

# Measures and Recommendations for Healthy Work Practices of Tomorrow (MEgA)

## Short Profile on the Objectives and Activities

The demands put on both employees and executives in the industrial and services sector are changing due to the increasing digitalisation of the workplace. Tasks are becoming more complex, cognitive demands are increasing and the requirements for communication skills are growing. Preventive measures concerning health as well as affirmative action are indispensable in order to ensure employees health in the long term. However, there is a considerable amount of insecurity, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), about which human-resource policies are called for in the face of “Industry 4.0” and demographic change.

The project “Measures and Recommendations for Healthy Work Practices of Tomorrow” (“Maßnahmen und Empfehlungen für die gesunde Arbeit von morgen” in German, abbreviated MEgA) aims at developing a comprehensive concept for promoting healthy practices in an increasingly digitalised workplace. It is an accompanying research project in the BMBF’s (Federal Ministry of Education and Research) funding priority “Preventive Measures for Safe and Healthy Work Practices of Tomorrow” and, as such, coordinates 30 nationally funded, joint projects that mainly address SME. The 3-year project is being carried out by the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology at Heidelberg University and began on 1st November 2015.

## Objectives of MEgA

The aim of MEgA is to develop concepts and methods that serve the purpose of organising work in a practical and preventive way. This is how applicable solutions for demographically sensitive personnel management can be offered to SME, which is the best way for companies to uphold the employability of their staff and ensure their capacity for innovation. In addition, MEgA enables fast exchange of information between the economic, political and research stakeholders by means of networks and communication platforms. Extensive interconnectedness and collaboration between social partners will ensure the transfer into practice.

## Approach and Activities

MEgA coordinates 30 joint projects that bring together research institutes as well as companies from different branches for collaboration to address questions concerning the health-promoting structuring of work. The topics of these collaborations are diverse – they concern the consequences of psychological strain on employees, the use of assistance systems and robots, or the compatibility of work, family and leisure.

Building on the branch and organisation-specific knowledge from the joint projects as well as own research, MEgA will develop practical recommendations for demographically sensitive HR Management. The plan comprises easy-to-use tools featuring checklists, guidelines for the companies, and an intervention addressing

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employees' work-life balance. Likewise, the procedure for "Risk Assessment of Psychological Stress" ("Gefährdungsbeurteilung Psychische Belastung" in German, abbreviated GBP), which has been successfully implemented in large companies, will be adapted for SME and made available to those. Based on own research as well as an evaluation of national and international studies, important trends and developments in the digitalised world of work will be presented.

### **Duration**

01/11/2015 until 30/4/2019

### **Contacts**

Prof. Dr. Karlheinz Sonntag (Project Management), phone: +49 6221 54-7320,  
[karlheinz.sonntag@psychologie.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:karlheinz.sonntag@psychologie.uni-heidelberg.de)

Dr. Christine Sattler (Project Management), phone: +49 6221 54-7311,  
[christine.sattler@psychologie.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:christine.sattler@psychologie.uni-heidelberg.de)

Universität Heidelberg  
Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie  
Hauptstr. 47 - 51  
69117 Heidelberg  
[www.ao.uni-hd.de](http://www.ao.uni-hd.de)