

History

With the establishment of the Reich Chancellery and the "Deutsches Handelsarchiv" (a publication focusing on German trade and industry) as far back as the German Empire of the late 19th century, the groundwork was laid for ensuring that German businesses received the important information about foreign countries that they needed.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the roots of institutional export promotion extend back to 1951. Forty years later, the practice of promoting Germany as a business location with the goal of attracting foreign direct investment was institutionalized on the federal level. *Germany Trade & Invest* has offered the highest levels of German foreign trade expertise under one roof since 2009.

1951

The "**Bundesauskunftsstelle für den Außenhandel (BfA)**" (Federal Information Office for Foreign Trade) is established as the highest federal office under the competency of the Federal Ministry of Economics. The agency's main task is to provide German companies with information about foreign markets in order to ease their entry into those markets. This, in turn, facilitates foreign trade. For this purpose, Germany sends its first reporters abroad in 1952; they are able to work freely and objectively while simultaneously mastering and observing the rules and principles of international commerce.

1953

The BfA is renamed to the "**Bundesstelle für Außenhandelsinformation**" (Federal Office for Foreign Trade Information)

1960

The "**Gesellschaft für Außenhandelsinformationen mbH (GfAI)**" (Limited Liability Company for Foreign Trade Information) is established as a subsidiary of the BfA: All of the foreign correspondents reporting for the BfA are employed by this company from this point on.

1971

The "**Three Pillar Concept**" of German foreign trade lays out the allocation of responsibilities between the so-called "three pillars:" diplomatic representative offices, Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs), and the BfA. The close cooperation between these three institutions still provides broad support for export-oriented German companies.

1980

The BfA is abbreviated as **BfAI** from this point on in order to avoid confusion with the former federal insurance institute for salaried employees.

1991

The "**Zentrum für die Betreuung von Auslandsinvestoren (ZfA)**" (Center for Foreign Investor Support) is established as a central contact point within the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWV):

Its task is to provide information and consulting services to foreign companies, particularly with regard to economic and legal conditions as well as possible federal- and state-level support measures. The ZfA's main duties, which were originally targeted at eastern Germany, are extended to cover the rest of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1995.

1997

The **New German Länder Industrial Investment Council (IIC)** is founded by the German federal government and the eastern German states. The IIC's goal is to attract foreign investment to eastern Germany and, in turn, to create jobs in industry and the service sector.

1998

The position of "**Beauftragter für Auslandsinvestitionen in Deutschland**" (Commissioner for Foreign Investment in Germany) is created by the German federal government: When the Commissioner takes office (at the "Gesellschaft zur Unterstützung des Beauftragten für Auslandsinvestitionen mbH", or the Limited Liability Company Supporting the Commissioner for Foreign Investment), he/she also accepts responsibility for the operational tasks surrounding the job of marketing of Germany as a location for business.

2000

The tasks of the ZfA are transferred to the "**Gesellschaft des Beauftragten für Auslandsinvestitionen in Deutschland**": With this transfer of powers, the agency takes on the responsibility of serving as an international point of contact for foreign investors who have not yet selected a specific region in Germany, in addition to its existing job of marketing Germany as a location for business.

2001

The Bundesstelle für Außenhandelsinformation (BfAI) is renamed to the "**Bundesagentur für Außenwirtschaft**" (Federal Agency for Foreign Trade, BfAI). The agency's original mandate remains the same.

The **foreign trade portal "iXPOS"** is set up to serve as a central platform with the goal of making the numerous foreign trade institutions and incentive programs more transparent.

2003

After the agreements with the Beauftragter für Auslandsinvestitionen in Deutschland expire, three new commissioners are appointed for a period of three years, and the agency is renamed to **Invest in Germany GmbH**. Invest in Germany becomes the official economic development agency for the Federal Republic of Germany, with the goal of marketing Germany as a business location for foreign investors. Additionally, the agency provides information and support to foreign investors regarding the legal and business environment in Germany.

2007

The New German Länder Industrial Investment Council (IIC) and Invest in Germany GmbH (old) merge to form Invest in Germany GmbH (new): The goal of the new agency is to improve the image of Germany as a business location abroad and, in turn, to generate/increase investor interest in making investments in Germany that create/secure jobs. This includes the acquisition of investors for Germany (marketing Germany as a business location). One particular focus is marketing Germany as a business location, including the acquisition of investors for the eastern German states (including Berlin).

2008

Invest in Germany signs a framework agreement with the DIHK and the AHK network regarding cooperation on marketing Germany as a business location and acquiring investors.

2009

Germany Trade and Invest - Gesellschaft für Außenwirtschaft und Standortmarketing mbH is established via a merger between Invest in Germany, the BfAI, and the GfAI: The agency's goal is to promote Germany as a location for business, investment, and technology, including the acquisition of investors and the provision of support to foreign companies that want to expand their business to the German market, as well as to export-oriented German companies looking to tap new markets. One of the company's major areas of focus is providing particular support for the economic development of the eastern German states (including Berlin).

2011

A new framework agreement between Germany Trade & Invest, the DIHK, and the AHK network is signed, leading to closer integration of the organizations' respective core competencies domestically and abroad.

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