

## National strategies mapping

### Country Overview

## GERMANY

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<b>1. Basic information</b>	<p>German version:</p> <p><b>Gemeinsame Deutsche Arbeitsschutzstrategie (GDA)</b> <sup>1</sup></p> <p>English version:</p> <p><b>Joint German Occupational Safety and Health Strategy</b> <sup>2</sup></p> <p>Since 2008 the development, evaluation and updating of the GDA have been enshrined by law.</p> <p>The GDA legally binds the German government, the federal states and the statutory accident insurance (= GDA actors) to continuously cooperate and to coordinate their prevention policies and activities in order to maintain, improve and promote workers' safety and health through preventive and systematically implemented measures of occupational safety and health, supplemented by corporate health promotion measures.</p>
<b>2. Background and the perceived problem</b>	<p>A background report with the basic concept of the strategy and their goals was published in December, 17 2007:</p> <p><b><i>Gemeinsame Deutsche Arbeitsschutzstrategie</i></b>  <i>Fachkonzept und Arbeitsschutzziele 2008 – 2012</i>  <i>Stand: 12. Dezember 2007</i> <sup>3</sup></p>
<b>3. Main characteristics and objectives of the OSH-strategy (activity plan)</b>	<p>Quote:</p> <p>“The overarching goal of the Joint German OSH Strategy is to maintain, improve and promote the safety and health of workers by means of the efficient and systematic implementation of occupational safety and health – supplemented by workplace health promotion measures.</p> <p>The awareness of safety and health among employers and workers is also to be strengthened.” <sup>4</sup></p> <p>For periods up to five years specific objectives are set and implemented through work programmes.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Gemeinsame Deutsche Arbeitsschutzstrategie (GDA). Available at: <http://www.gda-portal.de/de/Startseite.html>

<sup>2</sup> English descriptions are available at: <http://www.gda-portal.de/en/Homepage.html> - Downloadable publications in English are available at: <http://www.gda-portal.de/en/Downloads/Downloads.html>

<sup>3</sup> Gemeinsame Deutsche Arbeitsschutzstrategie, Fachkonzept und Arbeitsschutzziele 2008 – 2012, 2007. Available at: [http://www.gda-portal.de/de/pdf/GDA-Fachkonzept-gesamt.pdf?\\_blob=publicationFile&v=2](http://www.gda-portal.de/de/pdf/GDA-Fachkonzept-gesamt.pdf?_blob=publicationFile&v=2)

<sup>4</sup> Joint German Occupational Safety and Health Strategy - Goals and core elements, 2010. Available at: [http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/Downloads/pdf/englische\\_downloads/en-Flyer-Goals.pdf?\\_blob=publicationFile&v=2](http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/Downloads/pdf/englische_downloads/en-Flyer-Goals.pdf?_blob=publicationFile&v=2)

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<b>4. Details of the strategy and activity plan</b>  <b>Axis description</b>	
<b>Priorities</b>	<p>Quote:</p> <p>“The Joint German OSH Strategy comprises five core elements which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the development of joint objectives in the field of occupational safety and health</li> <li>▪ the elaboration of joint fields of action and work programmes and their implementation according to uniform principles</li> <li>▪ the evaluation of objectives, joint fields of action and work programmes</li> <li>▪ the improvement of the cooperation and coordination of the actions of the public occupational safety and health authorities and accident insurance funds</li> <li>▪ the establishment of a transparent, reasonable and user-friendly set of provisions and regulations.”</li> </ul> <p>The strategic objective of the 3rd GDA - period 2019 – 2024 is: To make work safe and healthy: Prevention through risk assessment</p> <p>To act together and systematically for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ safe handling of carcinogens (carcinogenic substances)</li> <li>▪ good work organisation with regard to psychosocial strain (Psyche)</li> <li>▪ good work organisation with regard to musculoskeletal workload (MSL)</li> </ul>
<b>Activities /</b>  <b>Work programmes</b>	<p>Elaboration of joint fields of action and work programmes and their implementation according to uniform principles, currently in the 3<sup>rd</sup> period. A specific emphasis is given to inspections of companies according to the joint guidelines on risk assessment and OSH organisation. Furthermore, work programmes will focus on carcinogens, MSL and Psyche. For the implementation of all three work programmes a multi-component and multi-actor approach is applied. Activities comprise: inspection and consultancy, awareness-raising, information material and events, qualification, guidelines and (IT)-tools, best practice sharing etc. These activities are foremost carried out by the GDA-actors and social partners. In order to broaden the scope as well as to increase impact for all work programmes cooperation with relevant partners shall be established.</p> <p>Over the third period 50.000 companies – mainly SMEs – shall be supervised.</p>

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	<p>Former GDA work programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work Programmes 2013 – 2018 <sup>5</sup></li> <li>- Work Programmes 2008 – 2012 <sup>6</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Programme "Musculoskeletal Loads (MSL)"</b></p>	<p>The work programme "Musculoskeletal Loads" (MSL) is implemented with a combination of information, advice and supervisory measures.</p> <p><b>Information:</b> Assistance and other risk assessment complement the core process, so that a broader impact can be achieved, beyond the (limited) number of site visits. In particular, with regard to the needs of SMEs, low-threshold access to the detection and assessment of types of stress at the level of coarse screening (checklist) or special screening (eg, key performance indicators) and examples of "good practice" for measures and impact assessments are essential. The assistance will thus create the conditions for the proper implementation of the entire process of risk assessment.</p> <p><b>Inspections and advice:</b> The core process in the third GDA period is regularly carried out by all GDA executives, above all as part of a system review of the occupational safety organization and risk assessment in companies with fewer than 250 employees. The work programme MSL provides for this inspection activity a technical data sheet or appropriate professional test items. On the other hand, the working programme MSL aims to integrate the issue of MSL sustainably as an integrated part of regular labour inspection action, with the focus on an appropriate risk assessment. Therefore, the working programme MSL would like to use the 3rd GDA period to further qualify and support the labour inspectorates for dealing with MSL in the context of the risk assessment.</p> <p><b>Strengthening "workplace health literacy":</b> The MSL working programme takes up the results of the second GDA working programme on "health literacy" in the world of work and would like to cooperate with networks and partners from the social security institutions, the social partners and other institutions in order to implement measures of working conditions related prevention (situational prevention) aiming to complement behavioral prevention. The aim is, in particular, to strengthen the role of the management not only to establish appropriate working conditions related prevention (situational prevention), for example as part of the risk assessment, but also to influence the behavior of employees at the workplace so that measures of working conditions related prevention (situational prevention) at the workplace can be accepted and realised.</p>

<sup>5</sup> GDA Work Programmes 2013 – 2018. Available at: [http://www.gda-portal.de/EN/GDA/Work-Programmes/Work-Programmes\\_node.html](http://www.gda-portal.de/EN/GDA/Work-Programmes/Work-Programmes_node.html)

<sup>6</sup> Aktivitäten und Ergebnisse der GDA-Arbeitsprogramme 2008 – 2012. Available at: [http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/Downloads/pdf/Ergebnisse-AP-2008-2012.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=3](http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/Downloads/pdf/Ergebnisse-AP-2008-2012.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3)

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	<p><b>Measures of the partners:</b>The work programme aims at networking with different networks and partners as part of the accompanying processes. Measures of the partners relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The realisation of multiplier effects for tools and support of the GDA organisations, in order to improve the contact to the management and company multipliers (e.g. occupational safety experts or occupational physicians)</li> <li>▪ The contribution of own expertise and adequate supplementary offers (tools) for the target groups, eg for the strengthening of the organisational and individual health competence</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Programme "Psyche"</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendations for implementing psychosocial risk assessment:</b> Since the end of 2013 the Safety and Health at Work Act explicitly calls for the consideration of psychological stress in risk assessments. In seven steps, a new brochure (see box on the right) explains the risk assessment of psychological strain, its methods and tools. Parameters are described within which the actual implementation of risk assessment is to move. The brochure is aimed particularly at companies and occupational safety actors (e.g. employers, works and staff councils, company physicians and specialists for occupational safety).</p> <p><b>Practical tools for the workplace:</b> The work programme collects examples of good practice for dealing with psychological stress in the workplace and makes them known to the public.</p> <p>Companies, workers and occupational safety and health experts receive practical support for the improvement of working conditions in everyday business.</p> <p><b>Qualification of inspectors:</b> Inspectors from occupational health and safety authorities and accident insurance institutions are trained to identify mental stress and to adequately advise companies. By the end of the period, the entire inspection staff will have a basic knowledge about psychological stress.</p> <p><b>Inspections and advice:</b> Since the beginning of 2015, the inspection staff of the occupational safety and health authorities and accident insurers conducts coordinated inspections. The focus of the site inspections is the consideration of psychological stress in the risk assessment. The inspectors also advise businesses specifically on setting up working hours so as to promote health and on dealing with traumatic events in the workplace.</p>

<p><b>Work Programme</b> <b>“Carcinogenic substances”</b></p>	<p><b>Inspections and advice:</b> As part of the core process of the working programme on “Safe Handling of Carcinogenic Hazardous Substances”, establishments where employees work with carcinogenic hazardous substances are to be visited by the labour inspectorates of the federal countries and the accident insurance institutions. The visit will be based on a single survey toolkit, the technical data sheet of the work programme.</p> <p>The core process shall be supported directly by the the accompanying process "Hazardous Substance Check". The close connection of the Hazardous Substance Check as a directly supportive process of the core process should raise awareness of the particular dangers posed by carcinogenic hazardous substances in all relevant branches of industry and identify the need for action. The goal is to accelerate the use of this instrument by the companies. The results of the self-assessment carried out with the check can in particular, increase self-motivation to implement necessary changes.</p> <p><b>Practical tools for the workplace:</b> Within the framework of the working programme "Safe Handling of Carcinogenic substances", exemplary solutions for operational practice shall also be found and presented. Good practice examples shall be collected and presented with the help of an online module.</p>
<p><b>Activity</b> <b>Collaboration of institutions</b></p>	<p>The German strategy addresses with all its core elements the collaboration of institutions (work programmes, cooperation on inspection activities, development of a coherent set of rules).</p> <p>Federal states and public accident insurance institutions hand in hand: the Joint German Occupational Safety and Health Strategy (GDA) provides the framework. As part of the GDA, state occupational safety and health authorities and public accident insurance institutions have undertaken to adopt a work-sharing and coordinated approach in advising and supervising companies.</p> <p>This approach aims at coordination, standardisation and transparency in consultancy.</p> <p>Key tools of the joint consultancy and supervisory strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Framework agreements on the interaction of the state occupational safety and health authorities and the public accident insurance institutions</li> <li>▪ Joint guidelines for coordinated, tactical supervisory action and equivalent implementation of occupational safety and health regulations</li> <li>▪ Promotion of data and information exchange between the federal states and the public accident insurance institutions on company inspections.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, the „Occupational Safety and Health Forum“ was established under the German Strategy. Its task is to ensure early and active participation of the expert representatives of the umbrella</p>

	<p>organisations of the employers and workers, the professional and industrial associations, science, the health and pension insurance funds, institutions in the sector of safety and health at work as well as bodies which help to promote employability in the development and updating of the Joint German OSH Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Activity</b></p> <p><b>Optimisation of rules and regulations</b></p>	<p><b>Statutory regulations are the basis for implementing and evaluating occupational safety and health measures.</b></p> <p>One important requirement for the effective implementation of occupational safety and health regulations is that they are practicable, consistent and, above all, easily manageable by the users and self-explanatory. The German government, federal states and public accident insurance institutions set themselves the task under the Joint German Occupational Safety and Health Strategy of optimising the rules and regulations relating to safety and health at work.</p> <p>One important module is the guideline paper on the restructuring of the set of rules and regulations in occupational safety and health passed in August 2011. The guideline paper defines the relationship of state law to autonomous law of the public accident insurance institutions and describes the procedures with which the two areas of law are harmonised.</p>
<p><b>Activity</b></p> <p><b>Improvement of the cooperation and coordination of the actions of the public occupational safety and health authorities and accident insurance funds</b></p>	<p>The occupational safety and health authorities and accident insurance institutions have undertaken to adopt a work-sharing and coordinated approach in advising and supervising companies. This approach aims at coordination, standardisation and transparency in consultancy. Activities are carried out accordingly to a programmatic approach<sup>7</sup>:</p> <p>Key tools of the joint consultancy and supervisory strategy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Framework agreements on the interaction of the state occupational safety and health authorities and the public accident insurance institutions</li> <li>2. Joint guidelines for coordinated, tactical supervisory action and equivalent implementation of occupational safety and health regulations</li> <li>3. Promotion of data and information exchange between the federal states and the public accident insurance institutions on company inspections</li> </ol>
<p><b>5. Actors and stakeholders</b></p>	<p>German government, federal states and public accident insurance have the decision power in the National Strategy Conference NAK. Social partners are advisers. There is support from professional organisations, other public bodies and sector organisations.</p>

<sup>7</sup> Gemeinsame Deutsche Arbeitsschutzstrategie GDA, Supporting the companies. Available at: <http://www.gda-portal.de/en/SupportCompanies/SupportCompanies.html>

<b>6. Resources and timeframe</b>	<p>Since 2008 the development, evaluation and updating of the GDA have been enshrined by law.</p> <p>Time frame of current work programme: 2019 – 2024.</p> <p>In kind contribution from institutions and associations.</p> <p>Financing of the secretariat of the GDA.</p> <p>No detailed information published.</p>
<b>7. Evaluation/lessons learned</b>	<p><b>Evaluation is ongoing.</b></p> <p>It is required that every strategy period "the attainment of the objectives of the Joint German OSH Strategy would be quality-assured and evaluated" and that the Joint German OSH Strategy in its entirety would be evaluated as regards interdisciplinary effects on the occupational safety and health system and safety and health at work. Evaluation reports of the strategy periods 2007 - 2012 and 2013 – 2018 are available online.<sup>8, 9, 10</sup></p>
<b>Ex ante indicators for the years of the strategy or 2019 to 2024</b>	<p>In the evaluation concept effect-chains, including indicators for every chain link, are described for all strategy areas. As regards the three work-programmes (Carcinogens, MSL, Psyche) specific targets and indicators are described in the work plans (chapter: Monitoring).</p>
<b>8. Relationship to EU Strategic Framework</b>	<p>In principle, the overarching target, core elements and the governance structure of the Joint German OSH Strategy (GDA) provide a well-established framework to ensure that Germany addresses the expectations respectively the challenges and key objectives of the EU Strategic Framework.</p>

<sup>8</sup> Dachevaluation der Strategieperiode 2008 bis 2012. Available at: [http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/GDA/Evaluation/2008-2012/2008-2012\\_node.html](http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/GDA/Evaluation/2008-2012/2008-2012_node.html)

<sup>9</sup> Dachevaluation der Strategieperiode 2013 bis 2018. Available at: [http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/GDA/Evaluation/2013-2018/2013-2018\\_node.html](http://www.gda-portal.de/DE/GDA/Evaluation/2013-2018/2013-2018_node.html)

<sup>10</sup> Abschlussbericht zur Dachevaluation der Gemeinsamen Deutschen Arbeitsschutzstrategie veröffentlicht. Available at: <http://www.gda-portal.de/SharedDocs/Meldungen/DE/19-08-16-Dachevaluation.html>