

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **“Made for Germany” Calls for Swift, Bold Reforms to Strengthen Europe’s Competitiveness**

- **Growth must become the top priority – as an essential prerequisite for European sovereignty**
- **Regulatory reform: urgently ease burdens on Europe’s economy**
- **Implement ambitious, substantial, structural reforms quickly and pragmatically**
- **Systematically reduce bureaucracy, strengthen capital markets, complete the capital markets union, and conclude and ratify free trade agreements**

Berlin, 11 February 2026 – Europe needs a fundamental change of course, implementing ambitious reforms swiftly and pragmatically, and to move away from over-regulation towards growth, business leaders in the “Made for Germany” initiative said on the eve of this week’s informal EU leaders’ retreat, in an urgent appeal to Europe’s policymakers.

The European Single Market is the largest economic area in the world, yet it remains fragmented, heavily regulated and incomplete in key areas. In addition, regulations are implemented differently across many EU Member States. Progress on the recommendations set out in the Draghi and Letta Reports is far too slow. Europe’s industrial base is under immense pressure – both from within and from external competition. In global competition, Europe competes with states that strategically direct industrial policy, actively deregulate, and scale key technologies at high speed. As a result, many European companies are losing competitiveness every day.

A halt to new regulation, accompanied by regulatory reform, is therefore essential. Europe’s economy cannot afford the paralysing burden of over-regulation at this time. In recent years, a large number of legislative acts have been adopted in rapid succession – often with legitimate individual objectives, but without sufficient coordination, prioritisation, or focus on practical implementation. Adjusting existing regulations and introducing an immediate halt to new rules would create a dual benefit: businesses could once again focus on innovation and growth, while policymakers gain time to implement the right structural reforms.

Moreover, all structural reforms must be consistently aligned with technological competitiveness and growth. This includes establishing regulatory and bureaucratic reduction as an equal political objective, strengthening capital markets and completing the capital markets union, as well as swiftly implementing the free trade agreements with India and Mercosur to secure access to growth markets. Not every reform must be perfect or capture all Member States simultaneously – but it must be effective and scalable. If this is achieved, Europe has the potential to become a leading hub where companies not only develop future technologies but also scale them industrially and assert them globally.

“The current geopolitical changes can be a genuine opportunity for Europe,” said Christian Sewing, Chief Executive Officer of Deutsche Bank. “Right now, however, we are still playing below our potential. We need ambitious and substantial reforms, coupled with pragmatic implementation. Economic growth is the fundamental prerequisite for European sovereignty and must therefore return to being the top priority. The interest in investing in Europe is already strong – and it will grow significantly if we now set the right course. Many want to invest here, not just to diversify their portfolios, but because they see considerable catch-up potential.”

Roland Busch, Chief Executive Officer of Siemens said: “Europe is falling behind in global competition. We must focus our efforts – with speed – on two goals: more growth and more innovation. This is also the key to technological sovereignty. Europe must master the critical technologies that underpin

industry, energy supply, and security. We have everything we need: a strong industrial base, outstanding talent, and deep technological expertise. Europe needs a bold change of course: no new regulation without reducing existing rules. Regulations must be simplified: fewer reporting requirements, no double regulation, faster decisions.”

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**About “Made for Germany”**

“Made for Germany” is a cross-industry initiative, in which 123 leading companies and investors join forces for a strong, successful, and future-proof German economy. The initiative aims to foster constructive dialogue between business, the government and society to boost confidence in Germany as an economic hub, attract targeted investment, and stimulate domestic demand. Ultimately, this will create lasting opportunities for future generations.

Further information can be found at [www.madeforgermany.net](http://www.madeforgermany.net).

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