



PRESS RELEASE

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BERNER Industry Barometer: German motor vehicle professionals report "bright to cloudy"

Happy New Year? People at car dealerships and workshops in Germany are not quite sure yet. While their colleagues in other European countries are very confident about 2022, German automotive professionals are holding back on optimistic forecasts. This is shown by the current industry barometer of the Berner Group. The B2B wholesaler asked a total of more than 1,350 European purchasing managers how they assess the business situation in their home market for the next six months.

According to the survey, the mood is currently partly subdued, especially in the German passenger car sector. One in four companies (24%) fears that the workshop business in 2022 will be "worse" or "much worse" than in the previous year. What is striking is that the scepticism has gradually increased in recent weeks. "News such as the ongoing disruption of global supply chains, the worsening chip shortage or the sharp slump in new registrations are contributing to a certain degree of uncertainty," says Florian Sommer, responsible head of the Mobility segment at Berner Group.

Added to this: As a result of the omicron variant, people are now working more in their home offices again and are also on the road less often in their private lives. "This is also slowing down the workshop business, because the mileage of the cars is of course considerably reduced overall as a result," explains Florian Sommer. "We already know this development from other markets. For example, when Austria went into lockdown in November, the expectations of the decision-makers in the workshops darkened directly."

Confidence in a quick recovery

Industry experts know that the workshop business is resilient even in times of crisis. More than half (55%) of the car workshops therefore consider at least a constant result to be feasible. 23% expect a growth spurt.

The forecast for the commercial vehicle sector is even more positive: 26% of the workshops surveyed by BERNER hope for significantly higher turnover than recently. 53% expect business development to remain stable. "In the commercial vehicle segment, we could already observe a somewhat friendlier overall mood in 2021," emphasises Florian Sommer. "One of the factors contributing to this is that the mileage of vans and heavy trucks continues to increase. This is accompanied by an increase in maintenance, service or repair work, from which workshops benefit. In addition, registration figures for heavy commercial vehicles in particular were significantly more stable in 2021 than in the passenger car segment."

The situation abroad

The mood in Austria is similar to that in Germany. 21% of car dealers and passenger car workshops there expect 2022 to be better or much better than the previous year (commercial vehicles 18%). 60% do not see much difference (Nfz 59%). The mood in some other European countries is significantly more optimistic than in the DACH region.

"Italy in particular stands out in a comparison of the markets," emphasises Florian Sommer. A remarkable 60% of Italian passenger car businesses are firmly convinced that they will achieve a stronger result than last year (commercial vehicles 56%). Only 8% expect less work. Not quite as euphoric as Italy, but still extremely positive, is the assessment of the situation in France. In the passenger car segment, more than



one in three (36%) think an increase is possible. In the commercial vehicle segment, one in four (25%) is of this opinion. On the other hand, only about 10% of the motor vehicle professionals surveyed believe that the order books will be emptier in 2022 than in the previous year.

"The positive figures from Italy and France reflect the fact that both countries are already a bit further ahead when it comes to living with the virus in everyday life - partly due to higher vaccination rates," explains Florian Sommer. "Important parameters such as the stable growth in vehicle mileage or in new registrations provide additional tailwind for the companies. The good mood is also reflected in what our field staff hear from our own customers."

The Berner Group

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