

Press release

Berlin, 20 May 2021

Impressive majority for completion of Nord Stream 2

- **Forsa survey commissioned by the German Eastern Business Association shows broad support across all voter groups in Germany**
- **Hermes: US sanctions against the project damage democracy**
- **Ukraine can also become an important energy partner**

According to the will of German citizens, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project through the Baltic Sea should be completed even in the face of American sanctions pressure. This is the result of a representative Forsa survey commissioned by the German Eastern Business Association. According to the survey, 75 percent of respondents are in favour of completing the natural gas pipeline, only 17 percent are against it. "The result of the survey is extraordinarily clear in view of the long-standing political dispute over Nord Stream 2: Not only the German business community, but also the German population wants the pipeline to be successfully completed and not a billion-dollar investment ruin to be built at the bottom of the Baltic Sea," emphasizes the Chairman of the German Eastern Business Association (Ost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Wirtschaft), Oliver Hermes, in view of the survey. This is also a clear mandate to the current and upcoming German government and German politics as a whole not to give in to demands for sanctions against the project.

"With growing incomprehension do we register the renewed sanction pressure from the USA against the pipeline this week, which damages democratic decision-making processes in Europe and ignores legitimate interests of Germany," Hermes said. "The fact that the USA is provoking billions in damage at the expense of European taxpayers and companies with its blockade policy, interfering with the sovereignty of democratic states, but at the same time pursuing its own energy interests with Russia, is unacceptable."

The German Eastern Business Association still considers the Nord Stream 2 pipeline to be a key infrastructure for German and European energy supply. "In the short term, the pipeline will help us to compensate for rapidly declining natural gas production in the Netherlands and Norway and an increasing gas demand due to the coal and nuclear phase-out. In the medium term, the pipeline has great potential to also transport hydrogen and to further develop the energy partnership with Russia in a climate-friendly way," Hermes emphasizes.

"Anyone who now rejects Russia as the most important European energy supplier and stops approved projects will also lose the country as a partner for climate protection." Moreover, in the event of a construction moratorium or a definitive halt to Nord Stream 2 by the current or incoming German government, the question of damages would arise, Hermes reminded.

The evaluation of the Forsa survey shows that the Nord Stream 2 project has broad majorities in all party camps and strata of the population in Germany: CDU/CSU supporters are in favour of its completion with a majority of 81 percent, among SPD voters it is 75 percent and among FDP voters 82 percent. The project also finds large majorities among voters of the Left (92 percent) and the AfD (84 percent). Even among Green supporters, the approval rate for completion is only slightly below the average at 69 percent. Only 21 percent of Green and SPD voters reject the project and do not want to pursue it in the face of US sanctions. Among CDU/CSU voters, twelve percent are against the completion of the project, and among FDP voters, 13 per cent.

The complete document on the Forsa survey (in German) is attached to this press release and can be viewed on the website of the German Eastern Business Association:

www.ost-ausschuss.de.

Hydrogen Partnership with Ukraine

According to the German business community, Ukraine can significantly increase its role as an energy partner of the European Union in the coming years and compensate for possible losses in natural gas transit fees. "Especially the large storage capacities in the gas sector but also the potential for the production of green hydrogen make Ukraine an important partner. There is great potential to be tapped in the field of hydrogen in particular," Hermes said.

"We are confident that also within the framework of the German-Ukrainian energy partnership, we are confident that these projects can be advanced and become marketable in the medium term. If the right course is set now, the Ukrainian natural gas grid also has a hydrogen future," Hermes emphasizes. The first companies from Germany and Ukraine are already engaged in concrete preliminary examinations of joint projects. "The German Eastern Business Association is involved in this intensifying energy dialogue and invites all interested companies to participate in this process."

Background Nord Stream 2

The Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline from Russia through the Baltic Sea has been planned and built for five years. The route is largely based on the successfully completed Nord Stream 1 project. The pipeline, which also includes distribution pipelines through eastern Germany to the Czech Republic, has received the necessary permits for construction from Germany and the EU and is now about 95 percent complete. In addition to the operating company Nord Stream 2 AG, five western energy companies are also involved in the pipeline project as financial investors.

About the German Eastern Business Association:

The Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (Ost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Wirtschaft e.V.). (founded in 1952) promotes the German economy in the 29 countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia. German trade with Eastern Europe accounts for around one-fifth of Germany's total foreign trade, making it more important than trade with the USA and China combined. The Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations has around 350 member companies and associations and is supported by six leading associations of the German economy - BDI, BGA, Bankenverband, DIHK, GDV and ZDH.

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