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Touch displays are a bigger distraction

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DEKRA Labor Market Report 2025: Turmoil on the labor market

The faltering economy is now impacting the job market – even in those occupations that long seemed to be immune. There are now fewer opportunities for academic professionals than they were just one year ago, reveals the DEKRA Labor Market Report 2025. However, the demand for skilled labor remains high in the bottleneck occupations.

At harvest time: Increased accident risk on rural roads

Harvesters can be expected to increase the risks on rural roads in late summer and fall. "At harvest time, a large number of slow and often overwide harvesters share the roads with faster cars and trucks. This is a high-risk mix on roads that already harbor the greatest risk of accidents," explains Stefanie Ritter, an accident researcher at DEKRA.

Further topics:

- Risks when purchasing a used car: Electronic faults can be expensive
- Pedelec batteries: Ensure protection from the heat
- Smart phones and other devices on planes: Shut down fully in checked bags



Cars with touch display: Prolonged distraction from driving

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Switching to vehicles from a rental company or car sharing service

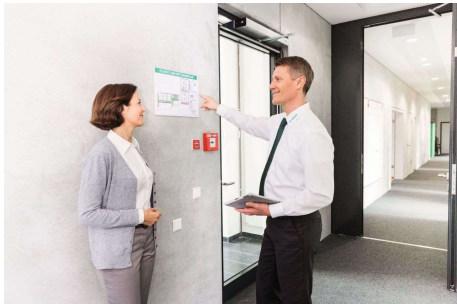
Touch displays are a bigger distraction

Anyone who uses an unfamiliar vehicle – from a rental company or car sharing service – for a vacation or business trip, should take the time to familiarize themselves with that vehicle’s controls. Even basic functions such as switching on windscreen wipers, air conditioning, the radio, or lights may not be the same as in the driver’s own car.

Just a few years ago, physical switches and buttons with haptic feedback were still the standard in a vehicle cockpit. Now, most modern cars are equipped with touch displays and touch-sensitive buttons. Moreover, some controls are hidden in a menu and cannot be accessed without searching and tapping. “This may greatly distract vehicle users from the actual task of driving and result in traffic risks,” warns Thomas Wagner, a traffic psychologist at DEKRA.

To examine the extent of the challenge in practice, DEKRA Accident Research conducted a test with 80 subjects in 2023. Each test subject was asked to perform safety-relevant operating tasks in both an older and a modern vehicle. It was found that they needed significantly more time on average – in some cases twice as long – to perform the task in the newer vehicle. Operating certain functions meant that the driver had to look at the screen for longer, thus distracting them from driving for longer.

Many of the test subjects were confused by the operating concept of the newer vehicle. In particular, they complained about the reaction time of the touch display and the touch-sensitive buttons, as well as the lack of haptic feedback from the buttons. They felt that it took a lot of effort – especially for older people – to learn to use the new operating system. Drivers who wear reading glasses could also experience problems with the need to switch between near and long distances. (DEKRA Info)



Labor Market Report: High demand in electronics, care, and retail

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DEKRA Labor Market Report 2025 **Turmoil on the labor market**

The faltering economy is now impacting the job market – even in those occupations that long seemed to be immune. There are now fewer opportunities for academic professionals than they were just one year ago. According to the DEKRA Labor Market Report 2025, the top 25 occupations currently include only three academic professions – compared with six a year earlier. However, the demand for skilled labor remains high in the bottleneck occupations. Electronics technicians (1) and health workers/nurses (2) continue to lead the ranking of the most sought-after professionals. Staff are also urgently needed in retail (3), warehouse logistics (4), and social work (8).

For the DEKRA Labor Market Report 2025, a total of 8,944 job openings were evaluated at the end of February 2025. The report delivers an overview of career trends and in-depth analyses for IT security and occupational safety professionals. It also examines how the world of work is changing and includes commentary by experts from business, research, and politics.

The largest growth in demand was seen in health and care occupations, which accounted for at least one in ten of the vacancies. IT-related occupations have suffered and, for the first time, job openings fell below those for the engineering professions, where demand was equally weak. Retail staff (3) have never ranked higher. In production, there is also an increased need for staff to set up machinery and systems. In the engineering disciplines, there has been a shift toward architecture and construction engineering.

“For a long time, the labor market has remained stable despite the persistently weak economy. However, this year, there has been a growing number of dismissals,” explains Katrin Haupt, CEO of DEKRA Akademie. “The turmoil cannot hide the fact that the digital and environmental transformation is in full swing. It is now necessary for employers and all the stakeholders in education and labor market policy to urgently address the consequences and, especially, to identify the skills and occupational profiles that will be more important or perhaps also less relevant in the future.” The findings and analyses of the DEKRA Labor Market Report 2025 can be found at www.dekra-arbeitsmarktreport.de (German only). (DEKRA Info)



*Purchasing a used car: Pay closer
attention to electronic systems*

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Risks when purchasing a used car

Electronic faults can be expensive

No modern vehicle comes without electronic systems and components. Indeed, cars are now veritable microchips on wheels. Electronic features range from driver assistance systems such as automated emergency braking, distance alert, and lane-keeping assistance through to control devices for the engine, airbags, and air conditioning. Compared with the mechanical systems that dominated in the past, electronics offer the benefits of greater comfort and safety. However, the larger number and complexity of the systems increase the likelihood of faults such as software bugs, defective sensors, system freezes, loss of connectivity, or control device failure. Any system anomalies are often eliminated on the first visit to the dealer.

“Buyers of used vehicles should be aware of this problem if they are to avoid the possibility of high costs following their purchase,” says Ronald Hufnagel, a DEKRA used car expert. “These are not minor issues. Even replacing a control unit can easily cost several thousand euros.” Before buying a used car, he recommends the use of a professional on-board diagnosis scanner to check the function of the vehicle’s installed electronic systems – and also to ensure that all the specified systems are actually still present in the vehicle.

DEKRA’s experts have developed a special system check for this purpose. The vehicle’s error log is exported and documented via the on-board diagnostic interface, enabling a check of system errors and other anomalies, and of whether the mileage is realistic or has been tampered with electronically.

“Every used car has a history, which is why it is important to minimize the risks as far as possible. Our system check is an effective tool for achieving this,” explains Hufnagel. It helps buyers to protect themselves from hidden defects and provides sellers with the basis for negotiating a fair price. The system check is one of three modules for assessing used cars. It can be combined with a technology check (or general vehicle inspection) and a bodywork check to deliver a full assessment of a used vehicle. (DEKRA Info)



*Beware of harvesters:
High-risk mix on rural roads*

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At harvest time

Increased accident risk on rural roads

DEKRA warns that harvesters can be expected to increase the risks on rural roads in late summer and fall. "At harvest time, a large number of slow and often overwide harvesters share the roads with faster cars and trucks. This is a high-risk mix on roads that already harbor the greatest risk of accidents," explains Stefanie Ritter, an accident researcher at DEKRA.

A defensive and proactive driving style is required, particularly on stretches of road with poor visibility – whether driving a car, truck, or delivery van, or riding a motorbike. Crests and curves in the road can make it impossible to see a slow-moving tractor with fully laden trailer or an overwide combine harvester. In such situations, there is often very little time for an emergency stop.

"Accidents frequently occur when a tractor wants to turn onto a field track and collides with a car or motorbike that is just starting to overtake. In such cases, concealed or dirty turn signals may also play a role," explains Ritter. Another dangerous situation is when a heavy harvester exits a field onto a rural road. It can be a close call if a vehicle is approaching at speed.

Crash tests by DEKRA Accident Research show that a motorcyclist can suffer severe, if not fatal, injuries in a lateral collision with a combine harvester tire at a speed of 60 km/h. In a frontal collision between a car traveling at 67 km/h and the solid structure of a harvester, rigid components penetrate the passenger compartment. Passive safety devices such as airbags and seat belts are virtually useless in such a situation.

"During the harvest season, it is necessary to take particular care when driving in rural areas," says Ritter. On roads with poor visibility that do not allow an adequate lateral safety distance, drivers should refrain from overtaking even slow-moving harvesters. Harvester operators must ensure that their vehicles display all mandatory signage. Lighting components such as turn signals or tail lights must not be concealed or dirty. An escort vehicle must accompany any heavy load more than 3.50 meters wide. (DEKRA Info)



Pedelec batteries: Heat can shorten service life

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Pedelec batteries

Ensure protection from the heat

Anyone who uses an e-bike to cycle to the swimming pool is advised to park their two-wheeler in the shade. "The batteries really don't like being left for hours in the sun and will overheat," says Jochen Hof, a DEKRA expert. When lithium batteries are exposed to very high temperatures, this has a negative impact on the battery service life. Batteries should also be protected from high temperatures and direct exposure to the sun when being transported by car. For example, they can be wrapped in a blanket or protective thermal covering in the vehicle's trunk. "Heat means stress for batteries, which work best at moderate temperatures," says the expert. For this reason, an overheated battery should not be immediately plugged into the charger but left to cool first. (DEKRA Info)



When flying: Electronic devices in suitcases must be shut down completely

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Smart phones and other devices on planes

Shut down completely in suitcases

DEKRA experts remind airline passengers that electronic devices with lithium batteries and their peripherals are the subject of more stringent safety requirements. They draw attention to airlines' rules in this respect. Generally speaking, smart phones, tablet computers, and cameras may be transported in either carry-on or checked bags. However, devices in checked bags must be shut down completely and protected from damage. Spare batteries, power banks, and battery-powered electronic cigarettes must be transported in carry-on bags and protected from short circuiting. In the case of lithium batteries, the maximum nominal energy rating is 100 Wh and the maximum lithium content is 2 grams. Permission must be obtained from the airline to exceed these values. (DEKRA Info)