



BDI

The Voice of
German Industry

More Realism in Policy

The German economy can look back on a successful decade. Industry has created prosperity and employment in Germany and in Europe. Today, however, we are at the beginning of a turning point that cannot only be attributed to the coronavirus crisis. Now is the time for political action before social compensation plans must be written to cushion extensive job losses. We therefore address this appeal to politicians in Europe at the federal and state levels as a call for immediate action.

Like never before, a profound global technological and digital change is altering products and production processes in classic industrial domains. German industry has demonstrated impressively that it accepts and actively shapes these challenges of change. Permanent transformation is part of the self-image of all industrial companies in Germany.

Structural change, rising protectionism and the coronavirus pandemic have led to the worst recession since the Federal Republic of Germany came into existence. As a consequence, economic conditions are massively changing. This cannot remain so without consequences for political decisions. Political measures in Berlin and in Brussels must realign themselves along these economic realities.

Germany must achieve sustainability and climate protection in all sectors through consistent innovation in technologies, digitization and energy supply - without a regulatory corset becoming even tighter and choking off innovation. Government, industry and society must rethink together. We need to prioritize the most efficient and cost-effective solution that avoids straining the environment and climate. Market-based and technology-neutral instruments are the necessary tools of choice. Sustainability also signifies a chance for prosperity and a low debt burden for future generations.

Now, we need an open and constructive socio-political and economic dialogue, including on the limits of the burden on industry during and, above all, after the crisis. This dialogue should touch on tension between changing social demands and industrial realities. Let us be clear: German industry is not concerned with the "if" but with the "how" when it comes to mastering the technological challenges, digitization and climate change. In particular, on the question of the Green Deal: Industry needs planning security in the transformation through a new realism in policy. If Germany and Europe want to remain on a level playing field with China and the United States, we must work together to build on the strengths of industry.

A necessary expansion of renewable energy and simultaneously a low price of electricity, accelerating approval procedures for investments on-site, a competitive corporate tax system, and greater acceptance of and freedom for new technologies, as well as commitment to human rights in supply chains without overburdening enterprises with unrealistic expectations serve as prerequisites for sustainability. If the political goals are to become reality, realism must now be brought in these areas and consequences must follow.

Industry and its employees in Germany form an essential basis for participation and social peace. Thus, they make a significant contribution to the acceptance of our democratic value-based community and the social market economy. It is in the vested interest of German society and politics to secure, transform and expand this industrial base.



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