

HEALTHCARE - GERMANY

SECTOR OVERVIEW

The German market for healthcare products is the largest in Europe and the third largest in the world. From 1996 to 2007, health expenditures rose from € 195 billion to € 252.8 billion. The share of the healthcare expenses of the German Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is at a rate of 10.4 percent. The Statutory Health Insurances (SHIs) bear more than half of the healthcare expenditure (€ 252.8 billion).

Germany's healthcare industry employs 4.9 million people including doctors, engineers, chemists, physicists, mathematicians, and pharmacists. The medical devices sector employs around 170,000 of these in more than 11,000 companies.

It is predicted that Germany will continue the trend towards an ever-ageing population. By 2050, half the German population will be older than 48 years and one third will be 60 years or older. The German government's declared goal for health policy is to keep standards of quality high while keeping the healthcare system affordable. The government's "High-Tech Strategy" supports innovation in the sectors of biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices.

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR UK COMPANIES

There are opportunities for British companies throughout the German healthcare sector for all products and services, from wound care products to hi-tech medical devices. British companies need to be competitive on price, high on quality and most importantly offer a product or service with unique features.

General Health Initiatives

Together with local Ministries, statutory health and pension insurers, private health insurers, doctors and health organisations the Federal Ministry of Health has developed and published six health initiatives/programmes e. g. programmes on diabetes mellitus type 2 in the German Health Reform. These offer particular opportunities for British exporters.

The German Government has also introduced programmes within the medical technology sector to fund R&D in product areas of implants, innovative rehabilitation, imaging and regenerative medicine.

Homecare, Care and Rehabilitation

The German federal government is keen to keep people out of nursing homes for as long as possible. Wherever possible, patients, their families and carers are provided with the tools and equipment necessary for them to stay at home. Home care is a growing sector likely to take a higher degree of priority in the future. There will be a rise in demand for items needed in the domestic environment to support both patients and carers. The increasing trend for home care is an area of opportunity for UK companies operating in this field.

MORE DETAILED SECTOR REPORTS

Research is critical when considering new markets. UKTI provides [market research](#) services which can help UK companies doing business overseas including:

- The full version of the **Healthcare Sector Report Germany** is available for free from the UK Trade & Investment's website shortly www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk for registered companies.
- **Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS)**. Bespoke research into potential markets, contacts and support during your visits overseas.

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