

Focus on IFA's work

Issue 06/2022

617.0-IFA:610

New trends in the world of work – The DGUV's Trend Search

Problem

With the constant evolution of the world of work, the risks faced by workers are also changing. Which specific aspects does occupational safety and health need to consider? Which new technologies and ways of working have become established? What does this mean for safety and health at work? What are the trends shaping tomorrow's world of work? These are important questions for all social accident insurance institutions.

Under the leadership of the "New Forms of Work" subject group in the "Organisation of Safety and Health" (FB ORG) expert committee of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), the German social accident insurance institutions are aiming to use the Trend Search to identify new trends in occupational safety and health. During this process, they work closely with the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the German Social Accident Insurance (IFA).

If trends are identified at an early stage, then occupational safety and health measures can be actively implemented to bring about technical, societal and political changes. This makes it possible to identify potential hazards and opportunities to improve safety and health at work and implement proactive, preventative measures at an early stage.

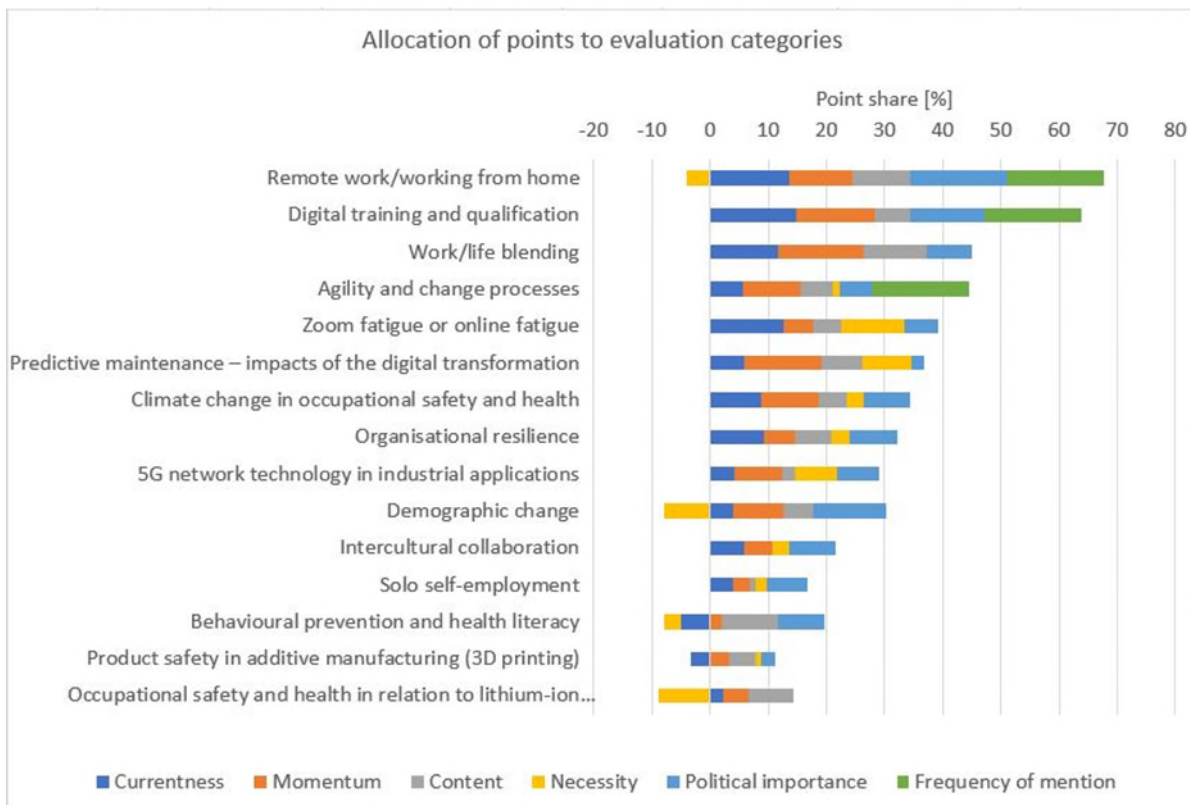
Activities

The Trend Search of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) observes the changes in the world of work each year. As part of this concept, anyone – i.e. individuals that work both inside and outside of the social accident insurance institutions – can report trends that are relevant for occupational safety and health by sending an email to Trendsuche@dguv.de. The reported trends are sorted according to topic, prepared as a trend profile and discussed by a committee consisting of social accident insurance experts, social partners and various associations, where they are assessed according to defined criteria such as currentness, relevance to occupational safety and health or political importance.

The experts award points to the individual trends across six categories based on an evaluation scheme. The total number of points awarded to a trend is presented as a percentage of the maximum number of points. This allows the trends to be ranked according to their priority.

Results and application

For the 2020 trend report, 26 trends were reported to us by the cut-off date in September 2020. These were then used to create a total of 17 different trend topics. The 2020 trend rankings show 15 of the 17 reported trends, which range from human-centric topics such as remote work/working from home to technical topics such as 5G network technology and 3D printing.



Points percentages for the individual evaluation criteria used for the 2020 overall evaluation.

The rankings also show the impacts that the coronavirus pandemic had on new trends and their positioning, e.g. with the “Zoom fatigue” trend.

The image shows how the points are assigned to the different categories. It should be noted that negative points can also be awarded here. These are subtracted from the positive points in order to calculate the overall number of points.

Currently, the compiled results and the rankings are used as a foundation for work by specialist departments and expert committees or will be considered in future survey rounds of the DGUV’s Risk Observatory.

Anyone that would like to suggest a trend can email us at Trendsuche@dguv.de.

Further information

- 2020 Trend Report: <https://publikationen.dguv.de/detail/index/sArticle/4230>
- Trend Search webpage: <https://www.dguv.de/ifa/fachinfos/arbeiten-4.0/trendsuche/index.jsp>

Technical enquiries

IFA, New Forms of Work Unit

Literature requests

IFA, Interdisciplinary Services Department