

We make work safe and healthy.

**VDSI**

Verband für Sicherheit,  
Gesundheit und Umweltschutz  
bei der Arbeit

## VDSI position paper

**VISION ZERO**

Safety. Health. Wellbeing.

**Paving the way to safe and healthy work**



## VDSI position paper

### **VISION ZERO – paving the way to safe and healthy work**

Accidents at work, commuting accidents and occupational diseases are taking a heavy human toll around the world and resulting in significant economic losses. In fact, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions claim the lives of more than 7,500 people every day, causing an estimated loss of 4% of the global gross domestic product (GDP). The negative economic effects are due to the loss of productive working days, the disruption of production processes, material damage, loss of reputation, and the cost of treating and compensating the employees involved.

The United Nations took these human and economic tragedies into account when setting its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), according to which employers should foster economic growth not only by offering “decent work” (SDG 8), but also by ensuring “healthy lives” and promoting “well-being” (SDG 3).

The **German Association for Health, Safety and Environmental Protection at Work (VDSI)** is helping to achieve the SDGs by implementing the VISION ZERO strategy proposed by the International Social Security Association (ISSA): <http://visionzero.global/>.

VISION ZERO is a global initiative that aims to endorse a holistic culture of prevention for the benefit of everyone: companies, employees, managers and society. VISION ZERO is a commitment and ambition to advocate safe and healthy work and to take responsibility. The VDSI firmly believes that it is absolutely essential for companies to operate a culture of prevention when it comes to achieving Vision Zero. The initiative effectively lays the foundations for health and safety to be viewed as non-negotiable values. By fostering a culture of prevention, companies can proactively implement and improve specific measures to prevent accidents, ensure health and safety and raise awareness of key issues. As a result, the preventive approach of VISION ZERO with its three dimensions of health, safety and well-being is integrated at all levels.

If the causes of accidents and occupational diseases are identified in good time, they can be effectively prevented. VISION ZERO isn't about achieving “zero accidents” and “zero diseases” in a matter of days – it's about developing a certain attitude geared towards taking responsibility. Everyone must be actively involved in the process to ensure that everything is done to guarantee health and safety through appropriate structuring, planning, procedures and practices.

The VDSI taps into the professional expertise of its members and their network to promote international cooperation and the implementation of the VISION ZERO prevention strategy based on the following seven golden rules:

- 1. Take leadership – demonstrate commitment!**
- 2. Identify hazards – control risks!**
- 3. Define targets – develop programmes!**
- 4. Ensure a safe and healthy system – be well-organised!**
- 5. Ensure health and safety in machines, equipment and workplaces!**
- 6. Improve qualifications – develop competence!**
- 7. Invest in people – motivate by participation!**

We are especially interested in:

- promoting the international exchange of experiences and learning from one another;
- helping to create decent working conditions in all parts of the world;
- contributing our expertise to global developments;
- making good practice examples from other countries available to our members;
- helping company managers at all levels to assume their responsibilities;
- ensuring the good health of employees and protecting their lives; and
- contributing to sustainable economic success.

While many companies already have strong safety mechanisms in place, there is often room for improvement in the field of health management – especially when it comes to ensuring their employees' well-being.

And in view of the work intensification and the global competition, psychosocial risks have also become an important factor. Since stress, burnout, bullying and violence are issues in many professions, it is also becoming increasingly important to ensure employees' well-being and foster a motivating management culture.

**That's why the VDSI supports the three-pillar VISION ZERO model: safety – health – well-being.**

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