



## **EMECs Country report Germany**

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**Manuscript completed in:** November 2021



This report was produced for the EMECs project (VS/2020/0497), which received funding under the Call for proposals VP/2020/007 of the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.

The opinions hereby expressed reflect only the authors' view.

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## Introduction

This report was produced as part of the ‘European market environment in the construction sector - Enhancing the free movement of posted workers in EU’ project (EMECs), co-funded by the European Commission, and addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mobility, working conditions and social protection of posted workers in the construction sector.

By means of a set of research and mutual learning activities, the project aims at delivering proposals to better support posted workers in case of future pandemics.

The report is part of a series addressing the different countries covered by the project, namely: Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland, Portugal, and Romania.

The study combines desk research with interviews to stakeholders to provide a sound background information for the rollout of the project.

More specifically, following a common questionnaire, the report departs from contextual information, addressing measures restricting free movement of workers and production, to detail: the actual impact of the pandemic on posting as per available figures and evidences; problems encountered by companies involved in posting (e.g. in arranging mobility of workers or in providing adequate accommodation); problems encountered by posted workers (e.g. remaining blocked in the host country or facing difficulties in accessing social benefits and aids); evidences of COVID-19 outbreaks in construction sites, including related information on geographical areas affected and involvement of posted workers.

The Annex provides the list of interviewees, including numbers used across the text to refer to each of them.

## Contextual information

### *Measures taken by public authorities*

In Germany three waves of infection were observed based on positive viral detections, and a fourth is currently ongoing (October/November 2021). In order to contain the pandemic, the federal and state governments decided in mid-March 2020 to impose extensive restrictions on public life, as did many other countries around the world at the same time. People were urged to minimize the risk of infection by adhering to AHA (Abstand, Hygiene, Alltagsmasken = distance, hygiene, everyday masks) rules and other precautionary measures, such as quarantine. Measures in the healthcare system aim to maintain sufficient capacity to treat COVID-19 patients and test suspected cases while ensuring infection protection for patients and staff.

Especially crossing the borders was more difficult than before. Departing from information provided by the professional association for insurance against accidents at work in the construction sector BG-BAU (interviewee 12), an overview on border closures and entry regulations in the beginning of the pandemic is provided below.

On 16 and 17 March, the German government largely closed the German borders to travel. Already on 16 March, 2020, the borders to the neighboring countries of France, Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Denmark, some of which had been declared risk areas by the RKI (“Robert-Koch-Institut”), were closed. From 17 March, corresponding restrictions also applied to travel from outside the EU to Germany. On the same day, the German Foreign Office issued a ‘worldwide’ travel warning for the first time (covering all areas in foreign countries). Overall, this meant that people who were neither German nor permanent residents of the country were only allowed to come to Germany for a ‘valid reason to travel’. Good reasons included, for example, commuting or the cross-border movement of goods. From 10 April 2020, according to an agreement between the federal and state governments, all persons returning to Germany from abroad and who had stayed there for several days had to be placed in domestic quarantine for 14 days. Commuters were not affected; exceptions applied to truck drivers,

medical personnel and certain seasonal workers. Also as of 10 April 2020, the Robert Koch Institute no longer designated international risk areas because the epidemic had now spread worldwide. Quarantine regulations were later differentiated by country of travel. From 15 May, controls at Germany's external borders with some countries were lifted, while at others they were reduced to random checks. BG-BAU (12) explained that there were certainly gaps, for example in the checks on motor vehicles and coaches. There were also certain problems to enter the country for workers and their supervisors.

On 25 March 2020, the German parliament (*Bundestag*) declared an 'epidemic situation of national scope', which has since been extended several times and is scheduled to expire on 25 November. On 27 March 2020, the Act for the Protection of the Population in the Event of an Epidemic Situation of National Scope went into effect, which has since been amended and revised several times by the so-called Federal Emergency Brake.

Beginning in early May 2020, some restrictions were temporarily lifted again. Due to rising positive COVID-19 test numbers, contact restrictions and other pandemic control measures were tightened again in October and November 2020 in a so-called 'light lockdown'. In addition to hygiene and the AHA-measures, this contained above all contact restrictions. In the fall of 2020, the rules were supplemented by a call for regular ventilation and use of the COVID-19 alert app.

As of mid-December 2020, significant restrictions on public life again applied in the form of a so-called lockdown. The German lockdown never contained that all people had to stay home all the time. It rather entailed closing retail trades and tight contact restrictions.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Construction and Home Affairs (BMI) published a new guidance on contracting during the COVID-19 crisis. According to this guidance, federal construction projects were to continue to be tendered and planned. In addition, a clause for dealing with construction disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is to be included, allowing deadline extensions in order to complete works. Generous bid and completion deadlines were also to be included in new tenders. In the article the General Manager of the German Construction Industry Federation (ZDB), Felix Pakleppa, emphasized that this was a forward-looking sign for the construction industry. In this way, the German government was already paving the way for a relaunch to revive the economy. The many small and medium-sized construction companies in Germany, which with their regional roots could make an important contribution to this, were thus given planning and legal certainty. He stressed that this guidance was the result of intensive consultations between the Ministry of Construction and the industry's leading associations<sup>1</sup>.

During the pandemic, it was essential for the safety of employees to implement hygiene and safety regulations. Sanitary capacities had to be increased, additional vehicles provided for routes to the construction site, and break times adjusted accordingly. Because of the high hygienic requirements, indoor activities (especially finishing) were more challenged to reorganize operating procedures and work processes than outdoor activities on larger construction sites. The distance rules are easier to comply outdoor.

Nevertheless, it is not clear, if it was complied with the necessary distance and hygiene rules properly across all construction sites <sup>2</sup>. The German trade union of the construction industry ('industrial union Bauen-Agrar-Umwelt', IG Bau) observed during occupational health and safety inspections on construction sites that rules were not respected. They pointed out that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, many construction companies have meanwhile reverted to old behaviour patterns and thus ignored the risk of infection. Collective transports to construction sites in only one van were once again

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<sup>1</sup> See: [Baugewerbe begrüßt "Covid-19-Vorbehalt" in Vergabep Praxis | Presseportal.](#)

<sup>2</sup> See: [Lässt die Covid-19-Disziplin auf Baustellen nach? \(handwerk.com\).](#)

the order of the day in many companies. Just like breaks in cramped construction vans. They also witnessed that there were employees on the construction site, who did not even have the opportunity to wash their hands at the sink with running water and soap. The installation of disinfectant dispensers has been an exception on the construction site.

The interviewee from the European Migrants Worker Association (EWV) and of the Central and Eastern European Countries Institute (PECO Institute) (10) also explained that, according to workers interviewed, information about infection control at construction sites in the Rhine-Main region was made available by employers, but instructions about contact restrictions and mask requirements often could not be followed due to the markedly physical nature of construction work. For instance, in most cases, transportation from the accommodation to the work sites was provided by a company car that picks up the workers at pre-arranged meeting points near the accommodation. Such a van was usually a minibus that can carry up to 8 people at a time and where the mask requirement was reportedly not always observed.

In case that construction operations were no longer possible while observing the necessary precautionary measures, companies had the opportunity to take advantage of the adjusted regulations on short-time working allowances and other measures from the German government's aid package.

The main instrument in Germany to prevent dismissals in all sectors was the **Short-Time-Allowance**. This means that part of the gross wage is paid by the state. This only refers to employees, who are employed with social security obligation. There is no entitlement for marginally employed persons. Apprentices only receive short-time-allowance after a work absence of 6 weeks/30 days. Before that they receive the full training allowance. This was only possible to pay for workers based in Germany.

Measures like **Bridging Assistance I, II, III, and III Plus** were a key relief tool in the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 100 billion in assistance disbursed. The federal government continued to provide assistance for solo self-employed individuals, businesses, and institutions that are experiencing severe revenue losses due to restrictions. Bridging Assistance III Plus will therefore be extended until December 31, 2021.

### ***Measures taken by SOKA-BAU***

Among the measures adopted by SOKA-BAU, the **Colleague assistance**, in place from April to September 2020 and for the January – June 2021 timeframe, is particularly noteworthy<sup>3</sup>. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, some construction companies were no longer able to employ their workers adequately, while at the same time other construction companies were desperately looking for skilled workers.

Therefore, a logical choice in order to prevent short-time work and dismissals was to hire out workers within the industry. SOKA-BAU offered to act as an intermediary: companies that would like to provide short-term workers to another company could have placed a free advertisement on bau-stellen.de. Just in the year 2020, 600 construction companies had placed over 1,000 ads.

Furthermore, SOKA-BAU did **not charge interest on arrears** for the reporting months of March, April and May 2020 and – provisionally until 31 May 2020 – did not assert claims through legal proceedings.

Especially for new construction companies, SOKA-BAU offered and still offers **webinars** on the collectively agreed social security fund procedures and other industry services for the construction industry.

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<sup>3</sup> See: [SOKA-BAU unterstützt Bauunternehmen bei der Personalsuche und der Kollegenhilfe](https://www.soka-bau.de) (soka-bau.de).

## ***Consequences/Effects of measures adopted to tackle COVID-19***

There were numerous measures, like border closures, restrictions in visa issuance or quarantine regulations in order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, which also affected the construction industry and their posted workers in particular, according to the employers' organizations of the construction industry, ZDB and HDB (7/8). But there is no certainty about the particular effect of each one of them. It is only secure that significant economic consequences were expected. In retrospective, for the construction sector, consequences were not as much as predicted in the first place<sup>4</sup>. Although turnover in the main construction sector increased by around 5 %, which is somewhat weaker than in the previous year, the construction sector developed significantly better than the economy as a whole in 2020. One reason was certainly the high order backlogs at the beginning of the year.

The training market in the construction industry developed significantly better than in other sectors last year. For example, the number of new construction apprentices rose by around 5 % last year, while it fell by almost 10 % across all sectors. At more than 41,000, the number of all apprentices in the construction industry marked the highest level since 2002.

The number of employees in the main construction industry also continued to rise last year by about 2% to just under 795,000. The gross wages paid by the approximately 76,000 construction companies, which depends equally on the hours worked and the wage trend, rose by almost two percent and thus at a significantly weaker pace than in the previous year.

According to Reinhard Quast, president of the ZDB, new orders in residential construction only showed a 'COVID-19 tremor' in April and May and weakened slightly. Since then, there was a significant demand. Commercial building construction in particular has weakened significantly over the course of the year. The slump in sales in industry and services was reflected in the reluctance to invest<sup>5</sup>.

Besides the economic effects there were increasing problems with the delivery of building materials and urgently needed posted workers were unable to enter the country. The extent and time periods depended on the country and the COVID-19 measures or incidences. A sending undertaking from Bosnia-Herzegovina (2) also talked about problems with the visa procedure within the timeframe between March and September 2020, because the German embassy was closed during that time.

### **The impact of restrictions on the posting of workers**

On the basis of information available in its database, SOKA-BAU can determine that the numbers of posted workers of the five largest sending countries combined did not differ in the time range from March to September (67,580) compared to the years 2018 (67,305) and 2019 (70,529).

In any case, the posting of workers was affected by the pandemic. The interviewee from Arbeit und Leben (1) did emphasize that there were noticeable crossborder restrictions. She said that especially when the borders between Poland and Germany were closed during the first 'lockdown', the workers were not able to enter Germany and start working there. A Romanian company (4) also said that they had a problem moving the workers at transnational level. For example, the case was workers had to stay in both countries in quarantine. This effected also the psychological side of the workers. The employer did notice more cases of depression among the workers.

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<sup>4</sup> See: [So trifft die Covid-19-Krise die Bau- und Ausbaugewerke \(handwerk.com\)](#).

<sup>5</sup> See: [Baugewerbe erwartet 2021 einen Covid-19-Dämpfer - Gebäude-Energieberater \(geb-info.de\)](#).

This was confirmed by another company from Bosnia-Herzegovina (2). There were many measures, which effected posting and the work on the construction-sites itself. It produced more work in general, especially for administrative employees. They had to organise entrance registration, COVID-19-tests etc. Also, the employers' organization of the construction industry ZDB (7) did emphasize that the construction industry and in particular the posted workers were affected by measures like quarantine, the obligation to test and restrictions to entry. An Austrian company (6) stressed that they have found solutions inside the company for themselves. All interviewees emphasized that in any case the posting employers had to fulfill the COVID-19 specific measures at their own costs.

On behalf of the EWV and the PECO Institute (10), a survey on workers' housing was conducted in Frankfurt-Griesheim from October 2020 to September 2021. The majority of construction workers were Eastern European workers employed by domestic companies. Posted workers were rarely found in the construction accommodations and only for short periods of time. Nevertheless, the observations reflect the situation of the construction industry in Germany in the middle of the pandemic:

- They describe as a main problem that the workers had difficulties getting test results via mobile phone, because they had no mail adress or did not know how to create one.
- Another problem had been raised by the requirement to test after returning to Germany, as the vast majority of workers traveled by vehicle and therefore could not get tested directly upon entry at the airport. There were reports from construction workers that some employers did not request the submission of a negative test result at all. As a result, some workers had stopped going to a testing center to be tested in order to avoid the language and technical difficulties involved. This mainly affects employees of some smaller subcontractors, working under precarious working and wage conditions.
- In case test results turned out to be positive after returning home, the persons affected were visited by the health authorities and immediately placed in quarantine. Quarantine for construction workers housed in collective accommodation usually meant transfer to premises set up for this situation, such as hotels or dormitories rented by the health department in Frankfurt for this purpose.

### **Problems encountered by companies involved in posting**

In general complying with the COVID-19 specific restrictions was a challenge, according to the employers' organizations of the construction branch, ZDB and HDB (7/8), e.g. the implementation of the Sars-cov-2 occupational safety and health rules: compliance with distance regulation, mandatory use of masks, working with reduced staff or in fixed teams, installation of partitions, regular testing of employees, reduced occupancy of vehicles or in accommodations, etc.

In comparison with other countries in Germany, the construction sites were never closed generally. This was necessary only in particular cases. This was confirmed by an interviewed employer (2), who is posting employees to Germany: they had the necessity to stop works on construction sites, because of a COVID-19 outbreak, with one person dead. Another Romanian company with about 60 workers (11) emphasized that there was partially quarantining of 6 weeks for all workers of the construction sites, so they had to interrupt the whole project.

BG-BAU (12) explained that due to a lack of personnel and difficult coordination (both internal and external), delays and coordination problems on construction sites were observed. The implementation of the COVID-19 requirements/rules initially took time. Travel restrictions and language barriers certainly also hampered the work of posting companies.

The employers had to change the framework conditions in their company. They had to ensure safety distance between workers during the working process. They also had to comply with the hygienic conditions, like setting up disinfectant dispenser and providing masks for all the workers. The Romanian company (4) stressed the biggest issue was dealing with the quarantine rules. Also common solutions were to work in fixed teams, according to the Austrian company (6).

One interviewee (2) explained that especially during the pandemic they have lost 15 posted workers, because the workers changed their workplace to a German company in order to be covered by German social security. The special problem was that they did not quit their job first, and that they had no visa. In this special case, the authorities for foreign affairs in Bochum were informed, according to the interviewee (2). Most interviewees though, e.g. the Romanian (4) and the Serbian (5) undertaking, stated that nobody did lose their job, because of the pandemic.

Another challenge had to do with the postponement of different construction projects. The employer had no work for their workers temporarily because of that, so the employer (2) had to send employees to the employment agency in Bosnia. The interviewee (2) said that in case of lost wages, the employer had to pay. According to him, they did not receive any money from the German government. The specific measures were financed by the employers, except for tests in Germany. The interviewed Serbian company (5) emphasized that the masks and the tests were provided by the German government. The employers' organisations, ZDB and HDB (7/8) confirmed the obligation of the employer to finance all the necessary measures. The Bosnian undertaking (9) stressed that the obligation to do the test before entering the country, was hard to organise, because the trip takes 15 hours and test was only valid for 48 hours. For them it was necessary to make even a PCR test before entering. Each of these tests costs about € 100, according to a Romanian company (11). Everything had to be financed by the employer, the tests and also the wages, even in case there was no way the workers were working. They were not entitled to a compensation payment by the German government for that. Comparing the answers of the different interviewees, during the time they had different experiences, with tests being financed by the German government or by the company itself.

The Austrian company (6) complained that different health departments have interpreted the applicable quarantine regulations differently. For example, personnel at the border with Austria were officially required to quarantine despite regulations said the contrary. Protests against this had in most cases only been successful when the quarantine was already over. It was in general hard to leave a country because of the closed borders, but as well because of the reduced and partially suspended air traffic. But the company did not face interruptions of works. In any case, it was necessary to get daily information about the travelling regulation regarding COVID-19, because they changed a lot at the time.

A Bosnian company (3) explained that the embassy in Sarajevo was closed from 17 March 2020 until 31 August 2021, so the requests concerning posting were not processed. This means they were not able to post workers during the time and had to cancel jobs because of the lack of personnel.

The mentioned survey on behalf of the EWV and the PECO Institute (10) regarding workers' housing, which was conducted in Frankfurt-Griesheim from October 2020 to September 2021, gives insights on how the accommodation of workers in the construction branch is and why this was not compatible with the necessary hygiene requirements during the pandemic using the example of this particular housing in Frankfurt-Griesheim. It is necessary to emphasize again that the majority of construction workers were Eastern European workers employed by domestic companies. Posted workers were rarely found in the construction accommodations and only for short periods of time. Nevertheless, the observations reflect the situation of the construction industry in Germany at the time of COVID-19:

*“The majority of rooms were about 20-25 square meters in size and mostly housed three people, more rarely four. There are four rooms in one corridor in most bodies of the building, where their occupants share kitchen and bathroom. However, there are also wings with much larger corridors and correspondingly larger sanitary facilities, which are also shared. Therefore, situations should be noted, where forty people share a kitchen and bathroom, with the notation that these respective units are slightly larger than those in the hallways occupied by twelve people. In addition, there is also a store located directly on the exterior of the shelter, which allows a space for physical proximity of several people at the same time, despite the need for masks. The construction workers are also socially active and visit each other, usually on weekends, even outside their own hallways. For this reason, the local situation at the collective shelter is judged to be far inappropriate for pandemic conditions. However, a widespread outbreak within the shelter has so far not occurred.*

*One explanation for this could be that due to their very busy work schedule, which for many can reach a total of 200-250 hours per month when added to the hours worked undeclared, construction workers are not socially active on a daily basis and prefer to relax in their own rooms rather than always visiting friends and colleagues from other rooms.*

*It should also be noted that, with very few exceptions, construction workers living there hardly ever wore masks while moving around the accommodation area during outreach activities. This necessity was only reinforced by the administration through some multilingual A4 sheets that were posted in some places in front of the entrances to the respective housing blocks. Moreover, many construction workers demonstrated a high degree of skepticism about the severity and dangers of COVID-19 infection, and quite a few of them also tended to pay attention to conspiracy theories.*

*Despite the many question marks that arise in relation to this housing, and also in view of local constraints, the dormitory administration should be credited with always responding openly to inquiries from the health department and assisting it in identifying and locating suspected cases and cases of infection. In the individual cases, the suspicion of COVID-19 originated from cases occurring at construction sites, which were subsequently also contacted by the health department with the collective housing. However, the quarantine measures only included contacts reported on construction sites as well as living conditions according to shared rooms and not also the other encounters that took place in the accommodation, which would also have been difficult to reconstruct with hundreds of people”.*

SOKA-BAU had problems with posting employer declarations reporting paid leave despite the construction site was (temporarily) closed due to COVID-19. In this case, the posting was terminated or interrupted. SOKA-BAU did not recognize paid leave during that time, because the main purpose of recreation was not achieved. In addition, quarantine is not considered paid leave. The employer also could not report lost hours, because one condition would be that the worker is actually ill. This is not the case if the worker has to quarantine without having COVID-19 and/or symptoms.

### **Problems encountered by posted workers**

According to a posting employer from Bosnia-Herzegovina with over 20 employees (3), nobody had lost their job. Another employer from Bosnia-Herzegovina (2) explained that at least temporarily the workers had to go back to the employment agency in Bosnia.

The Austrian company (6) said that they had to organise the work differently, because projects were cancelled or postponed. The workers had to be more flexible because of the given circumstances.

The Romanian posting employer (11) explained that there were no possibilities to access emergency aids, because there are no entitlements for posted workers/posting employers to that German national aid, if they are not employed in Germany or at least pay social security contributions in Germany.

The interviewee from Arbeit und Leben (1) stressed that she knows cases where foreign workers got an accommodation in containers without the possibility for keeping distance and with no disinfection supplies. There were also cases when new employees were tested on arrival before signing a work contract. If they were positive, they had to find by themselves accommodation/hotel to isolate themselves and pay all the costs. Employers did not take responsibility for these persons with the argumentation that the contracts were still not signed.

The interviewee from Arbeit und Leben (1) emphasized that there were not clear information at the beginning of the pandemic regarding the health and safety regulations. The regulations from the government were not translated by the employer and the workers had to find the information from other sources. It was not clear who has to pay for what – especially for testing. Some workers could not afford to pay the tests at the border and had to refuse work proposals.

Because of measures like quarantine, there were more cases of depression among the workers according to the interviewed Romanian company (4).

The mentioned survey on behalf of the EWV and the PECO Institute (10) regarding workers' housing also gives information about undeclared work and other abuse in connection with COVID-19. Although this covered mostly foreign workers based in Germany, rather than posted workers, the findings are worth noticing, as they shed a light on the situation of the construction industry in Germany at the time of COVID-19, and on malpractices affecting workers in precarious working conditions.

According to § 56 IfSG (infection control act), quarantined employees are entitled to receive continued payment of wages from their employers. This concerns only foreign employees, which are working for German employers and are insured in Germany for social security purposes. The amounts involved can be reimbursed to employers after certain lengthy bureaucratic procedures. However, this right to continued payment of wages has not been granted according to a large share of interviewed construction workers of Romanian origin and working for domestic companies. This circumstance affects the vast majority of the construction workers addressed there, regardless of their respective employers, and is to be regarded without reservation as an industry-wide practice.

Wage continuation during quarantine implies bureaucratic extra work and therefore it can be inferred that numerous subcontractors did not grant it to workers, despite a later reimbursement by the local health department. Many pay slips received by workers from their quarantine period do not contain any information on this or mention the keyword 'unpaid leave'.

This malpractice can also take a form and shape similar to other offenses often committed by subcontractors in the construction industry, particularly in the case of vacation pay and continued pay during illness. In this context, Eastern European construction workers are handed out part-time work contracts when they start their jobs, but in fact they work hours far in excess of the hours they are supposed to work. This creates a buffer of undocumented working time, which employers can juggle according to their own needs. Accordingly, although employees often receive official pay slips and money transfers with correspondingly precise information and amounts about quarantine and continued payment of wages, these are extraordinarily attributed to the work account performed with undocumented work and thus de facto not granted. This behavioral pattern also applies to the vacation pay received from the vacation fund and often also to the continued payment of wages in the event of illness. Due to a lack of language skills and far from adequate organizational support, very few

employees resist, and such practices are thus allowed to continue.

Even more widespread than the withholding of continued pay during quarantine is the theft of state aid in the form of the tax-free COVID-19 bonus from the construction industry, which could have been paid to workers from May 2020 until March 2021. The sums included here were from € 500 to € 1500 and were to be granted as a one-time payment. More than thirty workers working for various subcontractors were interviewed on this topic, without it being the focus of the survey, with the result that none of these workers received such a cash benefit, which is astonishing at first glance. In all cases, however, the corresponding information could be gathered from the pay slips submitted to SOKA BAU for inspection. It should be noted that the COVID-19 bonus was added to the working time account for undeclared work in the same way as usual with vacation pay, continued payment of wages in the event of illness and continued payment of wages for quarantine time of subcontractors and thus de facto not granted as an additional benefit.

### **Evidences of COVID-19 outbreaks in construction sites**

BG-BAU (12) confirmed isolated outbreaks on large construction sites, for example in Stuttgart and Brandenburg, but these were reported and treated relatively quickly.

The company interviewed from Bosnia-Herzegovina (2) explained that they had to stop working on the construction sites, because of a COVID-19 outbreak with one person dead. It was in Heilbronn. There were also outbreaks despite complying with the hygienic regulation regarding travel and accommodation. He explained that despite testing everybody, 18 out of 20 workers who were travelling in two buses and living in a house with 3 floors were infected. But he stressed that this had nothing to do with precarious working conditions or being a posted worker. The risk would not be higher than for other workers. The Romanian company with about 60 employees explained though that by having workers housed in site accommodation and sharing kitchen and sanitary containers, all workers must of course be quarantined in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, there is a connection between being a posted worker and the necessity to make quarantine more often.

The employer from Bosnia-Herzegovina (3) was not aware of outbreaks in German construction sites as well as the Serbian (5) and the Romanian (4) employers.

The Austrian employer (6) emphasized that over the time nearly every construction site was affected also by the infections without symptoms, but that was not necessarily an obstacle for continuing works.

## Annex 1 - List of interviewees

Position	Organisation	Date	Number
Adviser on labour law	Arbeit und Leben	14.10.2021	1
Managing director	Bosnian undertaking (Domovent)	11.10.2021	2
Managing director	Bosnian undertaking with 26 employees	11.10.2021	3
Managing director	Romanian undertaking	12.10.2021	4
Managing director	Serbian undertaking	11.10.2021	5
Managing director	Austria	15.10.2021	6
Advisor labour and social security law	ZDB	15.10.2021	7
Head of the Collective Bargaining and Social Law, Occupational Safety and Health Law Department	HDB	22.10.2021	8
Managing director	Bosnian undertaking	19.10.2021	9
Adviser	European Migrants Worker Association + PECO Institute	22.10.2021	10
Managing director	Romanian undertaking with about 60 employers	28.10.2021	11
Department prevention	BG-BAU	04.11.2021	12