

Press release

EISENWARENMESSE – International Hardware Fair Press Conference 2024

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German DIY, Construction and Garden Trade Association (BHB)

DIY industry between inflation, “bad weather” and high reliability

- Wet and cold weather dampen sales at beginning of year
- Trend leaves room for cautious optimism

After a mixed 2022 with a slight increase in real growth, the DIY and garden centre sector had anticipated a different start to 2023. However, consumer caution due to inflation and political uncertainty, coupled with prolonged periods of wet and cold weather, had a significant impact on demand, especially for garden-related products. As a result, the first quarter saw a decline of 8.6 percent in Germany and 7.5 percent in Switzerland. In Austria, the year got off to a more positive start with an increase of 0.4 percent thanks to more favourable weather conditions.

‘Our industry is regularly affected by **weather effects**, especially in the first quarter when people look forward to enjoying their gardens. As soon as the first rays of sunshine appear, they purchase new plants, and often even gardening equipment and furniture for the new season,’ said **Dr Peter Wüst, Managing Director of BHB**. While there have always been temporary dampening effects, this time they were more pronounced when compared to the sustained high-pressure system during the same period in 2022 and when combined with inflation.

However, **BHB board spokesman Peter Tepas** also views the development with a certain amount of optimism: ‘The weather is noticeably improving and the steadily declining inflation is also giving people a renewed sense of confidence.’ Although prices would remain at a high level, he does not anticipate any further dramatic increases. The industry continues to be very well positioned in the traditional DIY and renovation product ranges. **René Haßfeld, deputy spokesman of the BHB Board**: ‘We are the partners with all the products and services that people need for their energy-saving and home improvement goals. Our warehouses are well stocked and we can ensure supply at all times.’

Although DIY and garden retailers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland cannot completely escape the effects of inflation and cautious consumer sentiment, they continue to be the primary point of contact for the majority of customers for all things related to homes, apartments and gardens. During the pandemic, the desire for DIY activities, gardening and upgrades in the home played a vital role. As a result, consumers now have a greater appreciation for the wide variety and reliable supply of products that the industry is able to



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provide even during times of crisis. This aspect is also drawing more professionals to the markets.

Leading trade fairs in the industry, such as the **EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair (IEW)**, are and will continue to be an important point of contact. In the current situation, many households are trying to save energy through targeted smaller renovation and refurbishment measures, such as insulation and the use of smart energy solutions for heating and lighting.

Therefore, it is important for home improvement stores to stay up-to-date with the latest products in these areas. In the smart home category, for instance, new intelligent solutions are constantly being introduced. Even smaller energy supply solutions such as photovoltaic units and balcony power plants are now DIY-friendly. To be a competent retailer in this field, companies need to maintain ongoing communication with manufacturers and have a clear overview of trends and developments in order to provide customers with the right products. 'The IEW has always been and will continue to be one of the key meeting points for our industry sectors. Our retailers especially value the direct contact with producers and the comprehensive overview that is only possible in such a concentrated setting,' emphasises Wüst.

More information on the current industry **figures and trends** can be found [HERE](#)

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About Handelsverband Heimwerken, Bauen und Garten e.V. (BHB)

As a trade association, the BHB represents the interests of home improvement, building and gardening retail companies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland (DACH region) as well as other companies in the DIY industry from the manufacturing and service sectors. As an association with an international focus, BHB is active in Germany, German-speaking countries and all of Europe through its membership in the European DIY Retail Association (EDRA). It represents the economic and media policy interests of the industry and engages in dialogue with political institutions, the media, administration, suppliers and service providers. The association comprises 21 trade organisations with over 30 distribution channels and around 210 supporting members from industry and the service sector. The industry has around 480,000 employees in Germany. Total gross sales of German DIY and home improvement stores reached around EUR 21.92 billion in 2022.