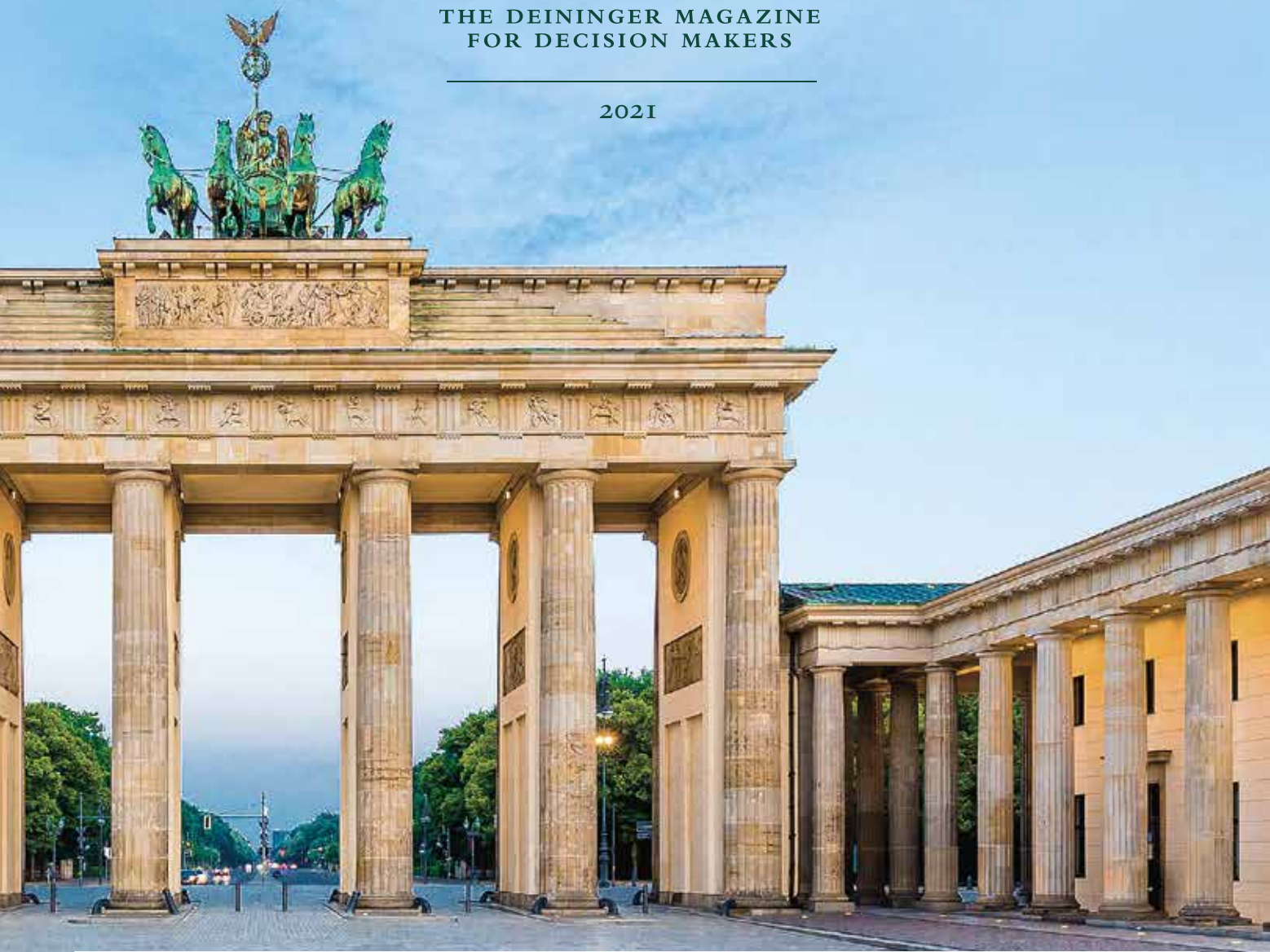


VISION

D

THE DEININGER MAGAZINE
FOR DECISION MAKERS

2021



Green German federal bonds

How Tammo Diemer manages
the country's finances

Research alliance

Biotest joins the fight
against COVID-19

Corporate diversity

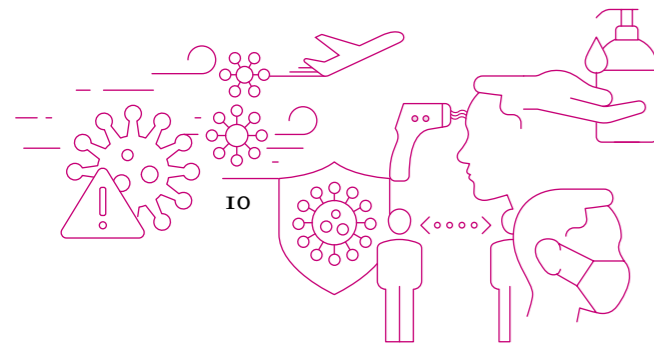
Dussmann Executive Board member
Wolf-Dieter Adlhoch wears many hats



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IMPRINT

Vision D – The DEININGER Magazine for Decision Makers
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Art Direction: Wolfgang Hanauer; Print: Kuthal Print GmbH & Co. KG, Mainaschaff
Publisher & Editorial Contact: Deutscher Fachverlag GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Tel.: +49 69 7595 3055; e-mail: bjoern.boeer@dfv.de; www.dfv.de

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SPEAKER'S CORNER

Humility ...

... had fallen out of fashion, but it's something we've been hearing about more and more recently. Many people didn't realize until the coronavirus crisis just how good they had it up until a relatively short time ago. They are now noting, with humility, that success is not a permanent situation. And that it is possible to be grateful for the good times in retrospect as well.

Humility is also liberating, in a way, because it brings **courage**.

Courage makes us strong. It keeps us from wearing down, from giving up. Courage is especially important in times of crisis, because only through courage and inventive spirit can we overcome the kinds of challenges many industries are facing these days. We've all heard that necessity is the mother of invention, but courage plays a part as well.

With that in mind, we hope you find the new issue of Vision D to be a stimulating read – and maybe even an encouraging one!

Your

Carl Philipp Berger Christian Berick Thomas Deininger Elke Ebeling
Joy Edwin Thanarajah Christian Göritz Christoph Hartmann Moritz Herfert
Lodowing Insiun Manish Joshi Mirja Linke Werner Mummert Rainer Pauly
Stefan Schuberth Christian Tuttlies Manish Varghese

Cover: Stock



BUILDING BLOCK: E-RECRUITING

Joy Edwin Thanarajah talks the benefits – and limitations – of online searches.

Millennials and generation Z use technology differently, so recruiters have to adapt, too. E-recruiting – recruiting employees across a wide range of different Internet channels – is a firmly established part of the world of recruitment these days. One major factor is that the Internet offers ideal ways to search for, identify, and contact new employees on a targeted basis.

There are also many other advantages that companies should be sure to leverage in the war for talent: e-recruiting is cheap and saves time, plus it can be used internationally. Incorporating tools like videos, electronic pre-screening, and online interviews also makes it useful even amid a pandemic.

But how successful e-recruiting is depends on how the entire recruiting process chain is designed. Getting candidates excited about your company right from the start and ultimately bringing them on board as employees only works when paired with direct personal contact. E-recruiting is only fully effective if the entire recruiting process, from posting a vacant position to placing a candidate in the job, is structured and organized.

E-recruiting is also a good way to pre-screen suitable candidates to bring in those who are merely passively receptive to being contacted as opposed to actively looking to make a change. But in these cases as well, there's no substitute for personal contact. A conversation is the only way to turn possible and passive candidates into interested and enthusiastic applicants. ●



JOY EDWIN THANARAJAH

Joy Edwin Thanarajah is a managing director at DEININGER Consulting. With more than 1,000 search assignments completed, he specializes in the areas of hidden champions of the medium-sized business sector along with mechanical and industrial engineering, insurance and related areas.

ADDED EXPERTISE

DEININGER Consulting welcomes ten new consultants to the firm's international team.

CARL PHILIPP BERGER
Senior Consultant
Berlin



Senior Consultant Carl Philipp Berger supports the DEININGER Consulting team at the

Berlin location. After completing a formal vocational training program in business and commerce and continuing education in commerce, he went on to study business administration. He spent more than nine years working for international fashion companies in the apparel industry before moving to personnel consulting.

CHRISTIAN BERICK
Managing Director
Frankfurt am Main



Managing Director Christian Berick has been advising German and international clients on executive search

and M&A matters since 2013. He also supports public companies and mid-sized family enterprises with expansion and restructuring activities and succession due to age.

RAFAL BOCZKOWSKI
Partner
Warsaw



For more than 20 years, Rafal has been successful in human resources management, mainly in Central Eastern

Europe, both as a human resources consultant and a human resources manager. He takes a holistic approach to advising his clients in the areas of leadership development and executive search.

ELKE EBELING
Managing Director
Frankfurt am Main



Elke Ebeling has more than 20 years of experience placing candidates in first- and second-level leadership

positions and top specialist roles in Germany and other countries. She supports the Frankfurt office. She specializes in the manufacturing industry, including the mechanical engineering and plant and equipment sectors, the construction industry, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods, focusing in each case on family companies with international focus and on hidden champions.

CHRISTIAN GÖRITZ
Partner
Düsseldorf



Christian Göritz has a *Diplom* degree in business and more than 20 years of international experience

placing candidates in executive and specialist positions. His industry focus is on manufacturing companies, especially chemistry, biotech and consumer goods as well as auditing companies (audit, tax and advisory). Over the past 17 years, he was responsible for building and expanding PMC International AG as a board member.

MANISH JOSHI
Partner
Mumbai



Based in our Mumbai office, Manish leads the real estate, infrastructure and supply chain & logistics practices

of our firm in India. He brings over 19 years of work experience, of which the last 14 years have been in executive search and leadership hiring. Most recently, he served as a Director with EAL Search and prior to that as a Principal with Pedersen & Partners, heading the Real Estate and Hospitality Verticals at these leading search firms. Previously, he worked as a Talent Acquisition Lead with DAMAC Group, UAE and Lodha Group, Mumbai.

JOANNA KRYSZTOPOWICZ
Senior Consultant
Warsaw



Joanna has been supporting DEININGER Consulting in Warsaw since 2014. Her focus is on filling

management positions in Poland and other countries in Central Europe. Thanks to her many years of experience and in-depth knowledge of local labor markets, she is able to design and implement solution strategies tailored to her customers and the requirements of their specific industries.

ALEKSANDRA MIZINSKA
Senior Consultant
Warsaw



Aleksandra has been handling top and upper management level recruitment projects since 2016. She

focuses on the manufacturing and construction industries, placing candidates in Central and Eastern Europe and significant projects in Western Europe.

THOMAS NIEDER
Partner
Berlin



Thomas Nieder establishes lasting contacts to existing and new clients and does so with incredible sensitivity. After a

two-year hiatus, he has returned – much to the joy of our national and international teams.

MARTINA PAGNOTTA
Senior Consultant
Düsseldorf



Martina Pagnotta has a degree in business. She focuses on the chemistry and life science industries, with

special attention to biotech and consumer goods. She has been supporting international clients in placing candidates in executive and specialist positions for more than 20 years. She also has expertise in private equity and venture capital and working with auditing firms. With her holistic approach, she identifies lasting solutions for her clients. She knows what characteristics executives should have and how to increase diversity and change within organizations.

You can find the entire DEININGER Consulting team and full contact information on the firm's website at www.deinger.de/en



Biotest's approximately 2,000 employees bring focus and passion to the quest for new medications.

Plasma helps save lives

Biotest AG is harnessing a very special kind of fluid – one that could even help in the fight against COVID-19 soon.

 PETER LÜCKEMEIER

When people ask Dr. Michael Ramroth why he is always happy to go to work, his simple answer rings true: “Because we make something that helps people.” Indeed they do. Biotest, based in the German town of Dreieich, makes products that help patients who require intensive care. The company can help save the lives of those suffering from severe pneumonia as well. And, not long from now, they may be able to help in the fight against COVID-19.

Ramroth, a lawyer by training, joined the stock corporation's Board of Management in 2004 and was named Chairman in 2019. The company he leads was founded by Carl Adolf Schleussner in 1946 and has been publicly listed since 1987. The Schleussner family held a majority stake for a long time. They did not sell until the growing company's need for investment outgrew their resources. Creat, a Chinese investment firm, currently holds the majority of shares.

The fact that Biotest AG needed a large infusion of funds was due to the company's ambitions. With its “Next Level” program, the pharmaceutical firm is looking to a bigger and brighter future. What exactly does that mean? Production capacity is being more than doubled. Previously, the company produced medications for clinical immunology and intensive care and to

treat hemophilia, an inherited disease that interferes with blood clotting. In the future, plans call for a significant expansion of the product range. There's plenty of room in Dreieich. And there's an ample supply of raw material as well.

The name of that raw material? Blood. Plasma is produced from this “very special juice,” as Goethe called it in *Faust*. Plasma is the cell-free residue left behind when blood is put through a centrifuge.

It doesn't look like much, this milky to watery fluid, but it is highly effective. Although plasma is 91 percent water, the rest really packs a punch. It contains hormones, minerals, and a wealth of proteins – which is also why a liter of plasma costs 130 to 140 euros. The human body is the only source of blood, which means it is also the only source of plasma. Artificial production is not possible. Plasma is the substance Biotest uses with the aim of making various medical dreams come true.

One of those is curing COVID-19. To that end, Biotest AG has teamed up with eight companies worldwide. This research alliance is pursuing a sensible approach: taking plasma donations from patients who



Dr. Michael Ramroth,
Chairman of the Board of Management/Chief Financial Officer ...

... has been a member of the Board of Management since 2004 and was named Chairman of the Board of Management of Biotest AG as of May 1, 2019. Before that, he served on the boards of the former MG Technologies AG, CeramTec AG, and Metallgesellschaft AG. Ramroth trained as a lawyer and holds a doctorate in economics.



Dr. Georg Floß,
Chief Operations Officer ...

... has been the second member of the Board of Management of Biotest AG since 2013. Before that, he served as CEO of Biotest Pharmaceuticals Corporation in Boca Raton, Florida, and worked at Plasmaprotein Operations. He worked for CSL Behring GmbH from 1999 until 2008. Floss first demonstrated his professional skills at Bayer AG and Hoechst Roussel Veterinär GmbH. He studied veterinary medicine and went on to earn a doctorate in virology.

→ have recovered from COVID-19. This plasma already contains the antibodies that fight the virus. The plasma is purified, processed to produce hyperimmunoglobulin, and then administered to patients. The antibodies start fighting the disease immediately. This kind of treatment is especially helpful for those with the most severe cases.

But that's not all; the researchers in Dreieich have another arrow in their quiver as well. A new medication, trimodulin, is currently in the pipeline. Originally developed for patients with community-acquired pneumonia, the goal now is to use it to help COVID patients. An international study is now under way to determine the drug's efficacy. The worldwide pandemic has brought fresh urgency to the development of fast-acting medications, but drug research remains a lengthy,

“We’re still a family company

expensive process. It typically takes ten years for a product to reach market readiness. And then there's the issue of where to get the blood.

Seventy percent of the plasma processed worldwide comes from the United States, where donors receive payment for each donation. Biotest AG joined other

companies and organizations in building its own collection centers in the U.S. But once the company's Chinese backer acquired a majority, in 2018, the team in Dreieich began feeling the effects of Trump-era policy decisions. Since the company was held by a Chinese entity, it was forced to sell its collection centers, ostensibly to keep it from obtaining American donors' data. “We have no interest in collecting their data,” Ramroth says. “But the U.S. authorities weren't convinced.” Now Biotest has to buy American plasma, a costly proposition. And that in turn means the business model no longer pencils out for the Chinese investment firm, so Biotest AG will be changing majority shareholders sooner or later.

Ramroth, who stands an imposing 2.04 meters (a little over 6'8”) tall, is unconcerned. Having started his career as a lawyer at industrial conglomerate Metallgesellschaft and now with his contract at Biotest having been extended until at least 2023, Ramroth believes the company is well-equipped for the future with its promising innovative products. Production capacity has been significantly expanded at great expense. There is still plenty of space on the outskirts of Dreieich for future expansions, especially since the company's neighbor, the Wilhelm Brandenburg large-scale butchering operation, is likely to move away at some point. Ramroth's optimism is also based on the company's workforce of some 2,000 employees, two-thirds of them working in Dreieich, where the company operates 24 hours a day in three shifts. The company's origins have been shaped by the Schleussners right up to the present day, the CEO says.

That history has a close personal connection with Hans Schleussner (1927–2015), the founder's son, who grew the business into a large company. He was one of those people for whom there simply aren't enough hours in the day. Hans Schleussner took a company that mainly focused at first on blood typing (hence the second part of the Biotest name) and turned it into a forward-looking enterprise working in immunology and hematology. But Schleussner, who had a doctorate in chemistry, was more than just a businessman. He also

found time for the Lutheran regional synod and his own congregation. Schleussner endowed a chair in immune pharmacology at Goethe University in Frankfurt with 2.3 million deutschmarks, served for four decades as part of the assembly of the Offenbach Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was one of the founding



Photos: Biotest AG



Biotest AG group headquarters, in Dreieich

A look behind the scenes: filter aid process for plasma fractionation (above) and a microtiter plate

SUCCESS FOR 75 YEARS

BIOTEST is a global provider of plasma protein products and biotherapeutic pharmaceuticals. Biotest products are primarily used in clinical immunology, hematology, and intensive care medicine. The company operates at every stage, from preclinical and clinical development to manufacturing and worldwide marketing. Development and production activities take place at the company's headquarters in Germany. Biotest maintains subsidiaries in France, the UK, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, and Spain. It also has its own sales and distribution companies in Brazil and blood plasma donation centers in Germany, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

Employees: about 2,000, most of them in Germany
Sales revenue: 484 million euros (2020)

in a way.” DR. MICHAEL RAMROTH

the public good with the next generation. His daughter Dr. Cathrin Schleussner is the chair of the board of trustees of Clementine Children's Hospital in Frankfurt. Hans Schleussner's spirit, Ramroth says, still shapes the company to this day: “We're still a family company in a way.” ●

INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS DEININGER



“YOU DON’T FIND A CEO BY VIDEO INTERVIEW”

When Thomas Deininger, founder and managing partner of DEININGER Consulting, first started out in executive search nearly 50 years ago, Germany’s business sector was a man’s world, parental leave was unknown, and the candidate file was kept using a pencil. New technologies have simplified many work steps in the meantime. But experience has shown him that technology has its limits.

Mr. Deininger, the past year has brought dramatic change in the culture of meetings all over the world. Videoconferences have taken the place of face-to-face meetings, right up to the uppermost levels of business and politics. That must make pre-screening of candidates to place in a position much easier for you, right?
THOMAS DEININGER | No, definitely not! When it comes to a management position, it’s true that formal qualifications count for something, but personal fit is much more important. It’s much easier and faster to gauge that if I can see how someone walks, how they come through

perspectives for the future. That includes things like insight into a company’s confidential strategic plans, and those kinds of documents will never be shared by e-mail, not even in the future.

How many meetings does it take for you to place a candidate for a “C-level” position, meaning in the executive management, board of management, or supervisory board?

TD | In executive search, it takes about 60 to 80 prior contacts to identify 12 to 15 possible candidates. Ideally, we then hold meetings on site in person with all of those candidates. That’s true

“Our focus is on people with high potential.”

the door, when I can observe their gestures and facial expressions. All that isn’t possible the same way with video chat. The authentic assessment gets lost.

Does that mean virtual meetings won’t become the new standard in recruiting?

TD | I can’t imagine that they would, at least for the top level, for two reasons. First, a video conversation only provides about 40 to 50 percent of the necessary information. And second, when it comes to a top position, it isn’t so much about discussing a person’s résumé as finding joint

of positions in the top management, but that’s not all. It also applies to finding a new head of sales, for example. We typically present three candidates to the client.

Has the coronavirus crisis made it easier or harder to select suitable applicants?

TD | It’s easier in one way. If a potential CEO chooses to hold their Skype call from their gazebo at home, that’s a clear issue. That kind of attitude shows a lack of preparation and lack of respect for the seriousness of the application situation and the interests of the person at the other end of the

call, meaning the possible future employer.

But on a fundamental level, the coronavirus has made search activities harder, at least in the medium term, since after all, we don’t deliberately seek out those who are just about to be let go, so they would be willing to make a change right away. Our focus is on people with high potential who believe they have better long-term career prospects at another company and are considering a move for that reason. And that group of people is more hesitant right now, since many of them can sense that could be a wave of layoffs coming this year.

With so much uncertainty surrounding the economy right now, are companies looking for new managers at all?

TD | The personnel consulting business has been picking up in the past quarter. We’ve seen two trends there. In urgent cases in Germany, when someone is needed to step into a certain role due to illness or retirement, decisions and actions come swiftly. But if someone is looking for a local manager for an international branch, the search process is still stagnant. Due to travel restrictions, we can’t meet candidates locally, and many of them can’t travel to Germany, either.

With all this as background, what do you think lies ahead for top personnel consulting in Germany?

TD | We will see a concentration of forces here. Smaller companies can only compete with the big international corporate groups if they forge close alliances or merge with each other. For DEININGER Consulting, I’m very optimistic, since our early strategic decision to cultivate a strong presence in Europe and Asia is paying off more and more. We set up four new teams in just the last few weeks, and a fifth is due to be added shortly. This is helping us to add depth in terms of industry. ●



THOMAS DEININGER ...

... is the grand seigneur among German headhunters. He focuses on the C-suite. Educated in Dresden, Deininger earned a *Diplom* degree in mechanical engineering before working in industry for several years. He moved to an international management and personnel consulting firm in 1973 and rose to the top of the firm in 1978. He founded DEININGER Unternehmensberatung GmbH in Frankfurt in late 1981. Since then, he has been pushing the expansion of activities to the rest of Europe and the Far East in the role of managing partner.

WORK OUT

AVIATION HEALTH

Researchers from the Aviation Public Health Initiative (APHI) at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health have studied the risks of SARS-CoV-2 transmission during air travel. Their conclusions affirm what representatives of aircraft manufacturer Airbus already announced: The combination of disinfection of aircraft interiors, face masks, and onboard ventilation means air travel carries a “very low risk of transmission” of coronaviruses. The researchers note that the aircraft ventilation system, which continually circulates and refreshes the air supply, filters out over 99 percent of the particles that cause COVID-19 and rapidly dissipates exhaled air with downward displacement.

INSURANCE

Anyone who is planning to travel on business (or for personal reasons) should be sure to update their insurance coverage. Companies like Allianz and Hanse Merkur offer extended “COVID-19 coverage” for selected travel insurance products, for example. The additional coverage also includes safeguards that apply in the event of individual quarantine due to a suspected case of COVID-19. Various airlines and hotels also offer specific insurance products. It’s important to note that conventional international health insurance does not typically pay benefits if a traveler has traveled to an area for which the German Federal Foreign Office has issued a travel warning.

3 QUESTIONS FOR

Lodowing Insiun, Managing Director of DEININGER Management Consulting Shanghai

“ALWAYS TAKE A CLOTHESLINE”



China took very strict measures to clamp down on the coronavirus, so it was practically inevitable that you’d be quarantined at some point. When did it happen, and why?

Lodowing Insiun

I flew from Frankfurt to Malaysia in mid-March, after a work meeting. I was planning to make a quick visit to my twin sons and then continue on to Shanghai. On March 29, China halted all entries by foreigners to prevent a second wave of infection imported from elsewhere. All flights were canceled, and all foreign nationals had their visas voided. I was stuck in Malaysia.

You ended up spending two weeks quarantined at a hotel in Shanghai afterward. How did you pass the time?

Once China lifted the travel ban, I was able to travel to Shanghai in mid-July. Finding a flight in the first place was a huge undertaking, with 90 percent of flights to China having been canceled. All passengers arriving at Pudong Airport in Shanghai had to take a coronavirus test then and there. After passport control, everyone boarded a central bus that took us to the various quarantine hotels. I was assigned to stay at a hotel in the city center and spend 14 days in my room. You were only allowed to open your door to take out the trash or accept your three meals a day. Any violation of the quarantine rules meant immediate deportation.

Looking back on the time you spent in quarantine, do you have any special tips for colleagues?

You should definitely take laundry detergent and a clothesline along. I was also really happy to have thought to bring coffee filters and ground coffee with me. There was an electric kettle in the room. If you have to spend 14 days in one room, you should definitely stick to a routine. Get up in the morning, eat breakfast, read your e-mail, and work as you usually would, then talk to your family by video call in the evening. That’s the only way to make the time fly by.

TRIPS IN GERMANY

At least for domestic travel within Germany, magazine *Apotheken Umschau* offers a coronavirus travel check. The tool gives travelers a quick way to check whether they are allowed to travel from one state to another and what rules may apply to entering a certain state or to overnight stays there. A website created especially for this purpose, [apothekenumschau.de/corona-reisecheck](https://www.apothekenumschau.de/corona-reisecheck), summarizes each state’s regulations. The information is taken from German federal and state laws and regulations and the risk assessments published by the Robert Koch Institute (RKI).

BUSINESS TRAVEL – DESPITE THE CORONAVIRUS

Insights on getting ready

5 QUESTIONS FOR ...

Dr. Tammo Diemer, Member of the Executive Board of the German federal finance agency

“GREEN GERMAN FEDERAL BONDS ARE GOOD FOR THE CLIMATE”

Mr. Diemer, Germany needed to borrow just over 400 billion euros in 2020, about twice as much as usual. In 2021, it might be even 470 billion euros. As a mathematician, cool calculation is your métier – but doesn't it make you and your team sweat a bit to deal with sums like that?

It's true, not only did about 200 billion euros in German federal securities mature in 2020, which we had to replace, but there was also about 200 billion euros in additional borrowing due to the coronavirus aid measures. We adjusted the issuance calendar for 2020 in March and April in particular. This year the Covid-19 pandemic will also effect the issuing volume significantly. To make sure the German federal government is able to take action on a precision-targeted basis even amid the crisis, we also use other reliable tools, like sales of our own holdings on the secondary market and hedged money market transactions. On the whole, we have our hands full, but even changes of plan like this don't distract us.

Can private investors hope to see interest rates rise now, since all of the countries in Europe are racking up more debt, so they have to compete for investor funding?

The interest level in the eurozone is indeed determined by supply and demand, and government demand for capital is increasing on a massive scale. But at the same time, the supply of capital has also grown, since the European Central Bank responded early on with special purchasing programs for government securities. That has kept interest rates stable at a very low level for now.

You recently enlarged the scope of your duties, so you now also offer “green” German government bonds. What is your goal there?

To reach Germany's and Europe's climate targets – reducing greenhouse gases by 2030, climate neutrality by 2050 – the German economy will have to make considerable investments. Our goal is to prompt capital market participants to get involved, and to make it easier for them to do so. We know from talking to our investors that when they think about making investments like these, they want to do so in a market that is secure, transparent, and liquid, so people can get in easily and get back out just as easily if necessary. Those are exactly the kinds of conditions we're creating now with our green German federal securities. The revenue demonstrably goes only toward eco-friendly budget items, and because these securities can easily be liquidated and the borrower ratings are top-notch, they will act as a benchmark. That will let us reach our goal of strengthening and further developing the green capital market on the whole.

But if more and more investors turn toward green securities, how will you plug any gaps in places like the defense budget? It won't be easy to go green in defense.

Although most investors view Germany as sustainable, the majority of the federal budget isn't suitable for green federal securities. That includes defense spending and social spending as well. Those activities will still be financed using conventional bonds. The fact that traditional securities are still available at the same level is another advantage of the innovative “twin” concept we've developed. Each green German federal security has a conventional twin with the same coupon and maturity date. The issuance of the conventional twin is also always increased by the same amount as the volume of the green security. That portion of the securities stays with us, but in this way, we can give the market access to the usual quantities of that tranche, so there's no concern about a shortage.

Watching every penny comes with the territory in your work. Are you just as careful with money in your personal life?

At the finance agency, we work in everyone's interest, and we do so with financial success. It's not really about watching pennies. In my personal life, I do occasionally splurge on something like going out to eat with my family or taking a nice vacation. That's what I think of as the finer things in life. You just can't let your expenses go over your income. And on and off the job, I do value a certain cushion, since it provides security and peace of mind.



Dr. Tammo Diemer

is a member of the Executive Board of Bundesrepublik Deutschland – Finanzagentur GmbH (Federal Republic of Germany – Finance Agency), based in Frankfurt. Together with his fellow Executive Board member, Dr. Jutta A. Dönges, and about 300 employees, he is responsible for ensuring that the German

federal debt, which currently amounts to about 1.3 trillion euros, is refinanced as favorably as possible, with good certainty in terms of planning. Born in Essen in 1969, Diemer studied mathematics at the University of Bonn and University of Warwick in the 1990s and then returned to Bonn for his doctorate. He started

his professional career in 1999, working in asset liability management at DePfa Deutsche Pfandbriefbank AG, and then moved to Aareal Bank AG in Wiesbaden in 2001. Diemer rose to the position of Managing Director and Head of Treasury there before taking over as head of the finance agency in 2013.

Photo: Finanzagentur des Bundes



Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann manages the family company as her late husband, Peter Dussmann, would have wanted, and in cooperation with the Executive Board, of which Wolf-Dieter Adlhoch has been the spokesman since September 2019.

Dussmann Executive Board Spokesman Wolf-Dieter Adlhoch honed his skills in politics.

PETER LÜCKEMEIER

AN EYE FOR DETAIL AND FOR THE BIG PICTURE

Tall and strikingly slender, there is nothing showy or superior about his manner even though he has a clear, carrying speaking style. Talk with him for a while, and you might begin to see attributes like “levelheaded” and “straightforward,” but also “decisive.” With every word he says, you can see that Wolf-Dieter Adlhoch enjoys his work. In his role as Executive Board Spokesman at the Dussmann Group, he also has an unusually broad range of duties. After all, what other company takes care of the elderly, cleans offices, disinfects

that really should be larger. In Hesse state politics, Adlhoch, who has a background in law, was one of those officials who might never get their name in the paper, but are still important in terms of crafting the right plans for the future. A protégé of the late finance minister Thomas Schäfer, he came to work closely with Roland Koch at the Hessian State Chancellery, which has always been a professional organization. “Head of Policy Matters” is the modest administrative title he held. His work focused on properly preparing economic, financial, and tax policies – including the Opel rescue and laying the groundwork for corporate tax reform.

“Striking the right balance between stepping on the brakes and on the accelerator.”

hospitals, supplies school meals, organizes childcare facilities close to the plants where people work, builds refrigeration systems, and operates a huge multimedia store in Berlin’s Mitte district?

Stepping on the gas

And that’s before we even get to integrated facility management, elevator technology, project planning for complex electrical engineering solutions, and the joint venture with Mainova for the construction of nationwide electric vehicle charging station infrastructure that was launched this summer. Adlhoch, 45, is the head of a company with 65,000 employees working in very different fields. That being the case, it’s only natural that the top manager himself has to embody strengths that might seem contradictory: an eye for both detail and the big picture. The Executive Board spokesman finds it important that he works for a family company. The founder, Peter Dussmann, was a sharp businessman who expanded the company into an international provider of various services. His widow, Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann, is continuing his work. She is the chair of the board of trustees of the Peter Dussmann Foundation.

Adlhoch, who grew up in the town of Heusenstamm in the German state of Hesse, honed the tools for his job as one of the few people to move between the worlds of politics and business – a group

“There probably aren’t many people who have had as many and as detailed discussions with Roland Koch as I did,” Adlhoch says with a smile, recalling a minister-president who thrived on controversy. Koch evidently didn’t want to let that kind of productive debate go even when he moved to the corporate world. Adlhoch joined him in moving to Bilfinger’s headquarters in Mannheim, trading in his role as a civil servant for that of a head of strategy from 2011 to 2016. That meant he was in charge of Bilfinger SE’s transition from a traditional construction group to a modern industrial service provider. Some time after his former boss left Bilfinger, Adlhoch moved as well. Once again, he was drawn by the chance to work behind the scenes in politics, this time as the Brexit officer for the Hessian state government. He was assigned to lead a task force exploring the consequences of Britain’s departure from the EU on Frankfurt as a hub of finance and on the export sector. Volker Bouffier had already been serving as minister-president for some time by then. Adlhoch says he learned a lot from both state executives, the conflict-embracing Koch and Bouffier, who is more of a consensus builder.

In August 2017, the man behind the scenes stepped up as a manager in a leading position when Adlhoch joined the Executive Board of the Dussmann Group, where he has served as spokesman since September 2019. He believes it is important to win employees

**DUSSMANN: F
ACTS AND FIGURES**

The Dussmann Group, founded in 1963, offers various services having to do with people's needs. It has five divisions:

- Facility management
- Technical plant and equipment services
- Senior care
- Childcare facilities close to the plants where people work
- Multimedia store

Dussmann Service offers 70 services having to do with facility management, all from a single source. It is the largest division within the Dussmann Group. Services for hospitals, for example, include catering, cleaning, and patient transport.

Dussmann Technical Solutions (DTS), a relatively new division, operates as a partner for construction and operation of sophisticated technical systems and equipment across ten industrial sectors. These fields include critical infrastructures such as life science companies and data centers.

Kursana operates 116 facilities and employs 6,800 people. There are currently 14 KulturKinder-garten child care centers, and the KulturKaufhaus multimedia store just recently expanded to include a new online shop.

The Dussmann Group in figures:

64,500 employees in 22 countries, 27,560 employees in Germany
Consolidated sales revenue, 2019:
 2.13 billion euros,
 78% Dussmann Service
 20.3% Care & Kids
 1.7% KulturKaufhaus

The company headquarters, on Berlin's Friedrichstr., are also home to the KulturKaufhaus multimedia store. The Dussmann Service division is the main revenue source in the Dussmann Group.



over, to involve them in decision making and identifying objectives. Admittedly, the management has to set the pace there. Adlhoch says a manager who wants to be a mover and shaker has to strike the right balance between stepping on the brakes and on the accelerator: "Even if I think 20 projects are strategically important, I might need to limit the number to ten right now so I don't lose focus."

An eye for detail

An outsider comparing how much time a manager and a political appointee work might well assume that the person with a government job works fixed hours while the one at the helm of a company is always moving here and there. Adlhoch knows better. Back when he worked in government, a weekend call from Koch's government spokesman Dirk Metz asking for a swift response to a report published by dpa left little time to ask the experts, coordinate a

Adlhoch lives in Frankfurt with his wife and three sons, aged eight, 11, and 14, but his desk is in Berlin, on the sixth floor of the building where the KulturKaufhaus multimedia store continues to serve customers until midnight, even amid the pandemic. Adlhoch and his colleagues on the Executive Board – Dussmann Service has 15,000 employees in Italy alone – don't spend much time working at a desk, though. He likes to form an authentic impression on site. And he doesn't shy away from what might seem like minor details, either.

He says he "drills down into the details" on important projects. Once a month, for example, he doesn't just attend the executive

"You have to work intensely on things, listen to people, make decisions, and meet the team where they are."

shared stance among multiple ministries, and win over potential opponents. Adlhoch says there is little difference in the amount of time he works. He also sees parallels in the fundamental requirements that apply in both politics and corporate management: "You have to work intensely on things, listen to people, make decisions, and meet the team where they are."

management meeting in Italy. He also takes a look around at the business. In Bergamo, for example, that means the hospital where employees of Dussmann's Italian arm make sure doctors and nurses can fight the coronavirus under good hygienic conditions. He is interested in the issues and the people who work there. That in itself explains why he is the right man in the right place. ●

SNIPPET



COMPLIANCE IN A NUTSHELL



Where is the line between a gift and a bribe? Ever since compliance first came to the fore, bosses and employees alike have had the same question. Hurricane-level flooding pales by comparison to the rising tide of new and different guidelines. A single major German bank can have a whopping 700 compliance employees. Worried managers turn to the compliance department to find out whether they can accept an invitation to go to a concert or watch a Bundesliga soccer game from a box seat. And if you work at a DAX-listed company, don't give your secretary the password to your computer. It could cost you your bonus. Or even your job. Are you still shaking in your boots, or are you already flying?

Ihr Peter Lückemeier

RELAX AND UNWIND

You're lying in bed, tossing and turning because your mind is still too much on your last conference, you have a packed schedule ahead of you the next day, or your new project requires planning. At times like these, Tobias Baier from Kakenstorf has the perfect solution: his goodnight podcast. His idea? He narrates "something to distract you from your own thoughts so you have an easier time falling asleep." At the end, he also reads something aloud to the audience. The podcast is such a hit that Baier has now even launched an online fan shop.

Sign up by app or via iTunes, online at einschlafen-podcast.de



4 PODCASTS FOR MORNING, IN BETWEEN AND EVENING

LEARNING

Podcasts and language practice come together on the Spotlight portal. Originally launched as a print newspaper, Spotlight has long since grown beyond the printed word. Users are welcome to explore and polish their business English in various ways, including via audio streams and an app. The Spotlight publishing house also offers language training for Italian, French, and Spanish.

business-spotlight.de/adesso-online.de/ecoute.de/ecos-online.de

KNOWLEDGE

The "Neuland" podcast from the Hasso Plattner Institute at the University of Potsdam unlocks more knowledge about the digital world. Experts give accessible talks about digital developments and trends and the opportunities and risks associated with rapid advances in technology. Each episode is dedicated to a specific topic that relates to society as a whole: from the power of artificial intelligence to blockchain and beyond to incitement on social media. For example, there is an episode on the challenges of starting a business in the digital era.

<https://podcast.hpi.de>, via iTunes or Spotify

NEWS

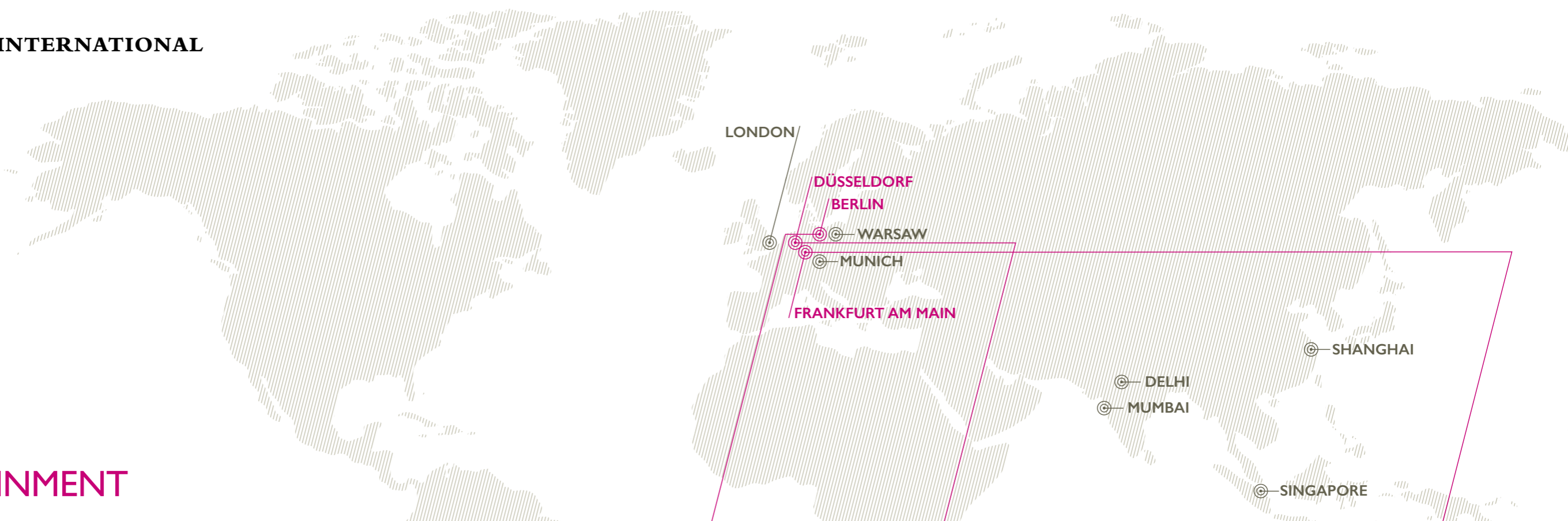
Trustworthy, short and concise, perfectly "snackable" pieces of information from a traditional source for news: Germany's *Tagesschau*, in this case the *Tagesschau in 100 Sekunden* format. Available as a video or podcast, the news summary is updated hourly.

tagesschau.de/multimedia/podcasts, on iTunes and Spotify



UNPLUGGING OPENS UP NEW PERSPECTIVES

"Diving is like the coronavirus crisis: You slow down, focus on the essentials, and gain a different perspective on things you thought you already knew. Werner Mummert of the Berlin office took this underwater photo in the Red Sea, near Hurghada, Egypt. He recommends this sport as a way to unplug and relax: "Diving clears your head, opens the door to new ways of thinking, and creates a very special sense of responsibility."



ENTERTAINMENT

MY FAVORITE BOOKSTORE

3 LOCATIONS, 3 PERSONAL TIPS
FROM LOCAL DEININGER CONSULTANTS



Photo: Dussmann Group

“Dussmann has been my bookstore as far back as I can remember. My father was born in Berlin, but moved away later on. Whenever we visited Berlin, our first stop was at Dussmann, where we had coffee and cake. It was our tradition; the vertical garden, or ‘green wall,’ has always been a highlight for me. They have a huge range of books and other media. I especially like to buy records there. I never go to Dussmann unless I have time to browse. I usually spend at least an hour there. Reading a book is a pure emotional experience. You can’t get that online. My reading tip? The architecture books from Taschen, especially the Bauhaus series.”



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Photo: Thalia Bücher GmbH

“Sadly, my favorite bookstore is closed: the Stern-Verlag store on Friedrichstr. It closed down in 2016, after a 115-year run. Since then I’ve been going to Mayersche, which merged with Thalia two years ago. Mayersche is centrally located on Königsallee, or ‘Kö,’ as the locals call it. It has five stories, including a café. I’m most often looking for travel guides and the latest in nonfiction or business books. My reading recommendation was published a while back, but it’s still relevant today: *The Black Swan* by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, a publicist and former options trader.”



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Photo: Buchhandlung Reuffel

“I live in Koblenz, and my favorite bookstore is in the city center there: Reuffel. It’s set up so you can happily settle down in a corner and browse. What I especially like about Reuffel, though, is that they give great advice, whether you’re looking for specialized reading or literature. That’s really outstanding. They also have more than just books. There are nice maps, for example, napkins, and other small items. They’re very well known in Koblenz and the surrounding area, especially since they have three stores in the city center alone. My reading recommendation is *Wenn Martha tanzt*, by Tom Saller; it takes the reader back to the Bauhaus era in Pomerania and New York.”



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BERLIN

CITY FULL OF HISTORY

The Brandenburg Gate is one of Berlin's most famous landmarks.

King Frederick William II of Prussia had it built 230 years ago at the end of the magnificent Unter den Linden boulevard.

Two years after the neoclassical structure was completed, the quadriga was placed atop the gate. The chariot seen today is a replica completed in 1956 to replace the original, which was damaged in World War II. Once a monument to division – the Brandenburg Gate was located inside the strip of no man's land after the construction of the Berlin Wall – it has become a symbol of German unity in the post-reunification era. Berlin has been the German capital since 1990 and the seat of parliament and government since 1994.

The flourishing, vibrant, and cosmopolitan metropolis has been a magnet for start-ups for years. The city's economic growth has been rapid, and Berlin is also home to Germany's highest number of researchers and university graduates per capita.

