

Mexican women entrepreneurs very successful

On 13 September 2024, the designated Director-General at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) Dr Christian Forwick welcomed a group of 19 Mexican women entrepreneurs to Berlin. The reception marked the end of their stay in Germany and highlighted the intensified bilateral cooperation in the context of the *Partnering in Business with Germany* programme in 2024.



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The majority of the women are CEOs of family-run production facilities in a range of sectors. Some of them intend to expand their sales markets, others are looking for German companies to set up joint ventures with them or speed up the modernisation of their businesses by working together with them. This is also necessary in light of the greater expectations of international original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), including Bosch, VW and BMW, in Mexico for the Mexican supplier industry. In this context, the entrepreneurs discussed the possibilities to use artificial intelligence (AI) and to automate and digitise production processes – i.e. areas in which the two countries can learn from one another.

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Mexican women entrepreneurs at the BMWK Copyright: @BMWK, Steffen Goldacker

Mexico is Germany's most important trading partner in Latin America. More and more international companies are investing in production facilities in Mexico. There is a lot of potential for bilateral trade especially in the manufacturing industry and in sectors which are particularly important for Germany, including the automotive and the supplier industries. Dr Christian Forwick, former Deputy Director-General for external economic policy, trade policy and Americas, said: "The German federal government wants to further diversify the trade relations. Here, Mexico plays an important role, and there is still great potential in the future. The *Partnering in Business with Germany* programme helps to fully tap this potential by bringing together Mexican and

German small and medium-sized enterprises for cooperation projects.”

During several visits to German companies and B2B talks in the context of the programme, the women entrepreneurs from Mexico saw for themselves that German firms are interested in working together with Mexican SMEs. The “hidden champions” in particular offer many possibilities for cooperation. Mr Ulrich Niemann, head of the division responsible for the *Partnering in Business with Germany* programme at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, said: “The broad range of companies represented here and the positive feedback by the participants regarding successful contacts with German firms during their stay in Germany show that there is a lot of potential for successful cooperation between Mexican and German SMEs.”

This was also reflected by contracts and declarations of intent between the women entrepreneurs from Mexico and representatives of German companies which were signed during their stay in Germany. At a very early stage of her participation in the programme, Ms Erika Navarrete, CEO of the family-run enterprise Boyco Group, for example, held negotiations with Bollfilter, an SME developing filtration technologies. In spring 2024, representatives of the German company visited Mexico to hold initial talks. During her stay in Germany, Ms Navarrete agreed with Bollfilter that Boyco will be in charge of the distribution of the German products in Mexico. This is an important step for the expansion of the German SME in the region.

For 25 years now, the Mexican family-run company WM Refractories has been manufacturing refractory products, including precast shapes for the aluminium and steel processing industries. During her visit to the Ministry, Ms Jessica Fernández, Vice President of the company, underlined the great interest of German companies in her firm’s individual prefabricated elements, which are indispensable for their production processes. She is optimistic that her company will in future supply its products to German SMEs, with a focus on long-term partnerships. She underlined that although it takes time to build trust, she remains confident in light of the ongoing support in the context of the PG programme. She said: “I am grateful that the programme will continue to support me in this effort.”



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Four out of the seven Mexican delegations which participate in *Partnering in Business with Germany* in 2024 consist of women only. The industries which they represent include green technologies, medical technologies, Industrie 4.0 / automation and the food processing industry. The group which was welcomed at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action is exemplary of the increasing significance of Mexico in the context of the programme and the growing appreciation of the economic potential of women entrepreneurs.

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'Partnering in Business with Germany' is
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