

GERMAN COMPANIES IN THE U.S. ANTICIPATE A REBOUND IN 2026 FOLLOWING A CHALLENGING 2025

- **Sales Development:** 82% of German companies in the U.S. expect sales growth in 2026, after 64% saw growth and 23% experienced a decline in 2025.
- **Challenges:** Political uncertainty (46%) and the financial impact of tariffs (44%) replace shortage of skilled workers as top challenges for German companies in the U.S.
- **Tariffs:** 86% of the respondents report negative impacts from U.S. tariff policies, while 31% saw positive effects from tariffs.
- **Investment:** 67% plan to increase their U.S. investments in 2026; 56% intend to invest at least over 1 million USD over the next three years. Workforce development and digital transformation are the top investment priorities.
- **AI:** 57% of companies have already implemented AI projects — more than twice as many as in the previous year (28%).

New Orleans, LA, March 6, 2026 – The German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) published the **2026 German American Business Outlook (GABO) results** today at the German American Executive Summit. With 243 respondents from German companies active in the U.S., this report offers a first look into German companies' expectations for transatlantic business in the coming years.

Rebound after a difficult 2025

After a challenging 2025 marked by political uncertainty and the impact of tariffs, German companies in the U.S. are anticipating a rebound in 2026.

Looking forward, 82% of German companies in the U.S. expect net sales growth in 2026, after 64% reported growth in 2025 and 23% saw a decline. Challenges lead to divergent expectations, with company outlooks for “very strong growth” and “decline” in net sales both above historic norms.

Political uncertainty and tariffs replace shortage of skilled workers as top challenges in the U.S.

After years where workforce issues dominated business concerns, political uncertainty in the U.S. has now become the number one challenge facing companies (46% of respondents), followed by the financial impact of tariffs (44% of respondents). Also, almost one-third of the German companies cite administrative burden of tariffs as a major challenge.

When asked about the impact of U.S. tariff policy, 86% reported being negatively impacted while 31% of respondents reported a positive impact from U.S. tariffs. Due to their strong local manufacturing presence, German companies are often better positioned than their competitors from other countries, some of whom are further challenged by higher tariff rates. Germany employs the second-highest number of Americans in manufacturing among all foreign investors in the United States.



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Investment plans remain strong, mainly due to market size and customer base

Despite uncertainty, investment intentions remain strong, driven by the size of the U.S. market and its proximity to the customer base. Of survey respondents, 67% still plan to increase their investment in the U.S. in 2026, and 56% say that they are planning to invest \$1 million or more over the next three years, consistent with historic norms. Workforce development continues to hold the top spot for planned investment. Digital transformation, including AI, is the second-most popular investment for German companies in the U.S.

“The U.S. remains a growth market, and companies are investing accordingly. Our members are navigating the political uncertainty with pragmatism and resilience even as they wish for more predictability and tariff relief.” – Matthias Amberg, Chairman of the German American Chambers of Commerce

AI implementation more than doubled

Twice as many companies plan investments in digital transformation as compared to last year. 57% of companies report having implemented AI in at least one area, more than double the 2025 rate of 28%. For areas of implementation, Marketing & Sales was the most popular, followed by customer service and cybersecurity. Early adoption of AI is being led by survey respondents belonging to large companies.

About the German American Chambers of Commerce

The German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) have five main offices located in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. as well as branches in Boston, Detroit, and Houston. The GACCs cater to an extensive network of members and National Partners with a wide variety of services for market entry USA, apprenticeships in the U.S., and industry events for their German American business network.

About the German American Business Outlook

Conducted annually since 2009 by the German American Chambers of Commerce, the German American Business Outlook (GABO) is a survey of German subsidiaries in the U.S. assessing current economic developments and trends in transatlantic business. This year's survey was conducted in January 2026, with 243 respondents from German companies active in the U.S. market.

Media Contact:

Simone Pohl
Director Marketing, Membership & Events
AHK USA-Chicago
pohl@gaccmidwest.org
+1 (312) 982-2769



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