

Press release



The future of digitalisation and sustainability in Europe to be debated in Berlin

- The 10th German-Spanish Forum, held today in Berlin, provides an opportunity to exchange views on the challenges in the fields of sustainability and digitalisation in Europe and to develop joint solutions to shape this transformation.
- Inaugurated by His Majesty King Felipe and the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, it highlights the excellent bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Berlin, 18 October 2022 - The 10th German-Spanish Forum on 'Building together a digital and sustainable future in Europe', co-organised by the Liz Mohn Center of the Bertelsmann Stiftung and Telefónica, with the support of Fundación ICO, was held today in Berlin.

The Forum, inaugurated by His Majesty King Felipe and the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, is part of the official visit of the Spanish monarchs to Germany, which highlights the excellent bilateral relationship between the two countries.

The meeting was attended by high-level representatives from the private and social sectors of both countries. The first round table, 'How to be more competitive through digitalisation and sustainability', was attended by José María Álvarez-Pallete, Executive Chairman of Telefónica; Ignacio S. Galán, Chairman and CEO of Iberdrola; Belén Garijo, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Merck; Nico Hofmann, CEO of UFA GmbH; and Klaus Rosenfeld, President and CEO of Schaeffler AG. Through a joint dialogue, they pointed out that both transitions are fundamental factors in strategic planning, with a direct impact on the daily business of industry, banking, tourism and trade, concluding that digitalisation and sustainability pose great challenges, but also great opportunities for Europe's economic and social recovery.

The next panel was dedicated to 'Industries in transformation and challenges of financing and investment', with the participation of Ernesto Antolin, president of Grupo Antolin; António Simões, CEO of Santander Spain and regional head of Europe; Uwe Fröhlich, co-CEO of DZ Bank AG; and Michael Rüdiger, president of BlackRock Germany. This roundtable focused on the recent update of the industrial policy strategy approved by the

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European Union and how the different Spanish and German companies are adapting to these transformations.

The conference concluded with speeches by the German Minister for Economic Affairs, Robert Habeck, and the Spanish Minister for Industry, Reyes Maroto.

The aim of the 10th German-Spanish Forum is to strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries, as well as to exchange views on the challenges in the fields of sustainability and digitalisation in Europe and to develop joint solutions to shape this transformation, gaining in competitiveness.

About the German-Spanish Forum

The German-Spanish Forum was created in November 2002 at the proposal of the Spanish and German governments. It is seen as a bilateral platform for the exchange of views between leading representatives of politics, business, culture and science from both countries. The forum is regularly held alternately in Spain and Germany.

About the Liz Mohn Center of the Bertelsmann Stiftung

The Liz Mohn Center was founded in 2022 as an initiative of the Bertelsmann Stiftung and continues the commitment of Liz Mohn in an independent institution. The Liz Mohn Center pursues the goal of intensifying the global transfer of knowledge through various activities in order to improve the quality of leadership decisions in politics, business and culture on the basis of sound knowledge; to support leaders to lead sustainably and responsibly; to strengthen understanding between nations and cultures; and to support young talents from different sectors of society in their personal development. The Liz Mohn Centre is a non-profit limited liability company.

About Fundación ICO

Within its scope of action and in accordance with the ICO Group Strategy 2022-2027, the ICO Foundation works with the aim of contributing to the development of society. To this end, the ICO Foundation deploys its actions to facilitate and promote access to culture and knowledge, with a marked international vocation, from two axes: the first focused on sustainable economy and finance and the second on art and sustainable architecture.

About Telefónica

Telefónica is one of the world's leading telecommunications service providers. The company offers fixed and mobile connectivity services, as well as a wide range of digital services for individuals and businesses. It is present in Europe and Latin America, where it has more than 384 million customers.

Telefónica is a fully private company whose shares are listed on the Continuous Market of the Spanish stock exchanges and on the New York and Lima stock exchanges.

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