



@DGUVKompakt

 web magazine  
[www.dguv.de/kompakt](http://www.dguv.de/kompakt)

Page 2: Standardisation as an instrument of economic policy – Interview with Angela Janowitz, Director of the Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardization (KAN)

## The risk of a shortage of skilled staff

There's a shortage of them, and in many industries: workers. This shortage of workers is having a negative impact on safety and health at work. It is the responsibility of politicians to put the necessary measures in place to counteract the current situation. But safe, healthy and human-oriented workplaces also help to ensure that employees and their knowledge remain in the economy for a long time.

The shortage of workers is affecting safety and health at work. This is the result of a survey carried out by the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the German Social Accident Insurance (IFA). Accordingly, the shortage of skilled workers is a foreseeable risk for safety and health at work in 33 of 42 branches of industry. (→ Graphic on page 4). The ongoing retirement of the baby boomer generation will only increase this trend.

“When the workforce shrinks, this generally increases the pressure on those that are left. This can result in increasing workloads and stress”, says Dr Dietmar Reinert, Director of the IFA. In addition, more and more non-specialists or unskilled workers are found in the workforce. “Stress and a lack of expertise increase the likelihood of errors and occupational accidents.” This makes it all the more important to implement prevention measures, such as regular training, and to structure work in a human-oriented way. After all, stress can lead to even people leaving work when this leads to physical or mental health issues.



When the workforce shrinks, this generally increases the pressure faced by those that are left.

### Practising diversity and flexibility

“In order to get more people into work, the world of work must become more diverse”, Reinert explains. The job market must be accessible to everyone – regardless of their age, gender, ethnic origin, physical and mental abilities, or professional qualifications. Therefore, occupational health and safety topics must be prepared in different ways for the various target groups. Image-based instructions, translation assistance, barrier-free and multi-lingual offerings and a reflection from a gender-specific perspective are initial approaches.

### Healthy working over the long term

It is just as important to maintain employability until retirement. Lifelong learning and age-appropriate work provide the basis for this. “Early retirement due to work-related stress or illness must be prevented. This requires a culture of prevention in companies and educational institutions”, explains Reinert. This regulates organisational

measures in the areas of safety, health, organisational development and personnel development, and also guides an organisation's corporate culture. After this, technical aids such as lifting systems or artificial intelligence can also be used as a way to relieve the strain on workers. After accidents or long periods of incapacity for work, operational integration management (OIM) is essential.

Healthy and safe workplaces are not the be-all and end-all when it comes to the labour shortage, but they are an important piece of the puzzle. “Employers that offer poor working conditions often end up with a shortage of workers. That is why safe and healthy workplaces are a way to attract and retain staff”, states Reinert.

→ [www.dguv.de](http://www.dguv.de)  
 (German only)

→ [www.forum.dguv.de](http://www.forum.dguv.de) > 6/2022 edition >  
 Shortage of skilled staff in the care sector  
 (German only)



Interview with Angela Janowitz, Director of the Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardization (KAN)

# Standardization is becoming increasingly important – also in terms of economic policy

Dear readers,

Many people are worried about the coming months. Political events and the resulting energy crisis are making many feel uncertain and stressed – both about the costs of household bills and the costs of continuing to operate businesses and educational institutions. The measures aimed at reducing energy consumption that have been in place since September will be particularly noticeable in companies and at workplaces. Lighting should be used more sparingly and room temperatures should be decreased. If this wasn't enough, we are also facing the third coronavirus winter. Almost as if it were simply a matter of routine, we are already preparing for the likely developments, such as increasing rates of infection, some cases involving serious health outcomes or long-lasting health problems after an infection and overstretched healthcare workers.

This autumn, the German Social Accident Insurance will once again be there to help companies and educational institutions assess the familiar and new risks for employees and develop appropriate protective measures – for each individual sector. Together with BG Hospitals, we are continuing to expand our post-COVID programme and will continue to try to help all those affected by post-COVID syndrome – from diagnosis to treatment and rehabilitation. By all suitable means – that is our mandate. The wide range of symptoms makes this task even more difficult, but the disciplinary approach of BG Hospitals, supported by various research projects, will hopefully help many people suffering as a result of a work-related COVID-19 infection.

Stay positive and supportive of the people who need protection.

Best regards

Dr Stefan Hussy  
Director General of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV)

**Standardization is changing. It is becoming more international and political as a way of strengthening market power – both globally and in new areas. DGUV Kompakt spoke with Angela Janowitz, Director of KAN since January 2022 – about trends in the area of standardization and the opportunities to promote safe and healthy workplaces in standards.**

**Ms Janowitz, classic technical standardisation is increasingly being expanded into areas such as services, management systems and qualifications. What are the intentions behind this?**

There are a number of different reasons for this. Countries like China and certain industries hope to tap into new markets through standardisation. On the other hand, the EU Commission and the service industry are hoping to use standardisation to better exploit the potential of the sector. Some companies want to standardise the quality of services, while others want to certify services or create harmonised management standards and qualifications – in order to use them in company locations all over the world, for example. As KAN, we closely monitor these tendencies and weigh in on critical issues when

the standards concern occupational safety and health.

**KAN itself is not a standardisation body, but its purpose is to ensure that the needs of occupational safety and health are given sufficient attention in standards. How does that work?**

It works by involving us at an early stage, for example via the German Institute for Standardization. (DIN). We then act as an intermediary between occupational safety and health groups and experts. We identify the need for action of the relevant stakeholders, sound out their opinions and integrate these in the standard. The active participation of experts from the German social accident insurance institutions, the state and social partners who promote the interests of occupational safety and health in the relevant standards committees remains essential. One thing that helps us here is the fact that we have become more visible. For two years, we have also been represented in Brussels, since standardization is a European and international business.

**When it comes to standards in areas such as management, for example, these are largely concerned with social and political aspects. Can you explain this using an example?**

Let's take standards for ISO TC 260 on personnel management, which recruitment agencies want to use for their work in future. Some countries also want to standardise aspects of social partnership within this series of standards. For example, a standardization proposal from Iran concerned remuneration systems. However, the German social partners strongly oppose contents of standards relating to working hours, remuneration or work organisation. Occupational health and safety is also affected when standards on personnel management include key figures on the occurrence of accidents in the workplace. Companies are to be able to use these figures for their reporting, for example, to supervisory authorities. KAN does not consider this standard to be a

## The Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardization (KAN) – A strong voice for occupational safety and health

KAN has represented the interests of OH&S in standardization since 1994.

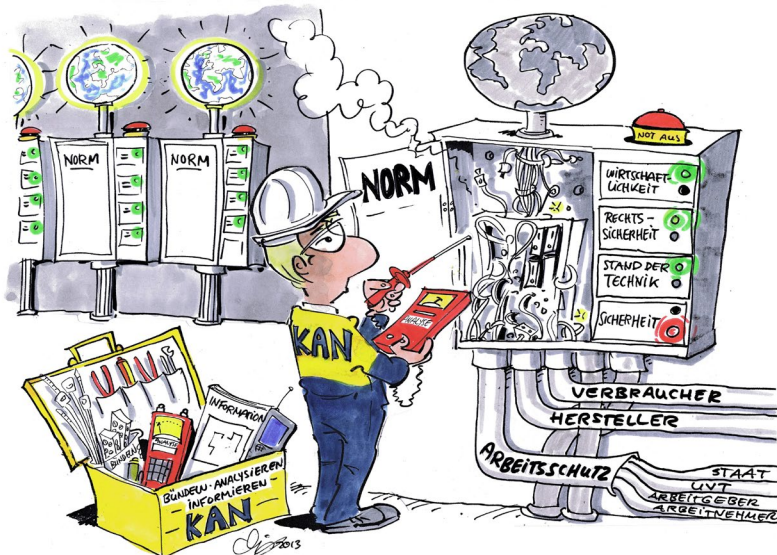
The social partners, the state, the statutory accident insurance institutions and the German Institute for Standardization are represented in KAN.

KAN develops joint positions which it introduces into national, European and international standardization.

→ [www.kan.de/en](http://www.kan.de/en)



# WIR FINDEN DIE LÖSUNG: MIT SICHERHEIT!



Source: © KAN/Michael Hiltner

Standardization is a process that involves parties with a wide range of different interests. KAN ensures that occupational safety and health always receives sufficient attention alongside all other requirements and influences.

suitable instrument for occupational safety and health. The social security systems in different countries are far too different for this to be an effective instrument for occupational safety and health. It starts with the fact that an occupational accident is defined very differently around the world. Companies in countries with extensive accident recognition would be at a disadvantage compared to companies in countries with more restrictive systems.

## Some criticism focuses on the idea that participation in the standardization process cannot be adequately ensured. Will digitalisation improve this situation over the long term?

Drawing up standards requires expertise and time. Thanks to digitalisation, time-saving virtual standardization meetings can take place. Many companies use standards but are not aware that they can actively participate in standards committees, and, in doing so, contribute to practicable standards. For example, we are strengthening our contacts with chambers of craft, for example, and are increasingly addressing "generation Z" through universities and colleges. The active participation of as many interest groups as possible in the creation of standards is a key factor in ensuring that standards are as user-friendly as possible and that they are accepted.

## How will the standardization industry develop?

Standardization is becoming increasingly important – including from an economic perspective. It needs to deliver results quicker than ever. This can have a negative impact

on quality and participating in the process in an appropriate way is becoming increasingly difficult. We need to prevent the needs of occupational safety and health from falling by the wayside and prevent decisions concerning occupational safety and health from being made or influenced by people pursuing entirely different aims. In Germany, we need more of our own expertise in occupational safety and health, both in traditional product standardization and increasingly for services, management and innovative technologies. At the same time, we need to maintain our national regulatory scope in the regulatory framework of the state, accident insurers or the social partners.

The earlier we are involved in the standardization of occupational safety and health, the more effective we are. When it comes to artificial intelligence, for example, KAN helps occupational safety and health groups to find a common position and transposes this position into standards and the European AI regulations. These investments also pay off in terms of prevention over the long term.



**Angela Janowitz, Director of the Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardization (KAN).**

## 2023 – The year of mental health

On 5 July, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on mental health in the digital world of work. EU institutions and member states are asked to find ways to address mental health problems in the digital world. The aim is to ensure that mental health is given the same priority as physical health.

The coronavirus pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of many employees. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are now calling for far-reaching measures to better protect workers. Such measures include minimum standards and working conditions to ensure that employees can exercise their right to disconnect.

Mechanisms for the prevention of psychosocial disorders and for the reintegration of those affected are also called for. Furthermore, MEPs are also calling for work-related mental disorders, such as depression or burnouts, to be added to the recommendation on the European schedule of occupational diseases. The recommendation is to be transformed into an EU directive. The MEPs believe that this directive should contain a minimum number of occupational diseases and minimum requirements for their recognition and the compensation of those affected. However, this legislative initiative would interfere with the freedom of the member states to design their social security systems.

Digitalisation can create opportunities for people with disabilities, including those with mental health problems. Accessible digital solutions are required from employers that also enable people with disabilities to participate in the labour market.

Parliament proposes that 2023 is the EU Year of Good Mental Health to highlight the issue.

→ More information:  
[www.dsv-europa.de/en](http://www.dsv-europa.de/en)

→ DGUV guidelines:  
[www.publikationen.dguv.de](http://www.publikationen.dguv.de)

# The biggest risks for workers

## Shortage of skilled staff, demographic change and intensification of work

Occupational safety and health has to consider more and more factors on which the German Social Accident Insurance has no direct influence. This is the result of a survey of around 800 experts for prevention, which was carried out by the Institute for

Occupational Safety and Health of the German Social Accident Insurance (IFA) as part of the Risk Observatory.

According to the survey, the shortage of skilled workers and the current demographic change is likely to be a risk for safety and

health at work in 33 of 42 industries. Intensification of work, musculoskeletal stress and intercultural requirements were also listed as a risk by many industries. These issues are mutually dependent and call for political measures.

### Which issues affect safe and healthy workplaces?

The most frequently mentioned topics from 42 industries:

**Shortage of skilled workers** (33 of 42 industries)



**Demographic change** (33 of 42 industries)



**Intensification of work** (31 of 42 industries)



**Musculoskeletal stress** (27 of 42 industries)



**Intercultural requirements** (25 of 42 industries)



15 other topics can be found in the brochure "It's all about people – Priorities for tomorrow's occupational safety & health". This shows the latest results from the Risk Observatory of the DGUV.

→ [www.dguv.de](http://www.dguv.de) > Webcode: p021999 (German only)

**How do technological and social trends impact our work?**

This question has been investigated since 2012 by the Risk Observatory of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV). The aim: concrete indications for proactive prevention.

[www.dguv.de](http://www.dguv.de)  
Webcode: e1179236

## New head of the Board of Trustees of the National Paralympic Committee Germany (DBS)

Gregor Doepke, Director of Corporate Communications and Chief Press Officer of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) was selected as the new chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Paralympic Committee Germany (DBS). He has been involved in disability sport for many years on a voluntary basis. Former swimmer Kirsten Bruhn was selected as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees. She is also known from the film "GOLD – DU KANNST MEHR ALS DU DENKST" (EN: GOLD – YOU CAN DO MORE THAN YOU THINK), which was initiated by the German Social Accident Insurance. As a three-time Paralympic champion,

she brings an athlete's perspective to the work of the Board of Trustees. "Together with Kirsten Bruhn, I will do everything in my power to make positive, lasting changes to the work of the National Paralympic Committee Germany", says Doepke.

Doepke and Bruhn have made the topic of attracting young talent a top priority and will develop concrete recommendations together with the members of the Board of Trustees. It is not just since the coronavirus pandemic that the DBS has faced major challenges.

The third participation report published by the German Federal Government showed that only a third of people with a disability



Source: © DBS

regularly take part in sport and 55 percent do not take part in sport at all. However, the coronavirus pandemic only made the situation worse, with disabled sport associations losing around 100,000 members.

→ [www.dbs-npc.de](http://www.dbs-npc.de) > DBS > Aktuelles (German only)

### Imprint

**Published by:** German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), Dr Stefan Hussy (Director General). The DGUV is the umbrella organisation of the German Social Accident Insurance Institutions for the public sector and for trade and industry.

**Deadline:** 07/09/2022

**Publishing committee:** Dr Renate Colella (chair), Udo Diel, Prof Dr med. Axel Ekkernkamp, Markus Hofmann, Gabriele Pappai, Dr Udo Schöpf, Karl-Sebastian Schulte, Ilka Wölfe

**Editorship:** Gregor Doepke, Kathrin Baltscheit, DGUV, Glinkastraße 40, 10117 Berlin

**Editorial team:** Kathrin Baltscheit, Katharina Braun, Arlén Buchholz, Katrin Wildt

**Translation:** Intercontact GmbH

**Layout:** Atelier Hauer & Dörfler GmbH, [www.hauer-doerfler.de](http://www.hauer-doerfler.de)

**Publisher:** Quadriga Media Berlin GmbH, Werderscher Markt 13, 10117 Berlin

**Printed by:** MedienSchiff BRUNO

**Contact:** [kompakt@dguv.de](mailto:kompakt@dguv.de)

**Image sources:** Page 2 – Jan Roehl/DGUV  
Page 3 portraits: KAN/Florian Janowitz

