

Human Resources Report

Technology is our superpower. But in our hearts, we are, and will always be, human beings. We are professionals by conviction and by vocation. More than 14,000 people work at the TÜV NORD GROUP to create trust in technology and make everyone – both our customers and society in general – feel safe and secure. The diversity of our teams is our strong point and the source of new perspectives. Expertise and commitment are the foundations on which innovation and progress are built.

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Artificial Intelligence is also changing HR work

The labour market has never been as competitive as it is now. More than ever, companies need brave ideas and unusual approaches to maintain their attractiveness to their workforce and new applicants. Dr. Astrid Petersen, Chief Human Resources Officer, talks in this interview about the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in HR work and offers her opinion as to why humanity will not fall behind, even given all the technical progress.

2023 was something of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) year. Technology has penetrated deeply into our everyday lives, and the ChatGPT chatbot is just one example. AI is also seen by some as a miracle weapon to combat the shortage of skilled workers. How do you assess the opportunities it offers for HR work?

This conversation is between two real people and hasn't been written by ChatGPT. You really need to say that nowadays (laughs). But seriously, it's amazing how rapidly AI has found its way into many areas of life in the past year and how it has become indispensable in some areas of medicine and education. We often don't even realise how frequently we're already having to deal with AI on a daily basis, whether we're using search engines or translation tools. And yes, in my view, AI will change HR work in the medium term too, and it may even revolutionise it. I see a whole range of potential benefits, especially in recruitment. Data and AI can be used to select suitable job boards; questions from applicants can be answered in advance and written applications analysed.

Is the TÜV NORD GROUP already moving in this direction?

We use technologies that our target group is familiar with and can be used intuitively. We broke new ground in recruitment in 2023, in particular. For example, we advertised jobs using the "truffles" app, a kind of Tinder for job searches, and brought the vacancies to public attention with tongue-in-cheek ads and "swing cards" on public transport. I'm impressed by the creative and innovative ideas our teams are developing and trying

out. We're currently analysing how and where we can use AI in a way that will likely deliver good results. We've recently started using an AI assistant in the Group that was developed in-house: In this way, employees can learn all about the practical use of AI in a secure environment.



The potential of the technology is one thing, but a lot of people see dangers such as job losses or the uncontrolled spread of misinformation. Will AI be the downfall of humanity?

AI will help us complete routine tasks more efficiently and, for example, make more time for creative and interdisciplinary thinking. AI systems can of course also be used to drive the polarisation of society. Which is why we need to take a really close look and use standards and regulations to work towards making the technology safe. After all, that's something we know all about at TÜV NORD (smiles). I'm also convinced that AI won't mean the end of humanity. Quite the opposite. The pandemic showed us really clearly how closely we humans are emotionally connected and need one another. The digital space is wonderful, but there's simply nothing like being together in person. This is something I'm currently having hands-on experience of myself with my consultations, in which I talk to employees from every part of the business. When someone's sitting face-to-face, it's much easier to see how they really feel.

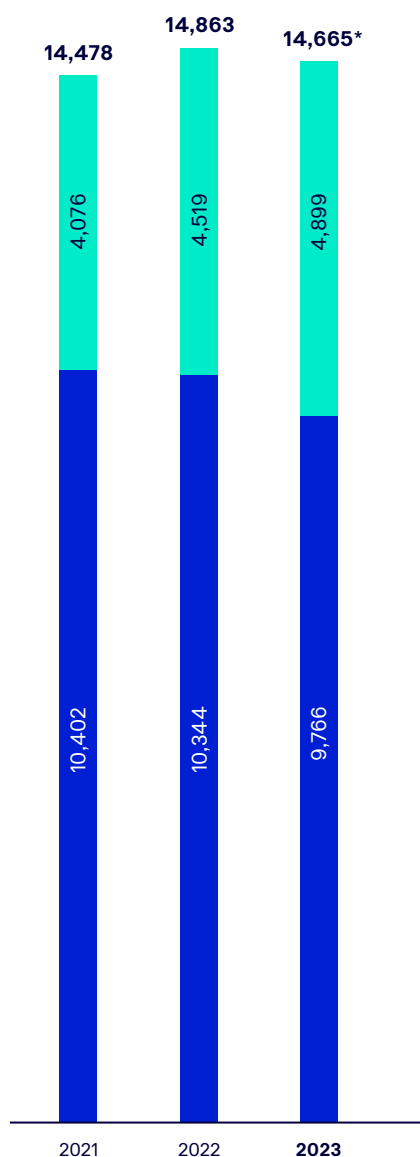
Mental disorders is on the rise. It's only logical that more and more companies should be focusing on the mental health of their employees. What is the TÜV NORD GROUP doing in this respect?

In our Group, we have the great advantage, thanks to our Nord-Kurs and MEDITÜV companies, of having psychologists and occupational physicians on board who can offer help to our employees in acute situations and with longer-term coaching. In the same way, mental health is a management task which is enshrined in our employee development. But we can't rest on our laurels. I'm determined to do even more for the well-being of our employees. In 2023, we held our International Health Week online for the first time to allow all employees to participate. The focus was on issues like stress reduction and back health. We particularly encouraged our staff just to do nothing occasionally. The response from the employees was great. This made me very happy and has encouraged me to keep on following this path.

At a glance

Trend in workforce numbers (headcount)

■ Germany ■ International



Scope of survey: Headcount (HC); worldwide; regular and other staff; period: December 2023.

* In January 2023, TÜV NORD Bildung with 750 employees was sold to Kolping Bildung Deutschland gGmbH.

64%



This, the Pulse Check's **Commitment Index**, is an indicator of the high level of willingness on the part of our employees to give their all to the company.

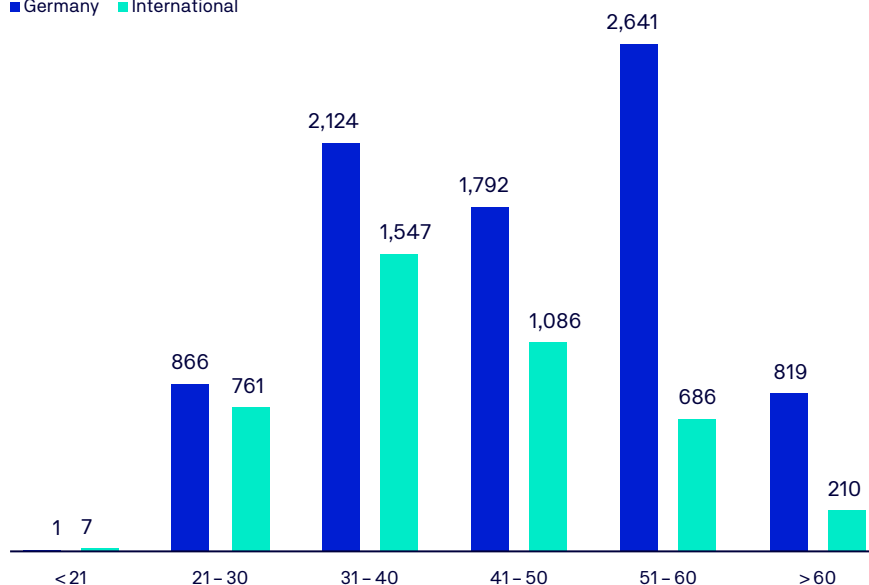
€13.2 million



Invested by the TÜV NORD GROUP in **training and further education** worldwide in 2023.

Age structure in the Group

■ Germany ■ International



Scope of survey: In Germany and internationally; active regular staff; period: December 2023



Awards from various institutions prove that the TÜV NORD GROUP is an attractive employer.

92%

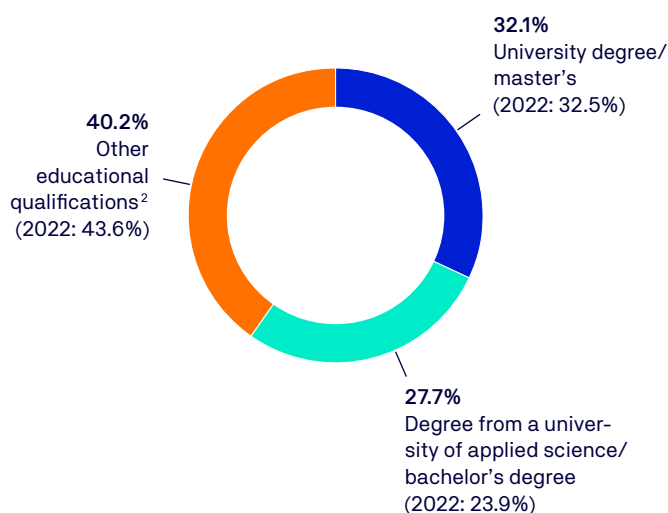


retention rate for graduates of the TÜV NORD GROUP after either an apprenticeship or a dual study course.

> 2,000

is the number of new **employees** hired worldwide by the TÜV NORD GROUP in 2023.

Qualification structure by type of qualification¹



¹ Scope of survey: Germany; active regular staff; period: December 2023

² Other educational qualification = employees without a university degree are aggregated in this category

26.6% ♀

Women in leadership positions. Scope of survey: Worldwide; period: December 2023



Inspiring people

The success of our company is entirely down to the commitment and passion of the people who work for us. We're boldly breaking new ground in the application process and ensuring the well-being of our employees in a variety of ways.

Breaking new ground in the application process

If you want to attract qualified candidates for vacancies, you should take their needs into account. For us, this means resolutely breaking new ground to present the TÜV NORD GROUP as a modern employer. We act without prejudice and want candidates to have a positive experience of the application process. We meet them where they are.

In China, WeChat is an important tool for every area of life, which is why our colleagues at TÜV NORD China also use this app for recruiting. In Germany, smartphones are also becoming increasingly important for jobseekers. We're reaching out to the Tinder generation, for example, with the "truffls" app. This is like the well-known dating platform, but, in place of potential partners, it suggests unfilled vacancies. TÜV India, on the other hand, has had good experiences with job advertisements on the Indian recruiting website naukri.com and the LinkedIn networking platform. Cover letters are no longer necessary for applications there. In Germany, we're going one step further with the "TÜV NORD CandiDATE" format and offering potential applicants an easy opportunity to get to know the Group. On the first Thursday of every month, employees meet with prospective applicants in a virtual room on the WebEx platform. The point is to meet up without obligation and talk about job offers – without a CV or application portfolio, but individually and personally. At TÜV NORD Mobilität, too, a job interview doesn't necessarily have to take place in the office; sitting in a café simply makes for a more relaxed chat. It's the personal impression that counts on both sides.

There are other new ways of recruiting employees: The TÜV NORD GROUP sponsors the ice hockey stadium in Rostock and advertises on the boards in handball arenas in Halle an der Saale and Magdeburg, as well as with advertisements on buses and with radio commercials. A team from the Human Resources department in the business unit Industrial Services recruited new colleagues in local public transport in Hamburg and Hanover using eye-level posters and swing cards. The cards dangle from the handrails in local and underground trains and are real eye-catchers. In the screen age, information you can touch makes for a refreshing change. The printed QR code leads directly to the detailed job advertisement.

In 2023, we also created the "Our Workspaces" section on our careers website. It's there that we show the faces of our company: Our employees – ranging from psychologists to auditors – appear in videos to present their fields of work. The whole training/dual studies area has also been given a facelift. And we've been using the "You needed us then, we need you now" campaign to address students directly.

Making benefits easier to access



Project manager Cicek Berse is sure that the new benefits portal will quickly be well received by employees.

The TÜV NORD GROUP offers its employees a lot of discounts and benefits. These additional services will soon be clearly summarised on a new digital platform and accessible at any time.

Whatever they want to do, be it back training, getting reimbursed for the costs of vehicle inspections or playing a round of crazy golf with the family, employees of the TÜV NORD GROUP can take advantage of more than 65 offers at a reduced price – and, in some cases, even free of charge. Figuring out what these are and how to get them has tended to be a hassle – but this has now changed. “Until now, we’ve had to poke around in the furthest corners of the intranet and ask where things are,” says Cicek Berse, “My Benefitportal” project manager at TÜV NORD AG, ruefully. “As an employer, we can be proud of our attractive benefits in many areas. Applicants also often ask for additional benefits in their interviews,” she says.

From 2024, things will be easier: The digital solution called “Mein Benefitportal” will be a quick way for employees across the Group to find out about the benefits on offer and take advantage of them. The portal will be available via smartphone or tablet app and on laptops or PCs.

The new platform was chosen based on a survey of the employees, who wanted a clearer presentation and an individual overview of the benefits. The results were incorporated into an extensive catalogue of requirements, based on which the HR experts of the TÜV NORD GROUP then selected the appropriate system. The feedback from test users was positive. The system is intuitive to use, so there is no need for extensive training. Project manager Ms. Berse is convinced of one thing: “This will make us even more attractive as an employer.”

Online health services for everyone – worldwide and digitally

The health and well-being of our employees is important to us. That's why, along with our occupational health and safety management, we offer other ways to keep body and mind in good shape. We held a digital health week at the end of 2023 under the banner heading "Fit for the winter". The focus was on nutrition, mental health and exercise. During the active lunch break, exercise professionals were on hand to show employees some suitable balancing exercises. Other offers ranged from training in positive thinking to cooking together.

To also reach employees in the field, all the events were streamed online. Additional recordings for download and English-language offers made it possible for colleagues from anywhere in the world to participate at any time.

Skin check by mobile phone

According to the Techniker Krankenkasse insurance provider, one in three cancer diagnoses in Germany affects the skin. Early detection is therefore particularly important. Employees of the TÜV NORD Group have access to a free skin check via their smartphones. They can use their mobile phones to take photos of the area of skin that has changed, fill out a questionnaire and upload everything to the "Dermanostic" app. Dermatologists assess the problem and respond within 24 hours with a written assessment. If necessary, they recommend further examination at a bricks-and-mortar medical practice. A chat function is available to handle any questions. The cost of 25 euros per reported change is borne by the employer.

Out and about with the "Deutschlandticket"

Being able to board trains and buses without having to worry about fare systems is a strong incentive to leave the car at home. Being driven instead of driving not only contributes to relaxation, but also reduces your personal carbon footprint. Every employee who chooses this environmentally friendly way of getting around is making an active contribution to the Group's sustainability goals. Employers and transport associations are providing financial support for the offer, which is why, for TÜV NORD employees, the "49-Euro-Ticket" costs only 34.30 euros per month. On 1 June 2023, the "Deutschlandticket" made history by becoming the first standardised staff ticket for use at all sites in the country. Users of the digital smartphone ticket take out a subscription with the Hamburg Transport Association which is then valid throughout Germany on all local and regional means of transport: All buses, underground and suburban trains as well as on trams and regional rail services.

“The health and well-being of our colleagues is very important to us. Our offers are giving them extra energy in their daily lives.”

Pia Jörling, Head of Occupational Health & Emergency Psychology, Nord-Kurs



“A good welcoming culture pays off in the long term. With our new onboarding box, we help our new team members to settle into their new role easily.”

Pringgo Tri Kusumo, Head of Human Capital, TÜV NORD Indonesia



Learning together

The knowledge of our employees is the key to our customers' success. We are creating an environment where innovation can flourish and in which we all learn together – including from our mistakes.

Power through knowledge

The TÜV NORD GROUP's new range of learning offers is collectively entitled "Empowerment", because empowering employees through knowledge is exactly what it sets out to do. From training courses and employee development topics to digital learning content and health offers – everything that can be learned with us is clearly and uniformly set out on this intranet page. The offer was implemented by experts who are very familiar with the requirements of this kind of "learning world". For example, the TÜV NORD Akademie has put together an offer that considers the needs of employees and makes it easier for them to find the right training course. Suggestions from users are always welcome, as the portfolio is constantly being expanded.

Fighting cyberattacks with SoSafe

Without a PC, tablet or laptop, our working life would grind to a halt. That is why these devices are also the most important way in for criminals who want to do harm to companies. SoSafe is a holistic e-learning offer that enables employees of the TÜV NORD GROUP to learn more about the risks of cyberattacks and how to deal with specific threats, such as phishing e-mails. These are e-mails that look harmless but come from cyber-criminals who want to use them to steal data, such as passwords and other personal data or confidential information. For example, the first phase of the SoSafe learning module explains what phishing attacks look like and how to recognise them. The participants are then sent a simulated, harmless phishing e-mail about once a month for a year for training purposes. If they do not recognise it for what it is, clicking on the link contained in the e-mail will take them to some interactive learning pages which they can use to refresh their knowledge.

A new horizon for retirement

Transitioning from working life to retirement is seen by many as a very disruptive step. The "New Horizon" workshop has provided guidance on this transition for employees who are about to retire. The workshop has been offered since 2023 as part of our MINDSET corporate culture programme. It is also a way of expressing our appreciation for people who have worked for the TÜV NORD GROUP for many years.

At the first "New Horizon" workshop on 30 October in Hanover, nine men and one woman spent a day finding out where in the organisation they could get answers to questions about semi-retirement or retirement, with and without deductions, and how big a pension they could expect to receive. But they also looked back on their working lives, reflected on what they had achieved and discussed their plans for the future. Would going bowling and playing tennis be enough to fill their days in a meaningful way? Or might now be the right time to start volunteering? The sooner employees start thinking about how they want to shape this new phase of their life, the better. The workshop is therefore aimed at all employees aged 60 and over.

The participants were enthusiastic about the "New Horizon" workshop and suggested that it be extended to two days and offered at other sites too.

“The success of cyberattacks on companies is often down to ignorance. We’re using targeted training and simulations to enable our employees to identify potential hazards.”

Thorsten Hörner, Head of QM, Security and Internal Processes in IT, TÜV NORD Service



“Everything is easier with proper preparation: The ‘New Horizon’ workshop prompted me for the first time to seek guidance for the transition from working life to retirement.”

Andreas Kohl, Head of Purchasing for Information Technology, TÜV NORD Service



Having a say

The world of work is constantly changing. We are adapting our corporate culture to reflect this reality, while also preserving our values. We are opening up creative spaces and motivating our employees to use them.

Working flexibly

The “Duo Studio” in Osnabrück was completed after six months of planning and redesign. This innovative co-working space in the digital and IT department of TÜV NORD Mobilität is a think-tank in which groundbreaking topics such as automation, Artificial Intelligence and software development are thought through and implemented. The studio is intended to be a place of encounter and interdisciplinary cooperation, and the department is in active dialogue with many employees. The open design has already proven its worth, and the feedback has been consistently positive.

In Hanover, too, more and more departments are trying out new spatial concepts. Many employees prefer to work in direct contact with their team rather than alone in an office. At TÜV NORD Mobilität, for example, new furniture and room elements are creating an environment with a variety of workspace options which employees can choose from afresh every day – depending on their work needs and how they feel. Personal work tools are stowed away in mobile containers in the evening, ensuring that desks are always clear at the end of the day. The needs of people raising families have also been taken into account: A small play area provides children with entertainment when important appointments are coming up in the office and childcare is not an option.

Lending a hand together

A fresh coat of paint for the Steeler Straße kindergarten in Essen-Margarethenhöhe: On Social Day 2023, employees of the TÜV NORD GROUP renovated the kindergarten’s building and play area. An employee whose children are cared for there came up with the idea and introduced it into the MINDSET corporate culture programme; after all, the programme also includes facilitating and promoting social commitment. Ten colleagues were quickly found who were eager to lend a hand. The TÜV NORD GROUP not only financed the wall paint and work materials, but also provided painting smocks and alphabet posters, among other things, for the 65 children. The Social Day was a wonderful opportunity for our employees to do some good and strengthen their team spirit at the same time.

Environmental protection in action

Working together towards a clean, healthy and waste-free future – this is the idea behind of World Cleanup Day, which takes place annually in September. Almost 15 million people in more than 190 countries took part in the campaign in 2023, and TÜV NORD employees joined in for the first time in 2023. They combed the parks and green spaces of Essen, Hamburg and Hanover to pick up cigarette butts and plastic bottles and to retrieve bicycle tyres from the bushes. Everyone agreed that they wanted to join in again next time. It was a good opportunity to get together to think about the ecological footprint of individuals and of TÜV NORD, too.

“The idea behind this new way of working together is that it should be fun for everyone, regardless of department, and foster creativity. The most important thing is team spirit and dialogue on an equal footing.”

Roman Meier-Andrae, Head of IT & Digitalisation, TÜV NORD Mobilität



Sporty lunch break

Table tennis is one of the most popular sports in South Korea. Which explains why the employees of TÜV NORD INCOK in Seoul were so happy to be able to get their bats out during their lunch break. For some people, exercising during lunch motivates them to go to the gym in the evening to improve their desk work. The sports enthusiasts have even gone so far as to organise their first tournament. But the emphasis is always on having fun together.



“A table tennis match after lunch clears my head. After that, I’m full of energy and ready to get back to work.”

Yang Ji-Eun, Key Account Manager, TÜV NORD INCOK



Living diversity

Our goal is to make employees feel comfortable in the workplace. Everyone should have the same opportunities and chances to contribute to the success of our company. We are doing a lot to create a culture of mutual respect and trust.

Diversity in May

In 2018, we signed the Diversity Charter; after all, diversity is one of the core values of the TÜV NORD GROUP. Since then, we have regularly invited our employees to connect with one another, despite their differences, during Diversity Month in May. In 2023, under the banner “Diversity connects”, we offered inspiring hands-on activities which allowed employees to exchange ideas in person and discover new perspectives. Throughout the month, colleagues arranged to meet for Diversity Lunches or to “Walk together 4 Diversity”. Diversity Day was all about psychological safety and belonging. The agenda for the Diversity Night, which was conceived and implemented by employees from Generation Z – the age group born between 1997 and 2012 – was to consider the topics of microaggression and allyship. Allyship means using one’s own privileged position to allow people from a socially disadvantaged group to be heard. The guests at Diversity Night explored and tried out several creativity techniques to harness diversity for innovation purposes. There was also a diversity quiz and a diversity speed dating session.

Pride Month in June

We are creating a work environment where everyone can feel safe and have a sense of belonging so that they can contribute their talents to the company every day, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. This was why we chose to use Pride Month in June to inform our employees about the background and origins of the campaign: Pride Month is celebrated worldwide in June to advocate for equal opportunities for, and

combat discrimination against, the LGBTQ+ community. The abbreviation LGBTQ+ encompasses lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer and stands for a wide range of sexual orientations and gender identities, with the plus sign symbolising the diversity of other identities. The month commemorates the 1969 uprising, in which lesbians and gays stood together to resist arbitrary arrest at their clubs on Christopher Street in New York City, and has helped pave the way for progress in gender equality.

Connectify connects employees

How about just having a chat with someone from the company you’ve never met before? For anyone who is ready for a blind date, there’s now the Connectify digital platform. With just a few clicks, you can set up a profile and select your preferred language. Since the summer of 2022, more than 300 employees have registered. A random number generator selects two registered people, who then either arrange to meet virtually or spend their lunch break together on site. No one has to go into this kind of meeting completely blind. From their profile, you know the name of the other person, their business unit, job and a few of their interests; this makes it easier to strike up a conversation. Those who have tried it have reported enthusiastically on this opportunity to expand their own network and appreciated the opportunity to get to know new areas of work and swap experiences.

“I’m involved both on a voluntary basis and in the TÜV NORD GROUP in improving the visibility of women in STEM professions. Networking plays an important role in this.”

Dr. Nele Pollmann, Head of Hydrogeology and Environmental Engineering, DMT



TheNetwork promotes diversity

TheNetwork is a corporate network within the TÜV NORD GROUP whose goal is to increase diversity within the company. It is open to everyone in the Group and is driving cultural change. Employees are encouraged to network and share their knowledge across countries, business units, hierarchies, age groups and social classes. This also includes supporting women on their path to leadership positions.

Events such as the annual conference, local lunches and digital exchange formats extend an invitation to network and get into dialogue with others. Anyone who wishes can also get involved in working groups on topics such as unconscious bias or dialogue with external networks. In doing so, they are contributing to a corporate culture that promotes diversity and consequently leads to more innovation, internationality and growth.

Women in Tech – supporting women

Technically oriented industries are still dominated by men. This is why we think it is important for women to have the space they need to support each other and develop their qualities and strengths even more effectively. A step in this direction was the kick-off event entitled “Women in Tech: By and for women” which was held at DMT in October. Around 50 participants used the safe space provided to ask questions and share their own experiences. The programme included lectures, workshops and interactive stations on topics such as self-empowerment, unconscious bias and work-life balance. A special highlight was the insights granted into the professional careers of three

inspiring women from the TÜV NORD GROUP. These stories showcased how women can succeed in the tech industry and spurred the participants on to forge their own paths.

The community has its own Teams channel which all interested employees can join. The participants also contributed numerous ideas and topics for further events, which will take place both remotely and as face-to-face events.

Women in Aerospace – inspiring girls

The underrepresentation of women in technical professions is particularly evident in the aerospace industry. We are striving for a diverse workforce, which is why we are committed to Women in Aerospace Europe (WIA Europe), a non-profit organisation that promotes female talent in the sector. WIA Europe is organised into 16 local groups, and ALTER TECHNOLOGY is one of the founders of the Madrid chapter. The association’s goal is to make women more visible in the aerospace industry. The members are also developing networking and mentoring programmes to support women in their professional development and to attract girls to technical careers. In 2023, the Madrid-based chapter focused particularly on children, giving a lot of talks in schools, institutes and universities. A highlight of the year was the second Children’s Space Congress, held during Space Week at the beginning of October, which built on the success of the first congress. To encourage more girls to pursue careers in science and technology, WIA members have reached out to public institutions. The response was very positive, which indicates that there is a great deal of interest in promoting the rise of women in the aerospace industry.



Securing the future

That we are an attractive employer is confirmed both from within and from outside the Group. Together with our employees, we are continuously striving to improve and working with one another to shape a successful future.

Stronger together

At the TÜV NORD GROUP, we attach great importance to combining theory and practice – and that starts with training. Of the 29 apprentices who started with us in 2023, eight are doing a dual study programme. During the semester, they attend regular lectures like any other student and during the lecture-free period, they shadow veteran TÜV NORD experts and gain practical experience.

We carefully select the universities we work with. New this year is our cooperation with the renowned FOM University of Applied Sciences, which has a particularly good reputation for its business courses. Our mechanical engineering students are in good hands at the Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences. The FHDW University of Applied Sciences in Hanover is renowned for its excellent training in the IT field.

High-quality training is very important to us, as it forms the basis for the internal training involved in becoming a TÜV NORD expert. Not only that, but our experts are actively involved in teaching as guest lecturers at universities. It is particularly pleasing when a cooperation gives rise to unexpected bonuses, such as a joint research project, for example.

The job market is extremely dynamic, which is why we respond quickly when we find a gap in our offer and look for a suitable university to collaborate with.

Earn more

Most of the employees of the TÜV NORD GROUP in Germany can look forward to a 9.4 percent increase in their remuneration. As of 1 July 2023, scale salaries increased by 5.1 percent, and a further 4.3 percent will be added on 1 September 2024. In addition, employees will receive a tax-free inflation compensation bonus totalling 3,000 euros, half of which was paid in July 2023, with the other half following in July 2024.

This has been agreed by the TÜV collective bargaining association and the ver.di collective bargaining commission. The new collective agreement is valid until 30 June 2025.

Employee views

What do the employees of the TÜV NORD GROUP think about their employer? In November, a randomly selected third of the workforce was invited to answer 26 questions in the Pulse Check. 54 percent took the opportunity to give their opinion on five topics. The 5-point scale ranged from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Most of those surveyed said that they enjoy their work, that all employees are treated equally in their day-to-day work and that they are happy to tell the outside world that they are part of the TÜV NORD GROUP. The areas of “Diversity and Inclusion”, “Corporate Culture” and “Health” achieved good scores of between 2.3 and 2.5. In terms of innovation and digitalisation, the workforce believes there is room for improvement. Here, the rating fell from the 2.5 recorded in 2021 to 2.8. The Commitment Index, which reflects employee willingness and motivation to give their all to the company, stands at 64 percent.

“When all is said and done, the TÜV NORD brand is simply very strong. When we go to schools to introduce ourselves, the students already know that TÜV NORD is the byword for safety and credibility and can be relied on to do a responsible job.”

Ebru Bakici, Head of Human Resources, TÜV NORD CERT



“Some people still think that we only inspect cars. But when we talk to potential candidates, we quickly bring them up to date and get them enthusiastic about the versatility of the TÜV NORD GROUP.”

Heike Hummel, Active Sourcing Expert, TÜV NORD Service

Getting off to a double start

It's out of the ivory tower and into the steam boiler. Marco Pastore is a dual student at TÜV NORD and is benefiting from an apprenticeship that combines theoretical university knowledge with practical experience.

While other students enjoy their semester breaks, Marco Pastore works in laundries, car dealerships and thermal power plants. But not as an ordinary holiday jobber: Marco Pastore is a dual student at TÜV NORD Systems and is shadowing his practice supervisor to learn how to inspect steam boilers and pressure vessels.

"At school, I listened to a lecture about dual studies," he explains. "The combination of university and practical work, plus a salary, won me over right away." Today, 20-year-old Marco Pastore is in his fifth semester studying mechanical engineering at the Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences in Mülheim an der Ruhr. During his lecture-free periods, he shadows TÜV NORD experts at the Dortmund site.

34

dual students are combining theory and practice in their training at the TÜV NORD GROUP.

Marco Pastore has also applied to industrial companies. Today, he sees the fact that he chose the TÜV NORD GROUP as a great advantage. "If I'd gone to a car maker, I'd only have got to know one car factory. As an expert-in-waiting, I'm familiarising myself with a lot of different plants throughout North Rhine-Westphalia. This is giving me a lot more variety and allowing me to link the content of my studies even more effectively with practical experience."

Marco Pastore is one of a total of 34 dual students in the TÜV NORD Group. Nine of them are studying alongside their training. Unlike Marco Pastore, they are doing their training regularly during the week while studying at the university in the evenings and at weekends. This is allowing them to do an apprenticeship and follow a course of study at the same time.

Alongside mechanical engineering, the TÜV NORD GROUP offers other courses of study. The Group is working with ten universities in northern Germany to cover all the topics of relevance to the company. These include, for example, Process Engineering and Electrical Engineering at the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Cybersecurity at the FOM University of Applied Sciences in Essen and Real Estate Management at the European Business School Bochum.





The TÜV NORD GROUP is supporting the students as best it can to offer them the best possible learning environment. As well as providing a laptop and money for books, the company also pays the university's semester fee. Perhaps most importantly of all, the students receive a subsistence allowance. "We voluntarily offer our dual students all the benefits to which trainees are entitled under the collective bargaining agreement," says Ebru Bakici, until recently Head of Group Education and now Head of Human Resources at TÜV NORD CERT, adding: "With private universities, we also cover the tuition fees." Alongside financial benefits, support in the form of expertise is also important to Marco Pastore: "I recently sat an exam in materials science. When you're preparing, it's great to be able to ask an expert directly who knows all about it in practice." Around 100 employees supervise the students during their practical phases, and each dual student is accompanied by a mentor.

Anyone who opts for this form of study must have staying power, because the double burden of studying and working should not be underestimated. But the flip side of this is that graduates can get a good start at a young age. They end up with a university degree and extensive practical experience at the same time. Only a few 20-year-olds



When there are no lectures in his dual mechanical engineering course, Marco Pastore spends his time familiarising himself with the practical work of TÜV NORD experts.

have ever climbed into a steam boiler to check welds – and Marco Pastore is one of that select number.

The next steps on his career path are clearly mapped out. Like all dual students, he has committed to working for the TÜV NORD GROUP for two years after graduating as a mechanical engineer. During this time, he will complete the in-house training to qualify as an expert. By the time he is in his mid-twenties, he will be able to independently test steam boilers in laundries, car dealerships and thermal power plants – and, who knows, perhaps he will in turn accompany dual students as a practical supervisor.

Excellence at work

In 2023, the Group was once again awarded the accolade of Leading Employer. This places it within the top one percent of employers in Germany for the fifth year in a row. Such were the findings of the “Leading Employers 2023” study, which sources its data from 160,000 companies, thus making it the world's most comprehensive survey of employer quality. A large number of criteria are included in the holistic assessment, including the experience of trainees and young professionals. Also considered are the company's activities on career websites and social media: 300 search robots and Artificial Intelligence evaluated ten million pieces of data from 200 international sources.

In a regional comparison of employers, the TÜV NORD GROUP has further improved its standing and now occupies first place out of 154 companies evaluated in Lower Saxony. In a comparison with 35 companies in Hanover, the Group has once again taken the number one spot. In a sector comparison, the TÜV NORD GROUP ranks second out of 67 companies.

TÜV Hellas is a “Great Place to Work®”

The employees of TÜV HELLAS (TÜV NORD) believe that their workplace is a “Great Place to Work®”. They have given consistently positive ratings to the working environment, the development opportunities, the management and the fairness of treatment of staff and partner companies. The evaluation is based on an anonymous survey that includes important values such as the reliability of executives and respect for employees, but also fairness and pride. 97 percent of employees believe that TÜV HELLAS (TÜV NORD) treats them ethically and honestly.

Driving sustainably

The new Group car policy agreement has been in force since 1 August 2023. With this policy, the TÜV NORD GROUP is making the use of company cars more attractive while at the same time making an active contribution to sustainability. In the future, the employer subsidy for company cars will be calculated on the basis of CO₂ emissions. The less CO₂ a vehicle emits, the higher the subsidy. This is intended to motivate employees to choose environmentally friendly ways of getting around, thereby supporting the Group's achievement of its climate targets. The TÜV NORD GROUP will make a one-off contribution of 1,500 euros to the purchase of a private wallbox for an electric company car.

Most significantly of all, the new car policy offers advantages for employees in the field who spend a lot of days on the road. The subsidy has increased significantly and is now based on the time spent travelling as a proportion of working hours instead of on the number of kilometres driven for business. There are also some new budget categories in which employees can use their company car without having to make further private supplementary payments. Each category offers two reference vehicles to choose from.



“After intensive negotiations, we achieved a good and sustainable collective bargaining result for our colleagues.”

Rüdiger Sparfeld, Chairman of the Group Staff Council of TÜV NORD

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