Hannover Messe 2026: international cooperation as key to success for German SMEs

The Hannover Messe 2026 trade fair, which attracted around 110,000 visitors, impressively showed the extent to which industrial transformation is characterised by international cooperation. It is becoming more and more obvious for German SMEs that economic success increasingly depends on access to new markets and innovative partners.

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This year's trade fair showed that artificial intelligence, robotics, automation and energy infrastructure are key enabling technologies for the future of industry. This offers enormous opportunities for German SMEs – especially in the context of international partnerships.

Programmes like *Partnering in Business with Germany* show just how successful cooperation in the field of Industrie 4.0 can be: more than 40% of the foreign companies involved in the programme sign contracts or declarations of intent. As regards Mexico, India and Chile, the number of business contacts also increased fivefold within two years.

Information

Countries

Brazil

Colombia

India

Mexico

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Industry 4.0

Kategorie

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Matchmaking as door opener for new markets

The networking and matchnaking event of *Partnering in Business with Germany*, which was organised together with the Hanover Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK Hannover), provided a platform for targeted and efficient exchange. Around 100 international entrepreneurs from Brazil, India, Colombia, Mexico and Türkiye (with a focus on Industrie 4.0 and energy efficiency in industry) met with nearly 40 German

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business representatives.

Such networking formats directly offer specific business prospects. Dr.-Ing. Steffen Hau, CTO of DELFA Systems GmbH, describes his experience as follows: “The format is a type of speed dating, which is very helpful to learn more about the potential of companies from different markets. Today, I held already a few initial talks, and it is very likely that we will work together with a Mexican company.”

In addition, existing partnerships were deepened, including those between Viscom SE and companies from Türkiye – an example of how international cooperation opens up new markets and results in cost and competitive advantages.

Focus on Brazil: a strategic partnership with potential

A special focus was on Brazil, this year’s partner country of the Hannover Messe. The political message was clear: Germany and Brazil want to significantly expand their economic cooperation. Both Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz and Brazil’s President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva underlined the importance of a closer partnership.

In the context of the German-Brazilian Business Days, the role of SMEs in particular was emphasised. Ingo Krämer (Latin America Initiative of German Business) said: “SMEs need support from the government to facilitate their entry into the Brazilian market.”

The Brazilian side also sees a great need for cooperation. José Gordon from the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) said: “We need more programmes which bring companies from both countries together”.

In this respect, *Partnering in Business with Germany* makes a specific contribution – e.g. at the Hannover Messe by participating in the matchmaking format “Stronger Together – Connecting Germany and Brazil in Energy & Raw Materials ”, which was organised by the German-Brazilian Energy Partnership of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

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The Brazilian pilot group with a focus on energy efficiency in industry was presented on the stage of the programme partner ApexBrasil in order to advance specific cooperation ideas with German companies.

Clarissa Furtado, Head of Competitiveness Department, ApexBrasil, pointed out that Brazil offers great opportunities for German SMEs. The growing market, state support for SMEs and the fast pace of innovation are a good basis for successful cooperation, especially as the situation in Germany is very similar.

Synergies with the Lower Saxony Foreign Trade Day

The Lower Saxony Foreign Trade Day with the central theme “Hidden Markets” took place at the same time as the Hannover Messe. The event, at which around 140 companies were represented, also provided an important platform for internationalisation.

Partnering in Business with Germany had its own stand, where it presented its services. Especially in the context of “hidden markets” it becomes clear that the structured approach of the programme helps German SMEs to successfully open up less well-known foreign markets.

How do German and Turkish companies assess their talks?

Fotios Dritsos, Sales Manager Industrial X-ray Inspection at Viscom SE, talking to **Koray Tomris**, mechanical engineer at Tomris Makina Ltd. from Türkiye, underlines the opportunities of the Turkish market.

“Türkiye is a very interesting market for us, as our machines can be used in many of the growing industries in the country. *Partnering in Business with Germany* helped us to contact potential new customers from Türkiye, for example from the plastics industry. We also met with a potential supplier of frame parts for our machines. This cooperation can result in cost advantages, in particular for the sale of machines in Türkiye.”

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Koray Tomris, mechanical engineer at Tomris Makina Ltd. from Türkiye, talking to **Fotios Dritsos**, Sales Manager Industrial X-ray Inspection at Viscom SE, points out the possibilities for future cooperation:

“In the context of *Partnering in Business with Germany*, we from Tomris Makina got to know Viscom SE, and we see a lot of potential for cooperation with the firm. Thanks to our experience with welding technology and machining operations, we are able to produce the frames and structural components for Viscom SE’s machines. We are very motivated to make more use of this opportunity and create added value together.”

Photo: Koray Tomris (left) und Fotios Dritsos © GIZ/Jan von Allwörden

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Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy
Social Media/Online Communication Department
Scharnhorststr. 34-37
10115 Berlin
Postal address: 11019 Berlin