

Greetings

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Topic „Baden-Württemberg in Europe“

I. Introduction

Very welcome in Baden-Wuerttemberg and its capital Stuttgart. I have accepted your invitation with great pleasure and I care to transmit you the greetings of the State Government of Baden-Wuerttemberg and of the Prime Minister Mr. Oettinger.

The European Technology Platform Industrial Safety deals with topics of the future. Therefore, you are really at the right place, here in Baden-Wuerttemberg. Because Baden-Wuerttemberg is a country of the future. Let me support this statement by some numbers.

II. Location profile Baden-Wuerttemberg

Baden-Wuerttemberg is one of 16 States of the Federal Republic in Germany:

- With a surface of 36.000 km² we are as large as Belgium, the Netherlands or Switzerland.
- We have 10.7 million inhabitants, which is about as many as Belgium, Portugal or the Netherlands.
- Baden-Wuerttemberg has the lowest unemployment in Germany; our population enjoys a high prosperity.
- Our economic performance is considerable: our GDP of 2005 was 331 billion € - and by thus higher than Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden and Austria – twice as high as Finland and Portugal.
- We dispose over a high economic strength: With the gross domestic product/inhabitant we are 22% over the EU-25 – The average of 2005:

Baden-Wuerttemberg is in line with the Netherlands, Denmark, Austria and Sweden.

- Our economy is strongly shaped by the industry. We are particularly strong in mechanical engineering, in automotive, in electro-technology and in chemistry.
- Baden-Wuerttemberg is a high tech country with particular strengths in high technology industries.
- We are strong in research and development: 3.9% of the GDP go into research and development, thus we are internationally at the top.
- In addition Baden-Wuerttemberg has an outstanding research and university landscape.
- Our economy is set up internationally, export-oriented and still very European: Almost 60% of our exports go into states of the European Union.
- And finally: Baden-Wuerttemberg is in the European Union the region with the highest innovation ability.

These are more than just figures and statistical data. Those are rather messages, which confirm that Baden-Wuerttemberg is an outstanding place:

- At the top level in Germany, Europe and the world,
- Competitive on the world markets,
- Technologically leading and innovative,
- And, therefore, prepared for the future.

We are proud of it. Because it is not self-evident. In former times it was not like that. Only some 150 years Baden-Wuerttemberg was an agricultural country, a poorhouse in Europe, from which many people emigrated, in order to search their luck in overseas. Today people come to us, to live and work here.

The root of success does not lie in raw materials, because we are a country lacking of raw materials. Our only raw material is people, their creativity, their invention strength, their gift for innovations. That has always been like this. Pioneering inventions were made in Baden-Wuerttemberg. E.g. the automobile was invented in Baden-Wuerttemberg. A small workshop was the origin of the

world company DaimlerChrysler - in the Daimler Benz museum in Stuttgart you can witness it yourself.

Baden-Wuerttemberg is traditionally the country of the inventors and creators, a cradle of the innovation. This has not been so only in the past, it is so: most patents in Germany are registered in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

As technology-oriented country we have been always re exposed to the international competition for the top positions, in particular now, in the times of the globalization, where new competitors arise, like for example China and India.

Therefore, it is good that Baden-Wuerttemberg has an outstanding research landscape, universities and institutes, as for example the Max-Planck Institute, the Fraunhofer Institute, the facilities of the German Research Community. A special jewel in the crown is the Steinbeis Foundation: a unique transfer system, which is very successful at a national and internationally level. It is a transfer of technology "corporation" acting around the world, over 700 European-wide Centers transfer research results into competitive products, technologies and processes.

The Steinbeis Foundation is an important success engine for Baden-Wuerttemberg. Therefore I thank in the name of the federal state government all the employees of the Steinbeis Foundation, especially Professor Trasch on the top.

The today's meeting is organized by the Virtual Institute for integrated Risk Management, which is founded with the University of Stuttgart. This institute is a sign that, Baden-Wuerttemberg is once again leading in Europe. We already have what the others might be still dreaming of! Therefore my thanks go to Professor Dr. Jovanovic and Mr. Salvi for their commitment.

The today's meeting is a proof of the performance potential, which is based in Baden-Wuerttemberg, pioneering work at the example of the Industrial Safety.

III. About the European politics of the State Baden-Wuerttemberg

Baden-Wuerttemberg is committed to Europe. We are convinced Europeans. Our politics for the future is in line with the European one, which we actively implement already:

With huge commitment we pursue the Lisbon/Barcelona strategy, its program adopted in the year 2000, with the goal to make, within ten years, the European Union the most competitive and most dynamic knowledge-based market.

The same applies to the Göteborg strategy, which supplements and deepens the Lisbon strategy with the continuity aspect.

Baden-Wuerttemberg is “European” for two main reasons:

- Due to its own-interest and
- Due to the broad vision.

The own interest means: As a technologically leading and exporting country we are interested in a large, unified, strong European market. We benefit from the economic and monetary union and from the Euro introduced 5 years ago, which evolved - despite all initial doubts – to be the most stable currency in the world.

We see the great technological success, which the development of the Airbus brought for Europe – without which the USA with Boeing would have had a global monopoly in the segment of large-capacity aircrafts. Something similar applies to Galileo and the European space program. Such examples are milestones for successful European technology policy, which would exceed the capacity of individual states.

Also the today's meeting - the European Technology Platform Industrial Safety - is an important contribution to the future skill of Europe.

As a central transit country in Europe we are already by definition "Europeans par excellence". Therefore, it is also our interest to be tied up to the European remote railway system Paris-Bratislava-Budapest with Stuttgart 21. It explains also our interest in improving the transportation infrastructure, in particular the motorways.

The broad vision is our commitment to Europe as a peace union. Only a few decades ago Baden-Wuerttemberg was still the border region to France, an enemy at that time, with which three large wars were led within just a few decades. Today we are surrounded by friends; a war in Europe is today unthinkable. Therefore, 50 years after conclusion of the Rome Treaty the European Union is to be understood also as peace union. Seeing what happens in Afghanistan, Iraq or Somalia one can hardly estimate this success highly enough.

In last 50 years Europe has with the latest entry of Bulgaria and Romania evolved from "Europe of the 6" to "Europe of the 27". The essential structures for the decision-making processes have, however, remained basically as they were 50 years ago with just a quarter of the current EU members. This emphasises the necessity of the European constitution.

Therefore it is important to bring forward the European constitution process during German presidency in the first half-year 2007. This project is resolutely supported by Baden-Württemberg.

The German Council presidency is a chance for the German Federal States to strengthen their influence within European politics. The position of Baden-Wuerttemberg is:

- The European Union must increase its dynamics,
- The constitution process must be sustained,
- The substance of the constitutional contract must be preserved

- Future extensions are to be regulated. Baden-Wuerttemberg is for a quick entry of Croatia, expresses however reservations with Turkey.
- We are in favour of forming the European Union Television Guideline. We are in general for its extension to audiovisual media services - however we consider as necessary a generous deregulation in the area of quantitative restrictions in advertising. We strictly reject the legalization of product placements in the Commission's draft.
- It is important for us to strengthen the German language within the European Union. Especially regarding English and French German should not to be disadvantaged.
- We stand for a broad energy policy: During the summit in March a plan of action for energy is to be adopted. Thereby above all the respect of the national energy mix is important, next to the liberalisation of the electricity and gas markets and the improvement of the energy efficiency. In addition comes the promotion of renewable and regenerating raw materials as well as the intensification of a „foreign policy of the energy” and the development of energy-political partnerships, particularly with Russia, China and the USA.
- The German council presidency should be also used, to further strengthen the consciousness of the citizens for Europe.

Baden-Wuerttemberg is endeavoured for reaching these goals.

IV. Conclusion

The German Council presidency offers a chance for the future of Europe.

The French writer Antoine de Saint Exupéry meant: „One can build the future”. The sentence applies to architecture; it applies also to building Europe. And you, today, you participate, you contribute to this process.

With the today's meeting you are bringing in a further stone for building Europe. Therefore, I thank you in the name of the Government of Baden-Wuerttemberg.

I wish to the European Technology Platform Industrial Safety good consulting and much success.