Reviewer's report

Title: Population-based Incidences of Non-fatal Injuries - Results of a German-wide Telephone Survey 2004

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Reviewer: Steffen Niemann

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General comment
The authors emphasize the importance of injuries as a public health problem, which in my opinion is often neglected. At the same time most research in this field is restricted due to poor data. Therefore the study is interesting for all researchers in Public Health, particularly for injury research.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. In the method section the health survey is described as an "annual cross-sectional study". Why did the authors use the survey from 2005 and not the most recent one?

2. For estimating incidences it is crucial to have unbiased data. The survey represents the German speaking adult population in private households. Particularly when comparing the results to other statistics, e.g. insurance registries, what is about the non- or bad speaking part of the population? Foreigners often work in occupations with higher risks. In consequence of this, occupational injuries may be underestimated.

3. The sample is drawn by random numbers for the fixed-line network. Households with only mobile phones should be considered. Although the proportion was probably not high in 2003.

4. Although the categorization of the "accident location" compared to other statistics is discussed, it is not clear why this categorization was chosen. It is a mix of places (roads, at home, at work) and activity (leisure). Did the respondents have to choose from a list or were the categories derived later for data analysis? Why is there a category "unknown place"? Can people remember the accident but not where it happened?

5. I was wondering about the shapes in figures 3 and 4. They are the expected u-shaped curves for road accidents, but not for home and leisure. It is known, that falls have a high incidence with increasing age. Are falls of the elderly sufficiently represented in the telephone survey?

6. On page 15 the authors state that they "are not able to report the sensitivity and specificity of self-reported injuries". However, they can discuss the problems of surveying the elderly and recall errors in general. For the latter issue there are published articles. E.g. Warner, et al. The effects of recall on reporting injury and poisoning episodes in the National Health Interview Survey. Injury Prevention

Minor Essential Revisions
7. Why is the working population restricted to the age group up to 69? Would a border up to 65, the typical age for retirement, not be more reliable?
8. The comparison of the distributions of school degrees in the survey and the German census data is also restricted to the ages 20 to 64. Why are the elderly (65+) not included?
9. The categories for travel mode in traffic related injuries are not exhaustive. E.g. powered two-wheelers or a category "other" are missing.
10. Typo: page 15, 1st paragraph: "Currant available…"

Discretionary Revisions
11. The Authors mention the variable hospitalization in the questionnaire but no data is shown on this. It would be very informative for the readers to see what the proportion of more serious injuries is.
12. There are only 13 questions on injuries. They should be published (maybe as a web-appendix). This would be very informative for the reader and makes it easier to comprehend the used categories for accident location.
13. The results on the higher incidence of occupational injuries for full-time-compared to part-time-employees are trivial and can be dropped with respect to the manuscripts length.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.