environment and safety committee of the Chamber of Commerce, which brings together employers and employees, under the management of Prevent.

[To find out more](#)

► [AUSTRIA: AUVA continues its activities](#)

In accordance with a legislative decision, on 21 December AUVA announced that as part of the reform of the social security universe in Austria it will continue its activities as an integrated occupational injury and disease insurance institution.

The organization thus keeps its prerogatives regarding the prevention, treatment and re-education of victims, and the payment of benefits. Anton Ofner, president of AUVA, said that: "2018 was a difficult year for us. I am delighted that, through dialogue with the policymakers, we have been able to determine that only the continued existence of AUVA and its four pillars could ensure the highest level of protection against occupational injuries and diseases for all Austrians."

AUVA insures about 320,000 companies and more than five million people against the economic, health and social consequences of OIs/ODs. Its work is financed almost entirely by corporate contributions. Note that the occupational safety and health contribution rate - the same for all companies - will decrease from 1.3% to 1.2% in 2019.

► [GERMANY: The possibility of early detection of mesotheliomas, a breakthrough](#)

According to the statistics of the injury insurance organization (DGUV), more than half of the deaths due to occupational diseases are attributable to asbestos. One of the most serious, mesothelioma, has so far been able to be treated only to a very limited extent, because it is generally discovered only at an advanced stage.

Now for the first time, a method for early detection of mesotheliomas has been validated. It is based on the results of combined blood analysis of the specific biomarkers of this disease, namely calretinin and mesothelin. "In certain high-risk groups, around 50% of patients who develop a mesothelioma can be detected up to one year before the clinical diagnostic with only 2% of false positives", explains Dr Johnen, head of the Centre of Expertise in Molecular Medicine of the Ruhr University Institute in Bochum (IPA).

Dr Joachim Breuer, Director General of the DGUV, does not conceal his enthusiasm: "The insured monitored under the prevention programme who show a heightened risk of developing a mesothelioma will in future be able to receive early treatment". Under this programme, workers exposed to asbestos are personally advised, examined and monitored regularly.

[To find out more](#)

Events

► [EUROGIP Discussions 2019: Occupational health and safety: what levers in Europe for a culture of prevention in the workplace?", 21 March 2019, Paris \(France\)](#)

► [10th International Conference on the Prevention of Accidents at Work, 23-26 September 2019, Vienna \(Austria\)](#)

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