

Summary

Improvement of occupational health and safety in temporary employment Objective

During the last years temporary agency work has continuously gained importance as an economic factor but also in the employment market in Germany. Therefore it is necessary to focus the activities of occupational health and safety more on this branch, because the number of accidents in temporary agency work was comparatively high, and it can be assumed that the level of employment will stay on this high level.

Based on the special employment relationships in temporary agency work between the temporary employment agency, the user undertaking and the workers themselves, particular challenges and difficulties arise for the posted workers:

- frequent change of work places with different working requirements,
- frequent adaption to new work flows,
- different structures of organization and communication in each company
- varying working environments

Further problems in temporary agency work employment often emerge from insufficient exchange of information concerning job requirements and working conditions between the employment agency and the user undertaking: but this is a necessary precondition to establish safe and healthy working conditions for the posted workers in the user company. It has also to be considered, that posted workers work under precarious conditions and that they are exposed to high working loads.

Methods

A focus of activities of the GDA programme related to temporary agency work was laid on the working conditions in the user undertaking (the 'host' company) because hazards and accident risks result from the given working conditions „on site”. The aim of this project was to contribute to a reduction in number and severity of occupational accidents and to improve employee assignments sustainably by intensifying communication between the temporary employment agency and the user undertaking on the basis of the risk assessments.

Since 2009 approximately 12 000 user undertakings were visited in order to monitor the working conditions of the temporary agency workers.

Results

The majority of the work places were not objectionable as far as legal issues were concerned. Approximately 10 to 15 percent showed deficiencies which required further measures by labour inspectors either of the federal states or of the accident insurances.

The main objectives of this project could be realized. User undertakings which had deficiencies in occupational health and safety or which did not provide an sufficient internal OSH-organisation or an adequate exchange with temporary employment agency received a critical feedback from the labour inspectors and were visited a second time.

A comparison between first and second revisions shows that during the GDA-programme significant improvements could be achieved. The survey of the data indicates no obvious shortcomings concerning the integration of posted workers in the user undertaking.