

**SPECIAL**

**KONFERENZ "NORMUNG,  
PRÜFUNG, ZERTIFIZIERUNG"**

**CONFERENCE "STANDARDIZA-  
TION, TESTING, CERTIFICATION"**

**CONFÉRENCE "NORMALISA-  
TION, ESSAIS, CERTIFICATION"**



Conference papers  
at [www.kan.de](http://www.kan.de)  
(News – Events)

<sup>1</sup>The attendance of representatives from candidate countries for EU membership was sponsored within the framework of the PHARE programme of the European Commission.

<sup>2</sup>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

## Results of the European conference "Standardization, testing and certification"

The conference was held on 11/12 October 2001 in the BG Academy for Occupational Health and Safety in Dresden. It was hosted by the French institutions EUROGIP and INRS and the German HVBG and KAN. The 150 participants came from 21 different European countries, including seven Eastern European countries wishing to join the European Union<sup>1</sup>.

A number of speakers emphasized the fact that the New Approach has led to a closer integration of legislation, standardization, testing and certification in Europe, and that the European occupational health and safety institutions contribute substantially to prevention by way of their activity in these areas and supporting research. At the same time, it became clear that after fifteen years, the time has come to review the New Approach and to develop it further. Better harmonization of accreditation and notification processes was regarded as being of key importance, as the confidence in the entire system may otherwise be in jeopardy. Market surveillance, an important element within the New Approach, must also be co-ordinated throughout Europe. Market surveillance is understood as an instrument which makes a major contribution to the safety of products placed on the market. It also protects manufacturers against competition from cheap products which do not meet the safety requirements.

The internationalization of standards was a further major topic. In the face of market globalization, international standards continue to gain in importance. In contrast to harmonized European standards, however, international standards have no statutory basis. The initiative by UN/ECE<sup>2</sup> is therefore of great interest, providing as it does the formulation of common regulatory objectives within certain sectors in certain

countries concerned, objectives which may subsequently be supported by international standards. Assurance of the level of protection embodied in European Single Market Directives and supported by harmonized European standards must remain an objective.

The conference also established that the OH&S institutions of individual member states have only limited means at their disposal to make their voice heard within international standardization. In order for European objectives with regard to protection to be carried through in international standardization, the concepts and ideas of countries outside Europe, which derive from a different tradition and safety culture, must be studied intensely. This is often beyond the ability of individual institutions. The need for pan-European co-ordination has therefore been raised. The time required for participation in sessions of standardization committees outside Europe should also not be underestimated. A network in which European OH&S experts are able to conduct discussions and develop common positions has been launched, and is regarded as an essential resource for the process of pan-European coordination. The network of Scandinavian states, which was reported on at the conference, may serve as a model. An important principle of the Scandinavian network is that the member states are not compelled to adopt a position at all costs. By the process of coordination and discussion with the other parties in the network, however, the different positions converge.

The six workshops held within the conference addressed the subjects and possible structures of the new European network (for details, see Page 9). The full text of conference papers and summaries of the workshops can be found on KAN's web site ([www.kan.de](http://www.kan.de)).

### Standardization, testing and certification for safe products

