

About the Plattform Industrie 4.0

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Plattform Industrie 4.0 is the central alliance to coordinate the shaping of the digital structural shift of German industry. It brings together all those who are shaping Industry 4.0 and bundles the forces and know-how of a diverse range of actors – be they companies, associations, trade unions, science or politics. As one of the largest international and national networks, it supports German companies – particularly medium-sized companies – in implementing Industry 4.0. It offers them decisive input by providing examples of company practices from across Germany, concrete recommendations for action and test environments.

www.plattform-i40.de [also available in English]

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Plattform Industrie 4.0 – Shaping change together

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Who is involved in the Plattform?

As the economy becomes increasingly digitised and networked, the number of links in development, production and sales, both nationally and globally, is increasing. Plattform Industrie 4.0 involves all of the relevant stakeholders and enables them to communicate: together, companies and their employees, trade unions, associations, science and politics.

What is the key objective of the work?

How can Germany become the leading factory equipment supplier for Industrie 4.0? How can Germany further improve its competitiveness as a production location through Industrie 4.0? What role can Germany play in setting standards and how can Industrie 4.0 benefit people in the world of work? Plattform Industrie 4.0 aims to find answers to these questions through dialogue. Together it wants to make a big impact. Ambitious but achievable recommendations are to be drawn up for all stakeholders, including the initiation of appropriate standards. In addition, a coherent research agenda based on the needs of operators is to be developed. Finally, compelling practical examples should be identified that demonstrate the various effects of networked production and value networks and the benefits of new business and working models.

A closer look: What's the story behind the working groups?

The platform has formed five working groups of representatives from business, science, associations, trade unions and federal ministries: Reference architectures, standards and norms | Research and innovation | Security of networked systems | Legal framework | Work, education and training

With enthusiasm and openness, the working groups engage in dialogue and other forms of cooperation with companies of different sizes from various branches as well as with experts from other projects, initiatives and clusters at the federal, state and regional levels

The working groups are open, in principle, to all interested and qualified stakeholders. Participants are selected by the steering committee according to the stakeholder's proven professional expertise and effective mandate to speak for an organisation, as well as the ability to act as a (regional) multiplier.

Why is it important to have a consistent focus on the needs of SMEs?

Many small and medium-sized enterprises in particular remain hesitant about transitioning to digitised production methods. The sometimes unclear economic benefits linked with uncertainties and high investment costs are currently the main obstacle to the large-scale introduction of Industrie 4.0. The barriers to companies implementing digital solutions in practice must therefore be identified and removed. At the same time, the substantial added value of Industrie 4.0 must be made clear to all involved. The mobilisation of the SME sector, whose “hidden champions” make a significant contribution to Germany's innovative and economic strength, is thus the central criterion for the success of a pragmatic debate on the implementation of Industrie 4.0 in Germany.

What characterizes the approach of the German platform?

The platform aims to develop joint recommendations for all stakeholders that serve as the basis for a consistent and reliable framework. The platform will initiate alliances and networks at the precompetitive stage which support the evolution of the entrepreneurial skills and energy present in Germany. The platform aims to identify all relevant trends and developments in the manufacturing sector and to combine them to produce a common overall understanding of Industrie 4.0. This means conversely that the platform does not operationally realise activities in the market, such as demonstration centres, research projects or company-led projects, however it does proactively initiate and support them. Equally, in the area of standardisation, the platform is not where the standards will be set in terms of committee work. However, the platform should indeed identify where action is required on standards and norms and should actively express recommendations for national and international committee work.

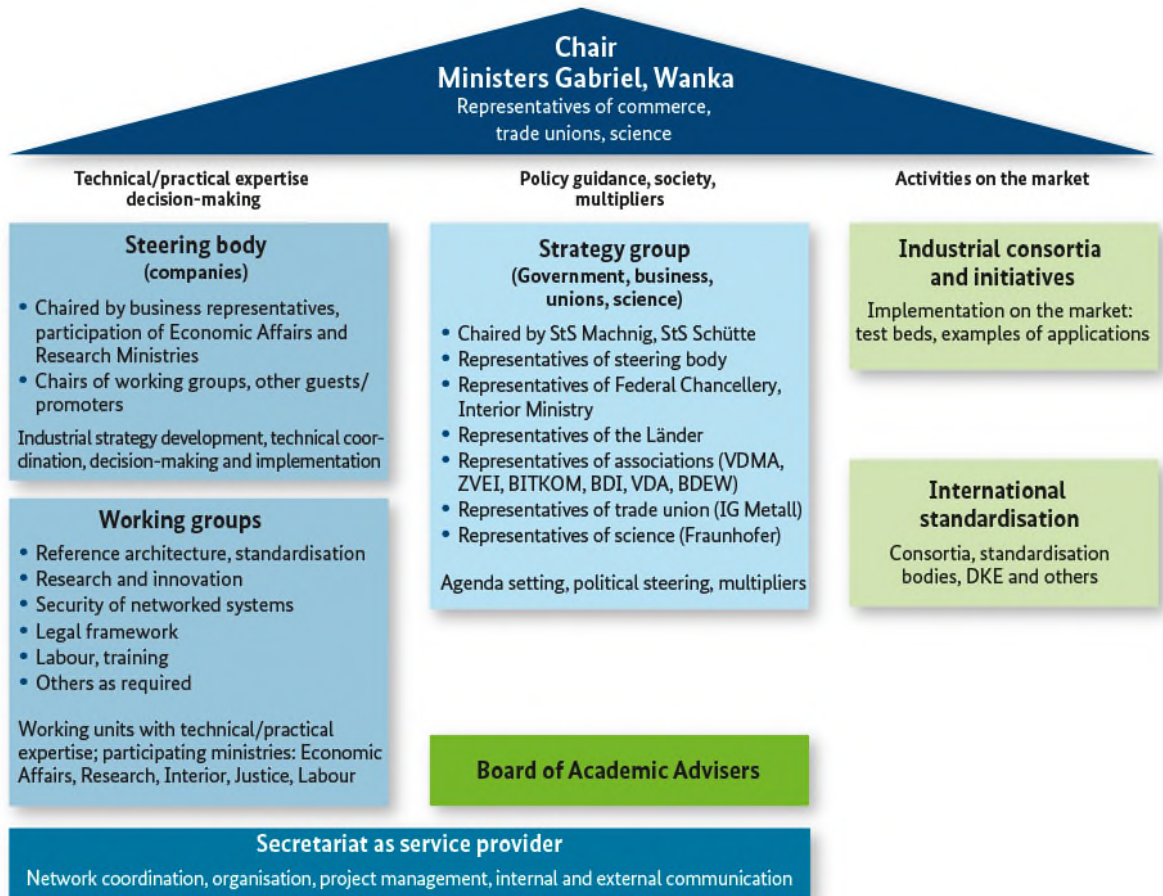
Review: The history of the platform

Industrie 4.0 is one of the future projects adopted in the „Action Plan High-tech strategy 2020“. The Federal Government thereby addressed the rapid social and technological development in this area and put structures for cooperation between all actors of innovation in Germany. The working group Industrie 4.0 set up by the Research Union Economy - Science of the BMBF shed a light on the requirements for a successful start into the fourth industrial age. In October 2012, the working group handed over its report entitled "Implementation of recommendations for the future project Industrie 4.0".

The associations BITKOM, VDMA and ZVEI - they account for more than 6,000 member companies – acted on the suggestion of a continuation and further development of the project Industrie 4.0 and in April 2013 concluded a cooperation agreement to run – in the form of an ideal thematic cooperation beyond association boundaries – the Plattform Industrie 4.0. The launch of the platform was officially announced at the Hanover Fair 2013.

In April 2015, the Plattform Industrie 4.0 was expanded - more actors from companies, associations, unions, science and politics were added.

Structure of the Plattform Industrie 4.0



Facts and Figures - Plattform Industrie 4.0

- ▶ **Engaged participants:** 250 participants coming from 108 organisations; representing various branches like engineering, electrical industry, IT as well as institution with a focus on politics, economy, associations and unions.
- ▶ **Enlargement of the Plattform Industrie 4.0:** April 2015 (based on the Plattform that had been established by the German associations BITKOM, VDMA and ZVEI as well as preliminary works by acatech – Deutsche Akademie der Technikwissenschaften in the previous years)
- ▶ **Working Groups**
 - **Number:** 5
 - **Topics of the working groups:**
 - Working group 1: Reference architectures, standards and norms
 - Working group 2: Research and innovation
 - Working group 3: Security of networked systems
 - Working group 4: Legal framework
 - Working group 5: Work, education and training

The working groups are composed of 25 to 30 experts from companies, expertise by scientific experts is consulted when needed, associations can acquire a „guest“ status

- ▶ **International cooperation:** The Plattform is in touch with various countries and has so far talked to France, China, Japan, Spain, Slovakia, the EU and numerous initiatives coming from other countries.