



## RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF STANDARDIZATION

# Content



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KAN\_Arbeitsschutz\_Normung



Kommission Arbeitsschutz und Normung (KAN)



KAN – Kommission Arbeitsschutz und Normung



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**Peer-Oliver Villwock**

Chair of KAN

Federal Ministry of Labour  
and Social Affairs (BMAS)

## Research activity: essential for OSH and standardization

If standards are to reflect the state of the art as is their remit, they must be updated regularly to take new findings into account. The results of research activity contribute to improving the properties of products, and serve as an important basis for the specification of test methods and limit values.

Keeping in step with progress is particularly important with respect to employees' safety and health. Institutions such as the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the German Social Accident Insurance (IFA), the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA), and also universities and other establishments therefore conduct research in numerous fields of occupational safety and health. These range from hazardous substances, ergonomics and machine safety through to emerging topics such as artificial intelligence, IT security in networked production systems (industrial security) and the impacts of climate change. The results also benefit standardization activity, as shown by the example of the slip resistance of floor coverings. Some topics, however, still require the research community's attention. One example is anthropometric data, which is required in standards.

Research institutions invest considerable resources in research into preventive activity. This investment pays off: the results serve as the scientific basis by which prevention issues can be presented effectively during standardization activity, and accidents and harm to health thereby avoided in the long term. «

# Musculoskeletal stresses arising during transport of patients on wheeled stretchers

Ambulance service personnel are subjected to heavy stresses when transporting patients. Situations repeatedly arise in which, for example, a wheeled stretcher carrying a person must be lifted. A study involving measurements, conducted at the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV (IFA), revealed that musculoskeletal stresses, particularly on the lumbar spine, can be reduced substantially by the use of more highly automated wheeled stretchers.

An analysis conducted by the German Federal Employment Agency of the shortage of skilled workers showed that the ambulance services are already suffering from such a shortage. In addition, not all ambulance service workers are able to work through to the statutory retirement age, owing to the physical stresses involved. The increase in the average body weight of patients and the rising proportion of women working in the ambulance services are also a factor. As a result, musculoskeletal stresses occurring during patient transport are attracting greater attention.

The present study of wheeled stretchers is a follow-on project to an earlier study of the transport of patients on stairways<sup>1</sup>. An online survey in which over 4,000 persons took part revealed that stairways continue to be the most significant factor in the stress; loading and unloading stretchers into and from ambulances was also frequently mentioned, however. The employees are particularly conscious of the stress upon the shoulders and back. Although more highly automated equipment is available, it is rarely used in practice at present, a situation criticized by some employees.

Persons are routinely transported on wheeled stretchers in the ambulance services. (A similar situation exists in the funeral services.) Transfer of a patient to the ambulance usually requires the ambulance service personnel to lift a large part of the total weight, comprising the patient, the wheeled stretcher, and in some cases also medical equipment. The wheeled stretcher is lowered to the ground, the patient is placed upon it, and wheeled stretcher and patient are then lifted to the loading height of the vehicle. Entirely mechanical wheeled stretchers are lifted by muscle force; by contrast, electrohydraulic wheeled stretchers require only the touch of a button.

Processes for loading the wheeled stretcher into the vehicle differ widely. Entirely mechanical wheeled stretchers are pushed onto a stretcher platform in the usual way, the undercarriage retracts and platform and stretcher are then pushed for-



Two test persons pushing a mechanical wheeled stretcher up onto the stretcher platform.

wards and upwards into a horizontal position. In a semi-automatic system, a mechanical wheeled stretcher is pushed partly onto a loading system, then drawn into the vehicle automatically at the touch of a button. Electrohydraulic wheeled stretchers are engaged with a sliding loading carriage, and the undercarriage of the wheeled stretcher is retracted and the wheeled stretcher drawn horizontally into the vehicle automatically.

In order to compare the physical stresses arising in use, the IFA performed measurements on these three different wheeled stretcher and pull-in/lock-in systems under laboratory conditions on behalf of several accident insurance institutions. To simulate the lifting and loading/unloading processes as realistically as possible during the laboratory measurements, a dummy was placed on the wheeled stretcher, and employees in the ambulance services were recruited as test subjects.

Measurements were performed by means of the CUELA measurement method<sup>2</sup> during use of the wheeled stretchers by a total of 20 test subjects. Body posture and movement and hand action forces were recorded. The subjectively perceived stress and the affected body regions were recorded by means of a questionnaire.

### Major ergonomic differences between the systems

The results reveal differences between the three systems with respect to the objective biomechanical parameters (hand action force, posture and intervertebral disc compression force in the lumbar spine (L5/S1)) and the subjectively perceived stress. Body posture was acceptable during use of all wheeled stretchers. Handling of the entirely mechanical wheeled stretcher with stretcher platform necessitates high hand action forces; these forces give rise to high intervertebral disc compression forces for the individuals handling the stretcher, including for both individuals when the stretcher is handled by a team of two as per the recommendations.

Electrohydraulic assistance and automated pull-in considerably reduce the required force and in turn the compression forces on L5/S1. The measurements showed that the physical stress arising during handling was reduced the most by the electrohydraulic wheeled stretcher with pull-in system: this system eliminates the need for the wheeled stretcher to be lifted manually to the loading height, and the associated stress does not therefore arise. During loading and unloading by a single person/by two people, both peak and median values for the compression force are halved, the peak values P95 from 6.8/5.6 kN for one/two persons respectively to 2.7 kN, the median P50 from 3.2/2.9 kN for one/two persons respectively to 1.6 kN. The stress perceived subjectively by the test subjects is also consistent with the results of the measurements.

As a result, all employees, and in particular women and older employees, benefit significantly from stretchers with power assistance. A need exists for technical equipment that safeguards employees' health. This need is exacerbated by the shortage of skilled workers. The EN 1865-2 standard, Patient handling equipment used in ambulances – Power-assisted stretcher, which was recently revised, specifies that such loading systems must support the ambulance crews by eliminating the need for manual lifting operations during normal use. The national foreword to DIN EN 1789, Medical vehicles and their equipment – Road ambulances, now views power-assisted stretcher loading systems as the state of the art and recommends their use. The switch to electrohydraulic wheeled stretchers would be a further step towards reducing musculoskeletal stress during patient transport.

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1 [www.dguv.de/ifa/fachinfos/ergonomie/ergonomie-in-der-personenbefoerderung](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/fachinfos/ergonomie/ergonomie-in-der-personenbefoerderung)

2 [www.dguv.de/ifa/fachinfos/ergonomie/cuela-messsystem-und-rueckenmonitor/index-2.jsp](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/fachinfos/ergonomie/cuela-messsystem-und-rueckenmonitor/index-2.jsp)

# Three questions for: Professor Dr Rolf Ellegast, the new Director of the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV

Since 1 November 2024, the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (IFA) of the German Social Accident Insurance in Sankt Augustin has been headed by Professor Dr Rolf Ellegast. In this interview, he provides insights into current core topics for the institute, recent developments and the impact of the Institute's research work.

## What are the current priorities for the IFA's work, and what new topics is it addressing?

The IFA and its employees – numbering around 270 – possess proven expertise in the scientific and technical aspects of occupational safety and health and in applied human factors and ergonomics. Our work yields tangible improvements in workplaces and work equipment, and supports the German Social Accident Insurance Institutions and their member companies in their day-to-day occupational safety and health activity.

Changes in the world of work constantly give rise to new challenges. One topical issue is the continuing digital transformation, in particular the integration of artificial intelligence into work systems. The IFA, and in particular its cross-departmental AI Competence Centre, is involved in several projects concerning this topic. It goes without saying that we're interested in how work systems are designed and implemented without impacting negatively upon employees' safety and health. At the same time, however, we're interested in how the OSH com-



munity can use AI to assure or improve safety and health.

Climate change also places new demands upon occupational safety and health. For example, we're conducting a prevention project to analyse the working conditions of bicycle couriers. In this project, we're examining stress factors such as whole-body and hand-arm vibration – but also UV radiation and heat stress, and the practical benefits of cooling vests on particularly hot days.

## How are the topics identified that the IFA chooses to address? Has the work changed over the years?

Many of our research topics are born out of inquiries from accident insurance institutions and companies in the field. In addition, many members of our staff are active on government and scientific committees in which current occupational safety and health developments are discussed.

We also identify relevant future topics ourselves through our risk observatory. One example is the field of industrial security, in which we've built up extensive expertise within a short space of time. This is crucial, since the

growth of networked production systems also increases their vulnerability. Industrial control systems are increasingly the target of cyber attacks, which can endanger the safety of workers. Through our work at the IFA, for example by setting out test specifications for industrial security, we're enhancing the protection against such attacks.

We can state that overall, our work has changed considerably in recent years. The IFA now has a stronger international presence and is more closely networked with experts in the rest of the world, both in scientific institutions and in standards bodies.

## What happens to the results of your research work?

Our aim is to make the results of research available for use, both for practical application and in the scientific community. The broad positive response to our publications and lectures is indicative of how well we achieve that.

We're particularly proud of projects that make a lasting contribution to reducing occupational diseases and workplace accidents. One example is the reduction of formaldehyde exposure in pathology departments and anatomical institutes. Another is the safe design of treatment tables and the resulting avoidance of fatal accidents. We conducted a project for this purpose jointly with KAN.

We also actively submit our findings during standards development processes. In 2024, around 50 IFA experts were members of a total of 109 national and international standards committees, through which they further promoted the interests of occupational safety and health.

Anyone wishing to learn more about the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health is invited to view our wide range of laboratories and workshops on our **open day on 25 May 2025**.

**The IFA on LinkedIn:**  
[www.linkedin.com/company/institut-für-arbeitsschutz](https://www.linkedin.com/company/institut-für-arbeitsschutz)

You can also learn more about the IFA in Episode 22 of the **KAN podcast**: [www.kan.de/podcast](https://www.kan.de/podcast) (in German)

# Testing of the non-slip characteristics of floor coverings

In 2023, around 172,000 reportable accidents caused by tripping, falling and slipping occurred in the public and private sectors in Germany. These accounted for 25% of all occupational accidents. According to statistics from the German Social Accident Insurance, almost two thirds of these accidents can be attributed to the floor covering<sup>1</sup>. With the EN 16165 standard, the standard test methods applied in Europe for the slip resistance of floor coverings have been condensed for the first time and a harmonized test specification has thereby been created.

For slip accidents to be prevented, priority must be given to the design of the work premises and work processes and to testing and evaluation of slip resistance. The slip resistance of floors must be compliant with the German Ordinance on workplaces (ArbStättV). This requirement is specified in the ASRA1.5 Technical Rule for work premises (floors), which sets out requirements for the slip-resistant properties of floor surfaces and testing of these properties. Annex 1 of ASRA1.5 describes the procedure for testing floor coverings in accordance with EN 16165 (Annex B)<sup>2</sup> and assigns the floor coverings to the assessment groups R 9 (lowest slip resistance) to R 13 (highest slip resistance). As a general rule, the greater the risk of slipping due to work-related or weather-related soiling, the higher the requirements for the slip resistance of the floor covering.

The following criteria are used to assess the risk of slipping:

1. Level of incidence on the floor of lubricants (substances conducive to slipping), and their distribution
2. Nature and properties of the lubricants
3. Average soiling of the floor by these substances
4. Other conditions associated with the building structure, work procedure and organization

In some work areas, such as kitchens, car repair workshops or outdoors, the surfaces of the floor coverings must have the capacity to absorb a certain quantity of lubricants (e.g. oil, water, dirt) and thus remove them from the pedestrian surface. To ensure that a floor covering is suitable for certain workrooms or work areas, ASRA1.5 therefore additionally requires a displacement space to absorb these substances, such as open cavities, intentional unevenness or profiling in the floor covering. Four assessment groups (groups V 4 to V 10) are specified, with successively stricter requirements for the displacement space.

## Walk test method

The requirement for certain properties to be present is based on objective criteria and suitable test methods. Floor coverings' anti-slip properties are tested to EN 16165 (Annex B) in accordance with the ASRA1.5 workplace rule for floors. During the test, a person walks forwards and backwards with an upright posture on the floor covering under test. The incline of the floor covering is increased in steps until the person begins to slip. The average angle at which slipping occurs, calculated from a series of values obtained from tests performed with two test persons, determines assignment of the floor covering to an assessment group from R 9 to R 13 (see table). For testing of floor coverings for wet areas, the standard also describes a test method with a ramp wetted with water (Annex A).



*In-situ testing using a GMG 200 mobile tribometer on sliders fitted with a range of footwear materials*

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Slip resistance assessment group	Angle at which slipping occurs, in °
R 9	From 6 to 10
R 10	Greater than 10 and up to 19
R 11	Greater than 19 and up to 27
R 12	Greater than 27 and up to 35
R 13	Greater than 35

*Assessment groups for the slip resistance of floor coverings for workrooms and work areas presenting a risk of slipping*

### In-situ testing enhances safety

This walk test method is purely a laboratory test method for the assessment of type samples. The type examination is very important, as planning and correct selection of products would not otherwise be possible. However, it does not permit conclusions regarding the slip resistance of a floor covering in use in situ<sup>3</sup>, since in practice, incorrect installation, improper care, ageing, wear and tear and soiling are often causes of slip accidents.

To enable corrective and preventive measures to be implemented, the slip-resistant properties of floor coverings must be determined in-situ in accordance with DGUV Informative publication 208-041 (assessment of the risk of slipping under conditions of use). This test is also described in EN 16165 (Annex D). A measuring instrument fitted with sliders is drawn across a floor covering at a constant velocity, and the tractive force required for this purpose is measured over a specified distance. A range of shoe sole materials can be fitted to the sliders. In addition, the lubricant media that arise in use (e.g. oils or other soiling media) can be applied in the test. The coefficient of sliding friction  $\mu$  is the ratio between the tractive force and the force acting vertically. The floor system, comprising floor, shoe and lubricant, is evaluated. Measured values below  $\mu = 0.30$  indicate a high risk of slipping, values between 0.30 and 0.45 a medium risk of slipping and values greater than 0.45 a low risk of slipping.

The fourth method described in EN 16165 is a pendulum test (Annex C). This test is used in Germany primarily for testing road surfaces. The results yielded by the four different test methods are not comparable with each other. However, since a test method suitable for universal use does not exist, each of the four methods has its own purpose.

The volume of the displacement space is determined in accordance with DIN 51130, Testing of floor coverings. The open cavity volume in the surface of the floor covering is filled with a test paste for this purpose. The volume of the displacement space can be determined from the difference in weight between the floor covering in its untreated state and when filled with the test paste, in consideration of the density.

### Current practice

The DGUV's Expert committee Trade and Logistics and the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV (IFA) have been addressing the testing of floor coverings since 1979<sup>4</sup>. The test methods, introduced initially at national level, have been continuously developed and incorporated into EN 16165.

Each year, the IFA draws up a list of tested floor coverings for workrooms and work areas presenting a risk of slipping<sup>5</sup> that have been assigned to an assessment group for slip resistance and, if applicable, to an assessment group for the displacement space, and for which a valid test report from a type examination by the IFA is available.

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1 Statistik – Arbeitsunfallgeschehen 2023, DGUV;

<https://publikationen.dguv.de/widgets/pdf/download/article/4990>

2 EN 16165: Determination of slip resistance of pedestrian surfaces – Methods of evaluation, 12/2021

3 Wetzel C., Windhövel U., Mewes D., Götte T.: Rutschgefahren erkennen und vermeiden, Technische Sicherheit 2013; [www.dguv.de/medien/ifa/de/pub/grl/pdf/2013\\_050.pdf](http://www.dguv.de/medien/ifa/de/pub/grl/pdf/2013_050.pdf)

4 [www.dguv.de/ifa/pruefung-zertifizierung/pruefung-von-bodenbelaeagen/index-2.jsp](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/pruefung-zertifizierung/pruefung-von-bodenbelaeagen/index-2.jsp)

5 Published in the IFA-Handbuch (fee applies), [www.ifa-handbuchdigital.de/IFA-HB\\_560210-1-1](http://www.ifa-handbuchdigital.de/IFA-HB_560210-1-1)



# Standards for all: gender-responsive and inclusive

European and international standards shape many areas of life. The world of work is no exception. A gender-responsive and inclusive approach to standardization is not only a question of equality, but also a consequence of social responsibility and the recognition that underlying conditions should be fair for everyone.

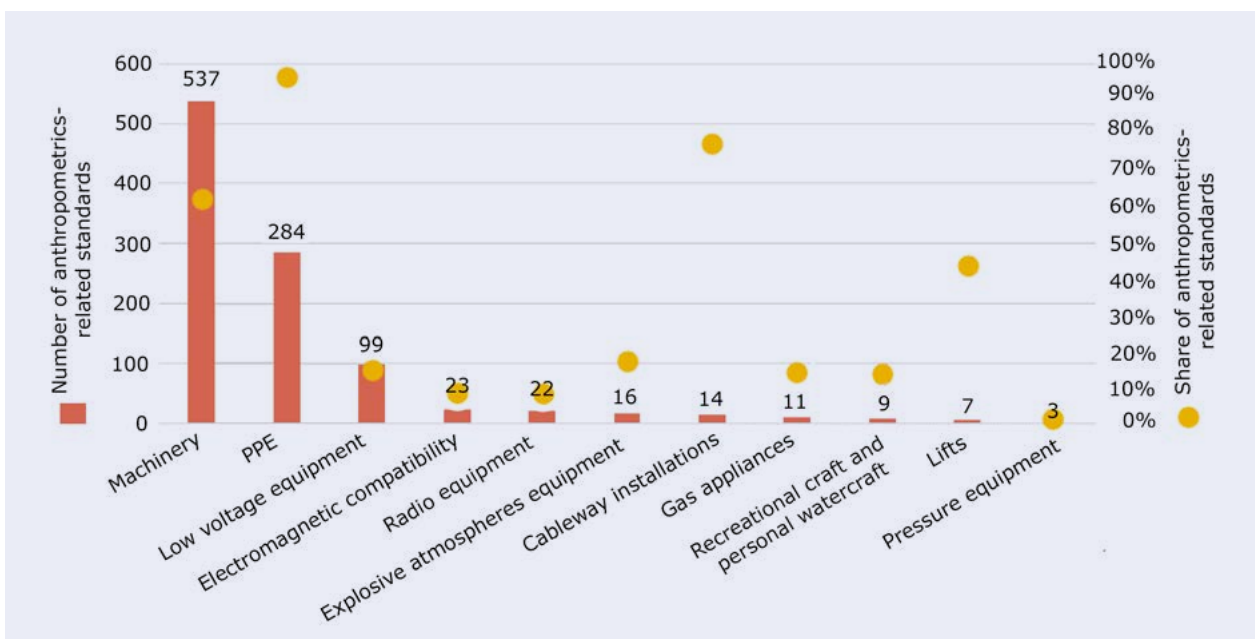
Work equipment, test methods, processes and services are designed for people. Many of the requirements set out in standards, particularly for machinery or personal protective equipment, are therefore based on the characteristics of their users. Failure to adapt work equipment or protective equipment to different body shapes and other criteria of the user population may lead to accidents and give rise to hazards and adverse stress. Human beings' characteristics are not homogeneous, but vary greatly.

### Gender-responsive standardization

Traditionally, many technical standards in which people are addressed have tended to be male-oriented in their approach. This is reflected in the way products are designed and tested, as well as in the language used. Women's anatomy and their physical abilities, in particular, may not be given adequate consideration. Gender-responsive standardization means that the needs of all genders are taken into account. Personal protective equipment for firefighters, for example, can provide the intended protection only if it makes allowance for gender-specific differences and assures a correct fit. A good example is DIN 14927 for firefighters' positioning belts. In response to an initiative by the HFUK (the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the fire brigades in Germany's northern region) and KAN, the sizes stated in this standard have been supplemented by a further class at either end of the range, thereby improving coverage of the breadth of body sizes occurring in the population.

### Inclusive standardization

Inclusive standardization goes a step further. It is intended to reflect the diversity of society and to take account of people with disabilities, older people and those of different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds. Standards for barrier-free design are an important step towards inclusion, ensuring that public spaces and buildings are also accessible to people with mobility impairments. Likewise, work equipment should be designed such that ideally, it meets the needs of all employees. It may not be possible for all products to be designed to be fully inclusive. This should not, however, serve as an excuse for not even trying.



Number and share of anthropometric-related standards by piece of EU legislation

Source: Study on the inclusiveness of anthropometrics in European harmonised standards/CSIL

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### Initial initiatives

Several standards organizations have already taken initial steps, for example by setting up working groups to address issues of inclusion and equality. Various initiatives aim to promote diversity and inclusion in standards committees, implement gender-responsive language in standards, and launch surveys of data, for example anthropometric data of different population groups.

In 2023, the European Commission reviewed 2,650 harmonized European standards with respect to the inclusiveness of the data on which they were based<sup>1</sup>. The study found anthropometric data to be relevant in 36% of the standards. In 76 of these standards (around 3%), the lack of inclusiveness is sufficient to present a major risk to the safety and health of large sections of the population. The Commission's view is therefore that these standards require urgent revision. For standards to take adequate account of human body measurements, however, the anthropometric data must be available for the relevant European population in all its diversity. The European Commission is therefore currently determining, in a follow-up project, what anthropometric data for adults is available and what data is still lacking<sup>2</sup>.

CEN and CENELEC set up a joint technical committee in 2024 to address various horizontal topics relating to personal protective equipment (PPE)<sup>3</sup>. Here too, the results of the Commission's study are of great importance. A working group addressing inclusive PPE has set itself the goal of developing a generic approach to the necessary revisions of the relevant standards governing PPE.

### Gender equality: a goal for sustainable development

In 2017, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) published recommendations for gender-responsive standards<sup>4</sup>. These recommendations also refer to Goal 5, "Gender Equality", of the UN Sustainable Development Goals<sup>5</sup>. The recommendations include a declaration that can be signed by standards organizations as affirmation of their commitment in this area. The annex lists actions that can be used to achieve the declared intent. DIN and DKE have already signed the declaration.

CEN, CENELEC, ISO and IEC, too, have committed to contributing to meeting the UN sustainability goals. According to the ISO website, over 50 standards support sustainability Goal 5. These include ISO 53800, Guidelines for the promotion and implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment. The corresponding search at CEN/CENELEC identified 281 standards.

Standards bodies should take care to use inclusive and non-discriminatory language. To support this, ISO has published a list of alternatives to terms that are not inclusive or may be perceived as being pejorative<sup>6</sup>.

Experts on the standards committees require continual training and raising of awareness, so as to remain conscious of the need to take diversity into account in the standards they develop. A shift towards gender-responsive and inclusive standardization requires not only structural adjustments, but also a cultural change in the world of standardization.

1 Study on the inclusiveness of anthropometrics in European harmonised standards, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2873/172248>

2 [www.ibv.org/en/proyecto/adult-anthr-data-making-harmonised-standards-inclusive-gender-responsive](http://www.ibv.org/en/proyecto/adult-anthr-data-making-harmonised-standards-inclusive-gender-responsive)

3 <https://t1p.de/CEN-CENELEC-JTC23>

4 [https://unece.org/DAM/trade/wp6/Recommendations/Rec\\_U\\_en.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/trade/wp6/Recommendations/Rec_U_en.pdf)

5 <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

6 <https://go.iso.org/noninclusiveterms>

# Market surveillance: the European concept and national enforcement

Stefan Pemp worked for many years as a head of department and head of inspectorate at municipal labour inspectorates, and from 2001 to May 2024 as the head of market surveillance of technical products at the Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Labour and Equal Opportunities of Lower Saxony. Based on his experience with European market surveillance, he offers suggestions from a “worm’s-eye view” on how it could be developed further.

The European Union is important to its Member States, as it lends them a voice in the world. However, it is crucial not only that the EU should exist, but that the economic, political and legal framework conditions that it creates are actually practicable for the Member States.

## The purpose of market surveillance

The mission and purpose of European market surveillance is to facilitate the free movement of goods throughout Europe in a fair market. Performance of market surveillance in practice is delegated to the authorities of the individual Member States<sup>1</sup>. Originally, the legal framework for this delegation was set out in EU directives, which were to be transposed into the national law of each Member State. EU regulations, which apply directly in all Member States, are now increasingly being adopted in place of directives. Enforcement of the regulations, however, still requires supporting national legislation.

The change from directives to regulations is linked to the desire for greater homogeneity and clarity. The idea of a central European market surveillance authority is also raised on occasions in this context. The advantages would include better distribution of resources (particularly in high-tech areas such as artificial intelligence, where experts are difficult to recruit), the avoidance of duplication of effort, and improved coordination at national and European level.

## The European reality

In practice, certainly in Germany but probably also in other EU Member States, European law collides with an evolved culture of national administrative law that may vary greatly from one Member State to the next<sup>2</sup>. Phrasing used in EU regulations, such as “market surveillance authorities [...] shall without delay require the relevant economic operator [...]”<sup>1</sup>, may have no direct

equivalent in German administrative law, and give rise to uncertainties for the market surveillance authorities. Does “require” imply mere communication, or does it constitute an administrative act?

In my view, the problem here is that however good a translation may be, it does not correspond perfectly to an application in the national legal systems. In the past, this could generally be resolved by taking account of national circumstances during the transposition of EU directives into national law.

Where deficits concerned purely formal rather than substantial obligations (e.g. merely a failure to affix the CE mark), they were generally regarded, in the German administrative tradition, as being trivial. This, too, reveals a problem caused by differences between countries in their respective understanding of the law, as the national administrations may vary in how strictly they act within their margin of discretion.

If the view is correct that traditions of administrative law in Europe are highly heterogeneous, a European (i.e. centralized) market surveillance authority brings with it not only opportunities for harmonization and effectiveness, but also a high risk of not being accepted, since the national players are informed by the practices of their respective administrations. Large companies will probably be able to overcome problems of legal comprehension with the aid of relevant personnel. Smaller companies, however, are more likely simply to give up in such cases. Both the enacting of legislation by the EU and the existence of a central EU authority could be perceived as remote and aloof, and thus also be a target for demagogic criticism.

## Goal and process

Against this backdrop, I consider it crucial to make the case for three things:

1. Creating simple rules is preferable to explaining complicated ones.
2. Ambitious goals should be set, and not abandoned in the face of immediate obstacles.
3. During selection of the process and timing for implementation of the goals, consideration must be given to the obstacles as applicable.

From my practical experience, gained over 20 years in shaping and implementing market surveillance policy, I consider points 2 and 3 particularly important. A task will not be addressed adequately if one allows oneself to be hindered in achieving one’s goals. Conversely, attempting to achieve everything at once results in the topic becoming toxic.

Market surveillance requires more than just a common language. In practice, even mere communication with authorities in different Member States presents difficulties, owing to limited language skills. Above all, however, a common understanding is needed of what we want – and this is where things become very difficult. This common understanding must be developed on the part of authorities and economic operators if it is to meet with acceptance. I consider this process essential, but it will be neither short, nor smooth.

To enable this process to be followed successfully, it is desirable for the EU to continue to set itself ambitious goals, both generally, and specifically in market surveillance, to make the necessary resources available, and to allow itself the necessary time.

*Stefan Pemp*

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- 1 Refer to the EU Market Surveillance Regulation 2019/1020, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1020/oj>
  - 2 von Bogdandy et al. (eds.), *Ius Publicum Europaeum* vol. V, 2013

# Construction sector pools experience across borders

Since 2000, representatives of accident insurance institutions, trade unions, employers' associations and labour inspectorates in German-speaking countries have met annually at the "Alpines Kolloquium" (Alpine Colloquium for safety and health on construction sites) to share their experience. Organization of the colloquium rotates between the participating institutions in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, South Tyrol and Liechtenstein.

The topics covered at the Alpine Colloquium are diverse, ranging from digitalization in the construction industry to climate change, personal protective equipment, hazardous substances and machine safety. One of the most significant challenges in this sector is presented by work performed across national borders, as it requires a large number of different national OSH regulations to be observed. For this reason, a sub-working group concerned with falls from a height was set up some time ago and tasked with publishing a joint paper setting out practical solutions to be applied across multiple countries.

The results of the Alpine Colloquium are made available to the relevant national bodies and, if appropriate, presented at EU level with the support of European sectoral associations. Discussion with the European social partners in the construction sector also takes place directly through the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW, Brussels) and the European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC, Brussels). Involvement in the working groups presents a good opportunity for KAN to contribute aspects of occupational safety and health and raise awareness of them effectively at European level.

## DACHSLI group for machinery

The announcement of revision of the Machinery Directive in 2019 placed machine safety on the agenda. The positive experience gained with the group addressing falls from a height prompted the Alpine Colloquium to set up a DACHSLI (an acronym of the German words for the German-speaking countries) group for machinery. To bring users of machinery together, the following institutions were invited to preliminary discussions:

- Germany: BG BAU, HDB (German Construction Industry Federation), ZDB (German Construction Confederation), KAN, PORR
- Austria: AUVA (Austrian workers' compensation board), Zentralarbeitsinspektorat (Austrian labour inspectorate), Geschäftsstelle Bau (building and construction department of the Austrian economic chamber), representatives of the construction sector
- Switzerland: SUVA (Swiss national accident insurance fund), Bau- und Holzgewerkschaft (Swiss builders' association)
- Liechtenstein: Office of Economic Affairs

The group's tasks were discussed in depth at the first face-to-face meeting in August 2020. The group's aim is to pool information and reach a shared opinion, in order in turn to introduce the topics addressed by the machinery group to the relevant bodies at national and international level. The optimization of personnel resources, in particular, is viewed as a positive effect, as all countries represented in the group are now finding it almost impossible to address all construction-related issues adequately at national and international level. In addition, if several bodies and/or countries present similar positions, it is more likely that the views of the users of construction machinery will be heard, as well as those of the manufacturers.

## Main topics: new Machinery Regulation and standardization

Two major topic areas dominated the first meeting: revision of the Machinery Directive, and standardization. For revision of the Machinery Directive, several small groups were conse-

quently formed and tasked with drawing up positions on specific chapters. The positions were discussed again and optimized in the main group. During this groundwork, the group was expanded to include representatives of the market surveillance bodies in the individual countries.

Thanks to the high level of commitment shown by those involved, the opportunity subsequently arose not only for the results to be submitted to the European Parliament in writing, but also for them to be presented to the responsible Rapporteurs in person in online meetings. Furthermore, the results of work by the group for machinery were included in discussion at European level by statements by the FIEC, representing European employers in the sector.

Now that the new Machinery Regulation has been published, the focus is shifting to standardization, a topic area entailing substantially greater efforts. Standardization forms an important and indispensable part of the efforts to harmonize and support the Machinery Regulation and the free movement of goods in Europe and worldwide. Keeping track of the standardization projects and identifying those relevant to employee safety and health is of itself a major challenge. Since many standardization committees are composed primarily of manufacturers' representatives, it is important for users of construction machinery also to be motivated to participate in the various mirror committees, to give them the opportunity to contribute their expertise and perspectives.

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## CWA for the Digital Product Passport for machines

The Digital Product Passport (DPP) is a dataset that summarizes information on a product. This information concerns, for example, the availability of spare parts for the product, its reparability and its proper disposal. Use of the DPP is intended in the first instance to support environmental protection by making it easier for stakeholders in the value and supply chain to work together in implementing a circular economy. The data stored in the DPP covers all phases of the product's life cycle, and can thus be used in the circular economy in the context of design, production, use, disposal, etc. In theory, safety-related data could also be stored in the DPP, enabling it to be used for the purposes of technical safety or occupational safety and health.

Work is currently beginning in a CEN and CENELEC workshop to define the content and data of a DPP for machinery. The DPP's data fields, which are to be defined in the planned CEN/CENELEC Workshop Agreement (CWA), are intended to be available for use in further steps in a machine's life cycle (reuse, recycling or repair) and thereby to support optimization of the machine's operating and material efficiency. This workshop is not intended to address safety-related aspects (which would in any case not be permitted under the regulations). It is conceivable, however, that in future – and at the level of standardization rather than in a workshop – requirements for DPPs could be defined for the communication of safety-related data concerning work equipment.

Useful links concerning the DPP:

Federal Ministry for the Environment: the product passport explained (in German) [www.bmuv.de/FA1313](http://www.bmuv.de/FA1313)

Fraunhofer IAO: A summary of the Digital Product Passport (in German) <https://publica.fraunhofer.de/handle/publica/467872>

## EU news flash

On 6 December 2024, the international standards organizations **IEC and ISO initiated proceedings** (case number T-631/24) before the European Court of Justice (ECJ) against the European Commission. This action was in response to the Commission's decision to implement the ECJ's "**Malamud ruling**" and make harmonized European standards accessible free of charge through "readability platforms". The aim of the standards organizations is to prevent European standards, which may be based in part or in full on IEC and ISO standards, from becoming accessible free of charge.

In mid-February, the European Commission published **details on the revision of the Standardisation Regulation** (EU) No 1025/2012. A public consultation on the revision is planned for the second quarter of 2025, and publication of a legislative proposal for the second quarter of 2026.

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14511>

Around 50 percent of the products listed in the **European Safety Gate** portal that fail to satisfy European safety requirements are imports from China (purchased in most cases from online platforms). Michael McGrath, the new EU Commissioner in charge of consumer protection, is seeking to tackle this problem with improved cooperation with the Chinese authorities and more effective market surveillance measures.

[www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/700896/IPOL\\_BRI\(2025\)700896\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/700896/IPOL_BRI(2025)700896_EN.pdf), p. 332

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (**EU-OSHA**) has published a **10-year strategy for 2025-2034**. The strategy's foci are evidence and knowledge for policy and research; tools and resources for prevention; and raising awareness and promotion of a safety culture.

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/corporate-strategy-and-work-programmes>

## Change at the KAN Employers' Liaison Office

1 April 2025 will see a personnel change in the Employers' Liaison Office at the KAN Secretariat. After 25 years as head of the office, Eckhard Metze will retire, having played a key role in representing the employers' interests in occupational safety and health and standardization during this time. He has also raised awareness of KAN in a wide network of associations and experts in occupational safety and health and standardization.

He will now be succeeded by Freeric Meier, who has been working as a technical officer at the KAN Secretariat since the beginning of 2020 and is therefore already very familiar with KAN's work. Freeric Meier is a graduate in economics with a specialization in the interfaces between economics, law and politics. In future, he will organize the agreement of positions on the employer side and serve as a contact and representative for the employers' interests.

## KAN's European representation has a new address

As of 1 January 2025, KAN's European representation is now located at Rue d'Arlon 50, 1000 Brussels. The European Representation of the German Social Insurance (DSV) can be found in the same building. With its office in Brussels' European quarter, KAN is in the right place to present its interests locally in discussions at European level and to strengthen personal contacts in Brussels.

# Events



01.04.25 » Berlin

Fachtagung

**BioStoffTag 2025: Der ABAS im Dialog**

Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales  
[www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Veranstaltungen/Termine/2025/04.01-Biostofftag-2025](http://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Veranstaltungen/Termine/2025/04.01-Biostofftag-2025)

10.04.25 » Wuppertal

Kongress

**Deutscher Arbeitsschutz Kongress 2025**

WandelWerker Consulting GmbH  
[www.arbeitsschutzkongress.de](http://www.arbeitsschutzkongress.de)

06.-07.05.25 » Online

Seminar

**CE-Kennzeichnung im Maschinen- und Anlagenbau**

VDI Wissensforum  
[www.vdi-wissensforum.de](http://www.vdi-wissensforum.de) CE-Kennzeichnung

12.-13.05.25 » Online

Seminar

**Elektrische Sicherheit nach Maschinenverordnung**

mbt Maschinenbautage  
[www.maschinenrichtlinie.de/index.php?id=660](http://www.maschinenrichtlinie.de/index.php?id=660)

13.-16.05.25 » Pforzheim/online

Fachkonferenz

**CE-Praxistage**

IBF Solutions  
[www.ce-praxistage.com](http://www.ce-praxistage.com)

14.05.25 » Online

Informationsveranstaltung

**Chatbotguide – Sprachmodelle im Arbeitsschutz nutzen?**

Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz und Arbeitsmedizin  
[www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Veranstaltungen/Termine/2025/05.14-Dresdner-Treffpunkt-Chatbotguide](http://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Veranstaltungen/Termine/2025/05.14-Dresdner-Treffpunkt-Chatbotguide)

14.-15.05.25 » Dresden

Fachveranstaltung

**Fokus Gefahrstoffe**

BG RCI/IFA  
[www.dguv.de/ifa/veranstaltungen/fokus-gefahrstoffe](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/veranstaltungen/fokus-gefahrstoffe)

19.-21.05.25 » Bonn/online

Seminar

**EU-Maschinenverordnung (EU) 2023/1230**

mbt Maschinenbautage  
[www.maschinenrichtlinie.de/fortbildung/seminare/maschinenverordnung](http://www.maschinenrichtlinie.de/fortbildung/seminare/maschinenverordnung)

20.-22.05.25 » Wien

Kongress

**Forum Prävention International**

Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt (AUVA)  
[www.auva.at](http://www.auva.at) Prävention

27.05.25 » Stockerau (A)

Seminar

**Umbau von Maschinen**

Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt (AUVA)  
[www.auvkurs.at](http://www.auvkurs.at) Umbau

04.-05.06.25 » Essen

Seminar

**EU-Maschinenverordnung mit sicheren Steuerungen**

Haus der Technik  
[www.hdt.de/eu-maschinenverordnung-mit-sicheren-steuerungen-1196?number=VA25-00563](http://www.hdt.de/eu-maschinenverordnung-mit-sicheren-steuerungen-1196?number=VA25-00563)

05.06.25 » St. Pölten (A)

Seminar

**Risikobeurteilung von Maschinen**

Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt (AUVA)  
[www.auvkurs.at](http://www.auvkurs.at) Risikobeurteilung

16.-19.06.25 » Newcastle (GB)

Konferenz

**OH2025: The Workplace Health Protection Conference**

British Occupational Hygiene Society  
[www.bohs.org](http://www.bohs.org)

## Ordering

[www.kan.de/en](http://www.kan.de/en) » Publications » KANBrief » KANBrief subscription (free of charge)



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