

Germany to roll out measures against heat wave deaths, drawing lessons from France

June 26 2023



Two people hold umbrellas as they attend the WTA tournament semifinal tennis match between Belinda Bencic from Switzerland and Maria Sakkari from Greece in Berlin, Germany, on June 18, 2022. The German government said Monday June 26, 2023 that it is launching a campaign to help local authorities prevent vulnerable people from dying during heat waves that are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. Credit: AP Photo/Michael Sohn, File

The German government said Monday it is launching a campaign against deaths from heat waves that are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change.

Health Minister Karl Lauterbach said Germany is learning lessons from France, which put in place numerous measures following a devastating heat wave in 2003 that caused about 15,000 deaths in the country.

Lauterbach said the French example was a "good model" for what can be done to lessen the health risks particularly among elderly people, those with chronic illnesses, pregnant women and the homeless. "(It is) relatively easy to save them, if you have a plan," he told reporters in Berlin.

Aside from launching a dedicated website for towns and [local authorities](#) to determine the measures they can take, Lauterbach said authorities are also examining how best to issue warnings about impending heat waves.

Environment Minister Steffi Lemke said global warming is causing new health risks in Europe that can be addressed, including by providing more shade and cool places in cities during [heat waves](#).

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Citation: Germany to roll out measures against heat wave deaths, drawing lessons from France (2023, June 26) retrieved 21 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-06-germany-deaths-lessons-france.html>

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