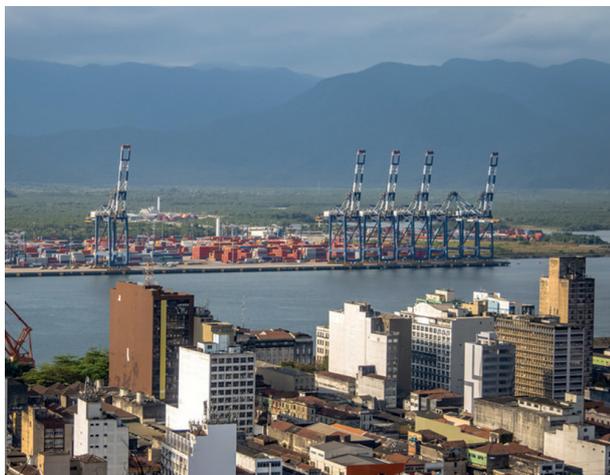


Global Project Quality Infrastructure

The German Government conducts bilateral political and technical dialogues with Brazil, China, India and Mexico in order to align and harmonise the regulatory and technical trading conditions with these countries. Among other things, the dialogues focus on standards and norms, differing testing and certification requirements as well as product safety controls.

The Global Project Quality Infrastructure (GPQI) of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) brings together political decision-makers with business representatives and stakeholders from industry associations, chambers and specialist institutions. By organising political and technical exchanges and implementing jointly agreed measures, GPQI facilitates the development of coherent quality infrastructures, which are an important prerequisite for fair and efficient trade and product safety.

Well-functioning and internationally coherent quality infrastructures also form an important basis for technical innovation and development. Therefore, GPQI is also engaged in supporting and coordinating coherent regulatory frameworks in innovative fields such as Industry 4.0, electric mobility and artificial intelligence.



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GLOBAL PROJECT *Quality Infrastructure*

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, the Global Project Quality Infrastructure (GPQI) initiates and implements political and technical dialogues with selected partner countries. As part of the bilateral dialogue partnerships, mutual topics of cooperation in the field of quality infrastructure are defined by taking into account the input of relevant companies, associations, chambers of commerce and experts. They aim to reduce existing technical barriers to trade, promote market access and fair trading conditions and improve the quality and safety of traded products. The continuous and long-dated exchange on regulatory and technical issues prevents the creation of new technical barriers to trade and enables innovation of new technologies and products.

A coherent quality infrastructure is essential for the functioning of an economy. It is a necessary prerequisite to product innovation, technology transfer and equal opportunities on the market and makes an important contribution to health, safety, consumer and environmental protection. It ensures that user quality expectations and regulatory requirements are met.

QI is also a vital element of international trade facilitation. Uniform and internationally recognised product requirements and conformity assessment procedures make it possible to sell products across borders and ensure the compatibility of products and services. International cooperation in the field of quality infrastructure is crucial to enable and promote transnational trade and to reduce technical barriers to trade.

Standardisation

Standards are voluntary documents, which describe products, services, technologies or processes for common and repeated use. They lay down compatibility, quality and safety criteria to ensure certain levels of uniformity and consistency, for the benefit of the public. Standards are developed by recognised standards bodies, which involve all interested parties and experts as well as by other standards development organisations or consortia. While the use of standards is voluntary in principle, regulators might choose to declare compliance as mandatory (thereby becoming a technical regulation).

Conformity Assessment

Conformity assessment provides evidence that a product or service complies with specific requirements. It encompasses tasks such as the calibration, certification, inspection or testing of products, services, processes, systems or persons. In some cases, conformity assessments are statutory, in other cases they are voluntary or based on a contractual agreement.

Accreditation

Accreditation is a confirmation by an independent third party, which formally states that a conformity assessment body has the required competences to conduct conformity assessment activities. In some cases, accreditation may be required by law, namely for conformity assessment

bodies operating in sensitive areas, e.g. healthcare. In other cases, conformity assessment bodies voluntarily apply for accreditation in order to demonstrate their competence and increase confidence in their work.

Metrology

Measurements and testing procedures are an essential element of quality assurance and the foundation of conformity assessments. Metrology ensures the accuracy of measurement results by comparing them with national standards and by calibrating measurement devices and procedures, in order for them to meet the requirements of the industry. Moreover, legal metrology lays down the official requirements regarding the units of measurement, the methods of measurement and the measurement devices for all areas, in which the government takes on a special protective function for its citizens.

Market Surveillance

Market surveillance authorities monitor and control products on the market to ensure their compliance with the existing legal requirements. If legal provisions are violated, they will take the appropriate measures such as recalls to restore conformity. Moreover, they inform the public about dangerous products on the market.

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