CCI in Practice—General Representation of Interests

7

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Representing the interests of all entrepreneurs in a region is another important task of a chamber of commerce and industry. The chapter begins with an interview in which two experienced personalities explain how a chamber of commerce and industry can approach this issue. This is followed by a brief insight into the opinion-forming processes of a chamber of commerce and industry. Afterwards, the work of the CCI in representing the interests of its members is explained using various individual examples: through portraits of committees and working groups, through agenda-setting for specific topics and in the work on legislation. The chapter also shows how the representation of interests is implemented at the next higher levels, at the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Finally, it looks at how a chamber of commerce and industry communicates its work—and thus also its representation of the overall interest—to the outside world.

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- Interview with Peter Driessen and Peter Kammerer: General representation of interests—constructively striving for the greatest common denominator to safeguard economic success
- Opinion forming processes—constructively jostling for positions
 - Surveys and studies—creating a basis for the general representation of interests
 - Open CCI—generating new ideas and projects online with our members
- The origins underpinning the general representation of interests—preparing positions in the CCI committees and working groups
 - CCI Finance and Taxation Committee—acting in a corrective capacity for legislation
 - CCI Industry and Innovation Committee—setting the course for a modern industrial location
 - CCI Committee for Corporate Responsibility—setting an example together
 - CCI working group “Women in Business”—making the potential of female entrepreneurs visible
- Interview with Dr. Eberhard Sasse: Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry—bolstering credibility by embodying key values
- The tasks of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- In pursuit of overall interests in business and the economy using five examples
 - The integration of refugees—creating a secure environment
 - Digitisation—making companies fit for the digital future
 - Transport policy—taking a position in infrastructure development and delivering on tomorrow’s mobility needs
 - Tourism—expanding horizons and bundling interests
 - Legislative work—the general representation of interests with statutory knock-on effects
- Communication—strategically positioning the CCI.

General Representation of Interests—Constructively Striving for the Greatest Common Denominator to Safeguard Economic Success

To represent the interests of the economy—for the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria—this legal mandate is the supporting pillar of its work. Both primary and honorary positions are discussed with politicians and administrators in order to create the best possible conditions for the economy. An interview with: Peter Driessen, until 2018 Chief Executive of the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria, and Peter Kammerer, Deputy Chief Executive of the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria.

Peter Driessen, Photo Credit: CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria **Peter Kammerer, Photo Credit: Photo Credit: CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria/Goran Gajanin_Das Kraftbild**

If one adds up your years of service to the overall representation of interests, between the two of you, you have been working for the interests of the economy for at least half a century. A quick conclusion to get the ball rolling—Are you satisfied with the results?

Driessen: Yes, I am. Over the years we have achieved many useful results for companies and have been able to help shape the framework conditions in their interest. At the same time, a chamber of commerce and industry is always neutral in terms of party politics. That is our highest commandment. We are only committed to the cause of the economy. In addition—and this seems to me to be just as important—we have succeeded in ensuring that politics, administration or citizens' initiatives on the one hand and we—as the CCI—on the other have come to know and appreciate each other as competent, reliable, trustworthy partners and listen to each other intently. This is the best basis for finding effective solutions together, even in the case of conflicting opinions.

Kammerer: And last but not least, we have learned that some issues actually take decades and that we have to be patient until they turn from political vision into reality. Representing overall interests is not a short-term business, but often requires patience.

How exactly do you determine the overall representation of interests?

Driessen: The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria has 390,000 members—large and small companies across all industries. In our committees, each company has the same importance and only one vote. Just because a company is bigger, systemically more important, employs more staff, it does not automatically have more of a say. In practice, participation takes place when the companies work out, weigh up and adopt positions, political demands and proposals in the CCI committees, and these are then jointly carried into politics by both primary and honorary offices, respectively.

Kammerer: The overall representation of interests is also a mirror of our representative democracy. Our understanding of democracy is based on the fact that all Germans over the age of 18 elect representatives in parliaments, who then make political decisions and initiate developments on behalf of the voters: from municipal to federal to the European level. That is the same with a chamber of commerce and industry. The economy—i.e. all member companies—of a chamber district elect their representatives to the regional committees and the general assembly of the CCI according to democratic rules. These representatives then work together with the main office to promote the interests of the business community in the CCI district. However, their commitment also extends beyond the CCI district, as the regional CCIs join forces at the state and federal level and jointly seek an exchange with state and federal politics.

The parliament of the economy!

Driessen: Correct. A general assembly is elected and, because we have a very large CCI district here in Munich and Upper Bavaria, 19 regional committees are also elected. In the general assembly as well as in the regional committees, all branches of the chamber district must be represented—that is a requirement. The electoral procedure is complicated, but it ensures that the entire diversity of industries in our CCI district is represented.

Kammerer: Diversity is an important keyword: In our last election, many women ran for the first time and many were also elected, which means that currently 30 percent of those appointed to the general assembly are women. That corresponds to the proportion of women entrepreneurs in our CCI district. The members of the general assembly are also more diverse in age than before. The average age is currently 54 years, and in the last legislative period, it was 58 years. Of course, entrepreneurs with a migration background are also represented. So we not only reflect the diversity of industries, but also the entire entrepreneurial diversity of the chamber district. And we would like to become even more diverse in the future.

The Federal Constitutional Court sees the overall representation of interests, even more so than the other pillars of the Chamber's work, as a key legitimisation of compulsory membership?

Driessen: I personally see it the same way. Because everyone becomes a member by law, they have to get something in return. The legislator has prescribed the overall representation of interests as one of these considerations. This is probably the most exclusive consideration that companies receive just from us for their membership. We stand for the fact that we actually identify, balance and represent the interests of all companies in the CCI district. Justified self-interests of individual companies do not prevail over the overall interest. We in Munich see the representation of overall interests as our first and foremost task—we have deliberately positioned ourselves as a very politically active chamber.

Kammerer: In trade associations, the companies that are larger and pay higher membership fees generally have more influence. They could threaten to resign if the association does not meet their own interests in its demands. That cannot happen with a chamber of commerce. We must always treat everyone equally. The fact that an individual company cannot build up pressure by threatening to leave also gives the CCI and its committees the greatest possible independence in its decisions and positioning.

Does the fact that the CCI is a statutory institution and that there is a compulsory membership make the decisive difference? Does this mean that politicians listen more closely?

Kammerer: If I compare the leading business organisations in Germany—the Confederation of the German Employers' Associations (BDA), the Federation of German Industries (BDI), the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB), the Chambers of Trades and Crafts and the CCI organisation—with each other, the CCI organisation has become increasingly influential over the years. Of course, we have a state and federal umbrella organisation. The regional principle makes the difference, which means that we are present throughout the country. This also makes us capable of campaigning for goals that we want to achieve. We bring some serious weight into the game; nobody can get past the CCI organisation so easily.

Driessen: And exactly for this reason we also argue to those members who criticise the principle of statutory membership and the membership fee—if they pay a fee at all—that they should not see the CCI membership as a constraint but rather as a privilege and opportunity. They do not have to get involved with us, they have the right to do so, but not the obligation. If they exercise their right, however, they can help shape the economy, politics and society. And if they do not get involved, they profit from the commitment of others.

As a rule, not all members actually get involved, but only a fraction. What kind of people are they? What is their motivation?

Driessen: Most people get involved because they see commitment as a civic duty. They want to get involved in the political process, do something for the economy and thus also for the common good, so that they can also give something back of their entrepreneurial success. Very few get involved out of vanity or because they only want to represent their own interests—they know that this is not possible with us. Some are already active in local politics and expand their activities into the CCI. A commitment based on such motives also increases the credibility of the CCI organisation.

Kammerer: You also get a lot in return. The CCI organisation is a platform that facilitates a process of exchange and networking, it allows you to look beyond the horizon of your own business. In other words, it helps—which also corresponds to the thesis of this book—to share and develop practical knowledge and, at the same time, to help shape the political framework and not to leave this to others.

Before you can go into politics with political positions, you must first find these positions. Who is actually bringing the issues into the discussion?

Kammerer: Primary and honorary positions. Both primary and honorary positions are close to the issues and call for discussion and positioning.

So how does the opinion-forming process work in practice? In view of the diversity of the companies, surely you also encounter a variety of diverging interests?

Driessen: Oh yes. And we must never be simply satisfied with lazy compromise, a consensus for the sake of consensus or for the lowest common denominator. We need the greatest common multiple. And that means that we have to argue, that we have to weigh up interests that we have to argue constructively.

That sounds like hard work...

Driessen: It is, but that is an essential core part of the CCI work. It takes place most intensively in the technical committees and working groups. This is where the companies meet and prepare their positions with the primary office, which are then discussed and adopted later in the general assembly. This is an extremely exciting process: which of the committee members position themselves how, with which arguments and how can the arguments be weighted? After all, a position must take many views into consideration in accordance with its claim to achieve the overall representation of interests: It is necessary to weigh up the interests of the industry; The interests of one industry must not outweigh those of the other industries. Nor must the interests of large companies override the needs of smaller companies, just as conversely the interests of smaller companies must not be allowed to thwart those of larger companies.

This requires a good culture of discussion?

Driessen: Absolutely. The desire to engage in constructive debate is absolutely essential. This requires a high level of abstraction—away from one's own company and towards the entirety of all companies. The parties involved must be able to obtain the right information, accept the opinion of others and let them stand, but they must also be able to include and develop the other position and relativise their own position. In terms of expertise, we also repeatedly bring scientific expertise on board and work together with research institutes and external experts.

Kammerer: So we need entrepreneurs who are willing to enter into conflict, in a positive sense and for the sake of the cause, who do not duck away and who are willing to go into confrontation, both within the committees, but also in the direct confrontation with politics and civil society. The processes of opinion-forming must be absolutely transparent. This is also how trust is created.

Does it happen that you do not find the greatest common multiple that everyone can accept?

Kammerer: Yes, that does happen. And that is not a problem. This is then exactly what the position says. The majority has agreed on this position, a minority takes a different position. We are also obliged to name considerable minority positions. Primary and honorary positions do not try to shoe horn the parties into a compromise.

At the same time, the chambers of commerce and industry also implement public tasks assigned by the state? Does this restrict the freedom of opinion-forming? Do conflicts of interest arise here too?

Kammerer: No, that can be clearly separated. The sovereign tasks assigned to us are subject to legal supervision, and their implementation has no influence on our economic policy positions.

Yet you are not allowed to comment on individual issues?

Driessen: Correct, the legislator has limited the overall representation of interests to economic issues. We are not allowed to comment on social policy. This was confirmed once again by the Federal Constitutional Court. I am annoyed by this, even though we naturally adhere to the jurisdiction's guidelines. But social and economic policy cannot always be clearly separated.

Sometimes you have to react very quickly because the legislator demands that a draft law be examined within a very short time. How do you proceed then?

Kammerer: Usually we can estimate when such a situation will arise. After all, laws do not come out of nowhere. This means that the primary office has already spoken to the companies in the committees and working groups beforehand. There may not yet be a position, but there is a trend in opinion, so that the primary office can then draft the assessment. We also have regulatory guidelines adopted again by each general assembly after the election. These provide the framework, so that the primary office, if time is very tight, can orientate itself accordingly and issue a statement which, even without prior explicit discussion with the honorary office, is still characterised by the necessary legitimacy.

And ultimately you also present your positions to politics and administration?

Driessen: Together with the honorary office. In recent years, we have had strong, very political presidents and vice-presidents who have entered into the discourse with us. Here, too, we need a good culture of debate. Strong-willed yet friendly in tone, constructive and striving to find a common language. To emphasise what matters: it's not about confrontation at any price, but about finding common solutions in the interest of the economy. We want to build bridges, not tear them down. However, we usually get involved when we see the interests of the business community at risk. In this respect, there is no getting around the dispute.

After all, there are many different political personalities, not everyone is likeable on a personal level? How does discourse succeed nevertheless?

Kammerer: We and the representatives of the honorary office do not take personal likeability into account. It is, of course, easier if we like a politician, but that's the point. We would have the wrong job if we let ourselves be guided by personal sensitivities.

Driessen: A personal way in, on the other hand, can help. Often personal connections arise during the preparation or even in the discussions themselves. Politicians are musicians, sportsmen, parents—through this another level is created in the conversations that can open doors. People who have things in common speak to each other differently.

On which functional levels do you talk to politicians?

Driessen: On all levels—from the working level to the minister, from the municipality to the European level. We here in Munich quite deliberately take our positions into federal and sometimes even European politics. As a rule, we do this through the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Over the years, this has certainly created a large personal network that is helpful?

Driessen: Yes, if you spend a long and intense time on the road in politics, you have to be well connected. This means it is then also possible to get a telephone appointment with a mayor, state secretary or minister at short notice. And politicians do the same—that has always been our goal—in reverse. They also call us spontaneously.

In what formats do you become politically active?

Driessen: From confidential background talks to public discussions and open letters in the press.

Kammerer: There are always situations in which we speak behind closed doors and contribute our assessments. Here, the networks and the trust we have built up beforehand are decisive factors. If we are successful with confidential discussions, we must not, of course, in retrospect publicly announce the result as our success. But we are happy to make this deal in the interest of the economy. The decisive factor is that we were able to exert our influence.

Politics is one level, and ever more citizens' initiatives and non-governmental organisations are also bringing their weight to bear in the economic policy debate. Do you also have this on your radar, so to speak?

Driessen: Absolutely. We enter into discourse with them just as we do with politics, in all formats, both personally and publicly. Just as we do not see the economy as an opponent of politics, we do not see it as an opponent of the citizens—quite to the contrary. The bottom line is that everyone benefits from good solutions.

What are you particularly proud of? Where has the CCI achieved a lot for Munich and Upper Bavaria?

Driessen: I am proud that politics and civic society listen to us and see us as partners, that a constructive, trustworthy and yet incorruptible working level has been created, and that the politicians call us once in a while on their own initiative. In terms of content, there is indeed a whole series of successes: We have fought for greater emphasis to be placed on rescuing and restructuring companies in insolvency law, we have fought for the security of supply with electricity lines from northern to southern Germany after the energy transition, and we have ensured that young refugees have a secure place to stay during their training and two years afterwards with the 3 + 2 rule.

Kammerer: I would like to add a current success. The new law on the immigration of skilled workers is also the result of a study carried out by the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry in cooperation with the renowned Munich ifo Institute for Economic Research. It also provides for the option of people coming to Germany to look for a job. That is a novelty. However, this law on the immigration of skilled workers also shows that we often have to dig pretty deep when it comes to the overall representation of interests. We have been discussing immigration with politicians for almost 20 years.

Does that mean you've failed, too?

Kammerer: Sure, we have not always got as far as we and our members would have liked...

Driessen: One of our presidents always said that if a politician throws you out in front, you go back in through the back door. None of us can claim that everything always succeeds immediately and completely. It is only important that we do not give up and that we make several attempts.

On some issues, stakeholders at Bavarian state or federal level have to get on board—you mentioned that. How must the reader imagine the process of the opinion and consensus formation with Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and DCCI?

Driessen: Those are similar processes to those at the regional level, here then the Chief Executives and Presidents of the individual CCIs sit together and try to agree on the largest common multiple.

A final aspect of interest representation is to enter into a discourse with the members, above all to constantly renew the foundations of entrepreneurial work in the spirit of the honourable merchant. How much may the CCI organisation demand from its members? How much may—or must—the honourable merchant demand from companies?

Driessen: It is our legal mandate to work for the honourable merchant's decency. I like to translate the concept of the honourable merchant with the golden rule: What you do not want to be done to you, do not do to anyone else. This also means that we, as a primary office, are obliged to approach members who violate the rules of the mission statement. We have to address misconduct, even unpleasant things. This is part of self-governance, just like the representation of interests: We regulate our affairs among ourselves, and for this we need a source of orientation—that is the honourable merchant. This also makes us credible to the outside world in the discussion. If necessary, we may also have to withdraw a trade or training licence, which we are allowed to do at our discretion.

Kammerer: We say this with a wink and yet with a serious undertone: We represent the good guys. And in order for us to remain the good guys, we have to keep reminding ourselves of the honourable merchant, live by his values and demand the same from our Members. The latter can, but does not have to happen publicly.

Does the overall representation of interests create a special mindset among the entrepreneurs and thus a special willingness to get involved for the common good as a whole?

Kammerer: Absolutely. Entrepreneurs who are involved in the CCI are (or become) more political and think more politically. They get involved with us because they want to exert influence—and often because they want to do so in an independent institution and not through a political party. We know many who are involved beyond the CCI. In this respect: Yes, a commitment to the CCI requires (or promotes) a certain mindset and allows companies to act in the interest of the economy and the common good.

Apart from a few crises, the economic success of Germany as a business location has continued in principle since the 1950s. Does this also have to do with the intelligent representation of interests through the CCI organisation?

Driessen und Kammerer: The overall representation of interests by the CCI organisation cannot bypass the economy—the economy itself knows exactly what it needs. In addition, we support the economy by efficiently carrying out tasks assigned by the state, by providing tailor-made services, we stand for the strong dual system of vocational training, and with our chambers of commerce abroad we are the gateway to the world. The CCI organisation is clearly a pillar of the location and a part of its success.

And a model for other countries?

Driessen and Kammerer: Absolutely. It needs the appropriate structures and, above all, people who are passionately and enthusiastically committed to the cause of business and thus to the common good in their primary and honorary office positions.

Mr. Driessen, Mr. Kammerer, thank you very much for the interview.

Box: Principles of Political Consulting for the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria

- **Overall interest:** The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria speaks for around 390,000 member companies of all sizes and from all sectors: from small family businesses to owner-managed medium-sized companies and global corporations. Due to its legal membership, the CCI is not dependent on individual companies or particular opinions, but represents the overall interest of the commercial economy in Munich and Upper Bavaria.
- **Economic relevance:** One of the central tasks of the CCI is to represent the overall interests of its member companies in a responsible manner. Among other things, the CCI provides fact-based advice to decision-makers in politics and administration on business-related issues through position papers, statements and studies.
- **Democratic legitimization:** In order to be able to articulate the overall interest, the positions of the CCI are advised by various cross-sectoral bodies and committees consisting of entrepreneurs who are engaged in honorary activities. In the course of these legitimization processes, regional and industry-specific interests are weighed against each other and relevant minority opinions are identified.
- **Party-political neutrality:** The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria acts in a neutral manner from a party-political standpoint. It does not support any party through donations, memberships or other financial and/or intangible contributions.

Opinion Forming Processes—Constructively Jostling for Positions

The most important basis for opinion formation in a chamber of commerce and industry is voluntary work. At the same time, the CCIs complement the process with studies or open innovation procedures.

How does a CCI find the position that it can then also represent to politics and administration? Behind this lies a complex process with many different stakeholders. The expert committees, working groups and regional committees play a special role. These are close to the issues and well informed about the needs of the local economy. In this way, they provide the most important impulses for the positions. In their meetings, they work hard to find the greatest common multiple, receive the support of the primary office and then bring their proposals to the general assembly for discussion and decision-making, so that the assembly can then decide on them. However, at the same time, the chamber of commerce and industry also conducts surveys and studies to know what its members think—or it uses digital platforms to remain very close to its members, such as open innovation processes. Two case studies from the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria show how these studies, surveys and open innovation help to determine overall interest.

Case Study 1: Surveys and Studies—Creating a Basis for the General Representation of Interests

According to a much-quoted sentence of the sociologist Max Weber, politics is like “drilling thick planks”. With convincing survey results that underline your own arguments, drilling is easier and quicker... Surveys and studies are, therefore, indispensable instruments for the overall representation of the interests by the chambers of commerce and industry. With valid data provided by the member companies themselves, important economic policy demands and statements on laws can be credibly and comprehensibly substantiated. Since a chamber of commerce and industry can draw on a very broad spectrum of companies as a result of compulsory membership, a very representative opinion is also created.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria also wants to know what its members think, what challenges they face and how they assess future developments before entering into political discussions with governments and authorities, before making proposals or making demands. For this reason, it regularly surveys its companies on their economic situation and numerous current issues and bases its arguments on this information. The results of the surveys are then fed into many discussions, meetings and conferences with politicians and other stakeholders and can also be used for public relations work. Of course, the CCI also keeps an eye on the burdens that companies face. The surveys are coordinated and only conducted when additional information is needed.

However, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry, like every chamber, does not usually carry out the surveys solely and exclusively for its own chamber district, but usually in conjunction with the other chambers of commerce and industry in the respective federal state and/or in Germany. An overview.

Regular Business Surveys on the Business Situation of Its Members

The best known are the business surveys, which each CCI conducts together with the CCI umbrella organisation, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry, three times a year at the beginning of the year, in early summer and in autumn. The nationwide presence of the CCIs pays off here. In contrast to other economic surveys, each CCI surveys its region, the DCCI then prepares the data for the whole of Germany, thus creating a particularly precise picture of the mood of the German economy. Up to 24,000 companies are surveyed throughout Germany, other business surveys are based on well under 10,000 companies. At the same time, the CCIs can carry out special evaluations for industry, wholesale and retail trade, services and construction on the basis of their data. Analyses are even possible for regional economic areas. In addition, they always pose additional questions on current issues.

Company Barometer on Current Topics

At the same time, the DCCI, with the support of many CCIs, regularly surveys its volunteer members on current topics in the so-called “company barometer”. During the last few years, the integration of foreign employees, digitalisation, health care, company succession or the German federal elections in 2017 were among the topics covered by the company barometer. Such surveys are conducted on a case-by-case basis and usually involve ongoing political discussions. Some topics, such as corporate succession, are regularly resumed every few years. Many chambers of commerce and industry can draw on a panel of several hundred entrepreneurs. For example, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Munich) surveys up to 600 executives. Here, too, there are regional as well as nationwide evaluations.

Training Surveys

The CCIs are comprehensively responsible for in-company training. That is why the DCCI and many CCIs regularly survey member companies on the current training situation. These surveys take place throughout the year. In the spring, the DCCI launches a nationwide survey, and in the autumn (at the beginning of the training year), the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry follows up with a Bavaria-wide survey. The results of these surveys are also evaluated regionally. In addition to the question of how many training places can actually be filled and how many trainees are missing, training surveys also identify new demands on the qualifications and personal suitability of school leavers for training. Surveys of this kind underpin the Chambers’ demands on policy-makers to

develop or support strategies to counter the shortage of skilled labour or provide their member companies with valuable information on how they can retain young people with attractive training in the long term.

Individual Surveys on Specific Challenges

Most CCIs also carry out individual chamber district-related location surveys. They usually take place at intervals of several years. In recent years, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Munich) has included transport infrastructure, the availability of labour, low-bureaucracy administration, energy supply, the availability of commercial space, land prices and other structural topics that provide information about the quality of a business location on its survey list. With these surveys, the CCI wants to be able to track down long-term changes in the location at an early stage and sound the alarm immediately if any serious deterioration becomes apparent. This is why it also surveys far more companies than straightforward economic surveys. Several thousand members take part in the location surveys of the CCI Munich. The results can even be broken down to individual districts and larger communities.

Further Studies and Surveys on Relevant Topics of the Overall Representation of Interests

Otherwise, the CCI Munich starts its own studies and surveys whenever it needs additional information for its work, or if existing studies provide no (or otherwise only incomplete) answers. In recent years, for example, it has asked member companies about broadband expansion or sustainable business management or examined the potential and role of women entrepreneurs for Upper Bavaria as a business location.

Cooperation with the Renowned IFO Institute—Conducting Exclusive Research

Furthermore, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry does not rely solely on its own expertise but seeks cooperation with external brain trusts. For example, it cooperates with the renowned Munich ifo Institute for Economic Research. On behalf of the CCI, the scientists have recently drawn up an immigration concept for Germany in a study. The focus was on the question of how the German economy can solve the shortage of skilled workers with qualified immigrants and what Germany should learn from classic immigration countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand. What was special about this concept was that it also provided for potential immigration: This meant that interested third-country nationals could come to Germany without an existing employment contract and look for work locally. This idea was also incorporated into the new German law on the

immigration of skilled workers. Other studies have dealt with the digitalisation of the world of work, the effects of a digital tax and the freedom to provide services in the European internal market.

Box: Business Survey—Knowing the Exact Business Situation of Companies

For their business surveys, which are coordinated by the umbrella organisation DCCI, the CCIs use a panel of registered companies, which is renewed every two to three years and provides a representative picture of all sectors and company sizes. Each survey is based on roughly half a dozen recurring standard questions on the current business situation and future business expectations. The companies provide information on the risks they see for the next twelve months, how their exports and employment figures will develop over the same period and for what reasons they are planning investments. This results in a time series that, based on questions that are always the same, provides a good picture of the changes in mood.

There are also additional questions on topics that vary from survey to survey and that address current economic policy developments and risks. The focus is on cyclically relevant topics such as financing conditions, the growing shortage of skilled workers or the effects of Brexit or simmering trade conflicts. In this way, CCIs and the DCCI are informed promptly about how new or altered framework conditions affect economic development. In addition, the individual CCIs can incorporate special nuances in their surveys. The nine Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which together survey more than 3,800 companies, make regular joint use of this opportunity and, on the basis of their evaluations, have repeatedly formulated demands to be placed on the labour market or energy policy-makers in the federal government and the Free State—such as securing skilled labour or a safeguarding existing energy supply. (Look at Fig. 7.1.)

Multiple mentions possible, in %, autumn 2019 | Source: Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Fig. 7.1 The regular surveys of the CCI also show what Bavarian companies see as the greatest risks to their growth in the coming 12 months—here are their answers from autumn 2019

Case Study 2: Open CCI—Generating New Ideas and Projects Online with Our Members

Internet platforms have become indispensable in the modern economy. They connect market players with each other and create networks that generate a wide range of benefits. Companies use them to market their products and services, recruit new employees, communicate with their suppliers or service providers, train their employees or generate new ideas. This is why the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria decided to strengthen its service and representation of interests with an open innovation platform. With Open CCI (in German: “Open IHK”), it now has a digital forum where member companies and employees can meet and exchange ideas. In this way, they are jointly developing an institution with a history of more than 175 years into a modern organisation that successfully uses the diverse opportunities offered by digitisation to mutual advantage.

The initiative for Open CCI came from CCI employees. Since 2014, they have been committed to Internet-based innovation management. In this way, they want to strengthen the internal organisation, facilitate cross-divisional projects, exchange and build up know-how and generate further attractive services for member companies. Open CCI adheres to the old experience that innovative solutions are more likely to emerge when many different minds bring together their different ideas, perspectives and experiences. With such an innovation platform, however, the CCI also has an additional channel through which the diverse opinions of member companies on business-related issues can be investigated and discussed, which can then be incorporated into political positioning and the representation of interests.

After the trial phase was successfully completed, the platform was opened to external participants in 2016. Since then, every member company and its employees are invited to contribute their expertise and experience. Specialist experts and citizens interested in economic issues can also participate once they have registered.

- **Pilot project “Women entrepreneurs in demand”:** “Women entrepreneurs in demand” was launched as a pilot project in December 2016. In Munich and Upper Bavaria, women run one in three companies or are involved in their management. The CCI invited this target group to formulate their wishes and ideas for better support in everyday entrepreneurial life. The numerous discussion contributions on Open CCI made clear that female entrepreneurs above all note the importance of digitisation and networking as permanent topics. The CCI thereupon channelled the focus of its Female Entrepreneur Day in the two following years to the key service point of digitisation and went on to develop special booklets on the topic to supplement the CCI magazine. This focused on the digitisation successes of women and the new digital working world. Last but not least, the pilot project via Open CCI looked for model female entrepreneurs. More than 30 women applied, and twelve were selected and presented at the Female Entrepreneur Day in the CCI magazine and the CCI newspaper.

- **Service improvement in start-up consulting:** Even when the start-up experts questioned their service, they looked for new ideas for this in the Open CCI. A wealth of suggestions were received. The spectrum ranged from simplified appointment arrangements and mentoring programmes for founders to the reduction of bureaucratic hurdles for the digital trade licence. The CCI Start-up Expo project also stems from this initiative: At recognised industry events and conferences, the CCI presents start-ups and their business concepts on an open stage and offers them stand space for networking.
- **Consolidation of the “Pack ma’s” digital initiative:** In addition, the CCI initiative “Pack ma’s digital” (“Let’s be digitally successful!”), which provides extensive support to small- and medium-sized companies on their way to digitalisation, used the open innovation platform. Sound examples of digitisation were sought. Around 40 companies entered the competition, from which a jury selected the ten best. The criteria were the transferability and scalability of the offer, the usability for small- and medium-sized companies and the degree of innovation. Short videos were shot with the top 10 companies and their examples, before being presented in the CCI magazine, the CCI newspaper and at the CCI event entitled “Together into the digital future”. The campaign was so successful that it went straight into the next round.
- **Open CCI in the service of the overall representation of interests on the topic of environmental and climate protection:** When the environmental protection experts of the Chamber Of Commerce and Industry prepared a position paper on environmental and climate protection for the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, they called upon companies to communicate their particular concerns on this topic on the innovation platform and to state their importance in a ranking process. The feedback from many companies was characterised by profound knowledge and thus made an important contribution to the opinion formation of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Among other things, the companies asked the CCI to advocate for less bureaucracy and more transparent rules in environmental protection, as well as for individual responsibility to be rewarded and for audit systems to be more accessible to smaller companies.
- **Open CCI in the service of the overall representation of interests “Cross-border services”:** Many companies that offer their services abroad are hindered by national regulations and laws. At Open CCI 2018, they were able to describe their experiences in detail. With the responses of its members, the CCI can now represent their interests even more effectively, make any recurring problems the subject of events and public relations work and inform the Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHK) about their needs. At the same time, if questions pertaining to the European Single Market are involved, the CCI can intervene with the EU authorities in Brussels together with the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry on the basis of the answers provided.

For Its Own Benefit

Last but not least, the CCI also uses the platform for internal topics. When it celebrated its 175th birthday in 2018, CCI employees used the platform to gather ideas on how this anniversary could be arranged with an attractive employee party. A lot of suggestions were received for the venue, supporting programme and food. The event then took place in the proposed “Werk 3” location, a stronghold for start-ups and young companies in the east of Munich. The topic islands, where employees could jot down their wishes for the CCI, for example, were also based on an Open CCI proposal.

All this makes it clear that an institution founded in 1843 has remained young in the twenty-first century and will continue to generate numerous ideas and innovations in the years to come.

The Origins Underpinning the General Representation of Interests—Preparing Positions in the CCI Committees and Working Groups

They contribute their expertise, work hard to find positions which they then present to the general assembly for discussion and decision-making—and are thus the nucleus of the overall representation of interests: the CCI expert committees and working groups.

There are a total of 13 specialist committees and six working groups in the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria. In other CCIs there is a similar number. They have an advisory function for the CCI general assembly. Therein, the positions are worked out, which are then supported in politics, administration and the public after consultation with (and the decision of) the general assembly. The special thing about the committees and working groups is that they not only bring together particularly committed members of the CCI and other experts, but also a huge amount of know-how. Above all, it is also the committees, in which, in addition to the main office, the knowledge of a chamber of commerce and industry is shared and expanded. The committees are decided by the CCI general assembly, while the working groups can also be formed independently. This is shown by four examples. At the same time, their contribution to the overall representation of interests will be explained.

Case Study 1: CCI Finance and Taxation Committee—Acting in a Corrective Capacity for Legislation

The Finance and Taxation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria sees itself as a powerful mouthpiece for local companies. “We want to help shape laws, regulations and procedures in such a way that they promote the companies at our location”, emphasises Holger Engelke, Head of Tax at Munich Re. He chairs the Finance and Taxation Committee. It is important to speak with one voice. That is why the committee tries to pool the voices across sectors and company sizes. “That is why we exchange ideas and discuss intensively until all members can agree on a specific line”, Engelke says as he describes his committee work. But it was not only the interest group that persuaded him to take on this honorary position. “In view of my extremely positive experience with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and my professional success, I wanted to return the favour—and contribute to the further development of our economy.”

35 Tax Experts Around One Table

Together with the Finance and Taxation Committee, which includes 35 tax executives and tax advisers from member companies, the primary office CCI experts prepare position papers, often based on surveys, expert opinions and studies. In these, they assess tax policy projects at all political levels and make recommendations on how to improve them. They disseminate these positions not only through all communication channels, but also by participating in working groups and committees and by maintaining contacts and networks with political and official decision-makers.

Corrector and Initiator in One

It’s worth it. That is because the work of the committee often brings success. For example, the Committee has taken major steps forward on the issues of “cooperation rather than confrontation in tax law” and modern tax procedures. And, in the case of inheritance tax, it has also been able to work with other organisations and associations to prevent the original plans that threatened succession from being realised (see also the chapter on legislative initiatives in this chapter). On the one hand, the Committee sees itself as a corrective force to all proposals in the financial and tax fields. For this reason, the members of the committee see it as a particularly important task to point out to politicians and authorities what consequences planned rules would have for companies and the region. On the other hand, the Committee also addresses the very problems that are causing companies a great deal of headaches and develops forward-looking solutions.

Adviser to the General Assembly

To help them form an opinion, Committee members often receive more than 50 current draft laws and other proposed amendments to laws every year. At the regular meetings, the members debate until a position emerges. However, the members do not only see positioning as an important activity, but also advising the CCI general assembly. The Committee advises them and makes recommendations. In addition, the Committee's position is incorporated into statements of the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria, the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Munich and the umbrella organisation, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Berlin. Engelke sums up, "Above all, we see ourselves as a network that serves to convey information, form opinions, represent interests and communicate, but also to exchange experiences".

Case Study 2: CCI Industry and Innovation Committee— Setting the Course for a Modern Industrial Location

There are probably few regions in Europe with such a diverse industrial landscape as Bavaria. It is home to companies from almost all major manufacturing sectors: automotive, construction, biotechnology, chemicals, printing, electronics, energy, IT, plastics, food, aerospace, mechanical and plant engineering, metal, paper, pharmaceuticals, steel and textiles. In almost every branch of industry, there are not only global players who move about in all important international markets. At the same time, the location is characterised by numerous small- and medium-sized manufacturers who supply national and international groups as suppliers or who have developed promising niche markets as hidden champions.

Cross-Section of Bavarian Industry

Despite this level of diversity, Bavarian industrial companies have numerous common interests. The Industry and/or Innovation Committees of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry are responsible for bundling and articulating these interests. The CCI Munich also has such a committee. The Committee has almost 40 members. Many work in mechanical and plant engineering, others are active in the automotive, construction, chemical, electrical engineering, IT, food, aviation, microelectronics and optical industries. "The Committee members represent a strong cross-section of Upper Bavarian industry", emphasises Herbert Klein, Chairman of the Committee and Manager of Agfa Healthcare Imaging in Peiting. "With this composition we are able to comprehensively represent the needs and concerns of Upper Bavarian industry."

Democratic Opinion-Making

To this end, the members engage in detailed, sometimes controversial discussions, involve experts from politics, business, science and administration and finally agree on common positions and draft position papers. Once the general assembly has decided on and confirmed the papers, the CCI can use them as a basis for convincingly and democratically legitimising the interests of industry vis-à-vis politicians and the public. For Herbert Klein, position papers act, above all, as signposts for governments and administrations. “The first addressee is always the Bavarian state government”, he says. “In our papers, we call on them to implement the key points of the papers—insofar as this falls within their sphere of responsibility—in Bavaria and to represent them proactively at a federal and European level.”

The Committee can be confident that its positions will be well received. “Our papers have a very good reputation for their sound content.”

Start-Up Financing as an Important Concern

Over the last few years, the Industry Committee has dealt with very different issues. One of its main concerns was the financing of technology-oriented start-ups. In a 20-page position paper, the Committee criticises the fact that Germany has a comparatively weakly developed venture capital market. This makes it much more difficult for ambitious young German entrepreneurs to finance their start-ups than their international competitors. Therefore, the Munich Industry Committee made 14 demands. Among other things, it called for additional tax incentives and regulatory relief. It should be possible to write off losses more quickly, and VAT on administrative services for venture capital funds should be abolished. Many EU countries have long since abandoned such taxes. The Committee also urged for creating better opportunities for institutional investors—such as insurance companies or pension funds—to participate more easily in interesting start-ups. And, last but not least, the Committee demanded better access to technology funding for start-ups. It also saw the new financing form of crowdfunding as a promising instrument for innovative start-ups. “The public sector must support campaigns for crowdfunding with advice, follow-up funding and public subsidies”, recommends Klein.

Topics of the Future

There is no shortage of topics for the coming years either. The Committee is currently working intensively on the tasks of a future-oriented industrial policy that takes account of the many and varied demands that manufacturing companies have to face today: Beyond the digital dawn of the industrial 4.0 age, these companies must press ahead with research and development, make production as environmentally friendly and sustainable as possible and counter the growing shortage of skilled workers with a wide range of training and further education strategies. The

Committee and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry are therefore calling for framework conditions that ensure competition and develop growth forces—including the following:

- **National Agency for Springboard Innovations:** The Committee advocated the establishment of a National Agency for Springboard Innovations, which would prepare companies with concrete projects for the disruptive changes in their products, services and markets and support them in developing new business concepts. If Germany wanted to play on an equal footing with world-leading innovation strongholds such as Silicon Valley in the development of ground-breaking, cross-cutting technologies such as electromobility and quantum computing, the Committee found that the country could not rely on conventional technology funding programmes. Other CCIs and the DCCI also spoke out in favour of such a service agency. The initiative was successful and in mid-August 2018, the German government decided to establish an agency for springboard innovations.
- **No machine and robot tax:** The CCI Industry Committee vehemently rejects the introduction of a machine and robot tax, which is repeatedly discussed in the media, even by managers of large corporations. According to the Committee members, such a tax would inhibit digital innovations and intelligent technologies.
- **Tax incentives for research:** A perennial topic at Committee meetings is tax incentives for research and development (R&D) in industrial companies. Germany lags behind other EU and OECD countries in this respect. Many regulations are complicated and require a great deal of bureaucracy. The CCI Industry Committee recommends alternatives. For example, it suggests flat-rate tax credits that could supplement existing project funding and motivate small- and medium-sized enterprises in particular to invest more in research and development.

Enthusiastic Volunteer Work

All members carry out the committee work on a voluntary basis. Klein explains, “We are all busy entrepreneurs and yet we are happy to take the time for the Committee: It is a stimulating exchange, a good network—and at the same time we can contribute to the industrial policy discussion with our position papers, set priorities and stimulate developments”. (Look at Fig. 7.2.) He is delighted by this, “When demands prevail—like the National Agency for Springboard Innovations—this motivates us and gives us all the assurance we need to uphold and reinforce our commitment. Even more important, however, is that the introduction of tax-based R&D funding agreed under the coalition is finally being implemented”.

Fig. 7.2 Innovative companies: Upper Bavarian companies come out on top in patent applications and publications in Germany

Patent Publications 2017

Source: EPA and DPMA / CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria

Case Study 3: CCI Committee for Corporate Responsibility —Setting An Example Together

When Sabine Braun, Managing Director of *akzente kommunikation und beratung gmbh* in Munich, was asked whether she would join the CCI Committee for Corporate Responsibility, she did not hesitate and agreed immediately. Commitment to society—that is essentially a big part of her life and business concept. In the case of the Corporate Responsibility Committee, she added that it is committed to her core topic of sustainability and fairness in business life. “I am convinced that an economy can only grow successfully in an intact environment and a fair society”, emphasises Braun. “In view of the challenges posed by climate change, poverty or migration, it is also very important to me personally to introduce this topic with ever greater frequency into companies, politics and society.” If a chamber of commerce and industry and one as large as the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry takes up the topic and spreads the word, a great multiplication effect could be achieved. “This is a real opportunity, so I am more than happy to work on a voluntary basis and give my time and energy to the Committee.” She adds, “Especially as we, Committee members, also get a lot back both personally and for our companies: We exchange knowledge, network with each other, come up with new ideas together and can also get the frustration off our chest when faced with so many unsustainable developments in the world...” (Look at Fig. 7.3.)

In December 2017, the general assembly of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria initially decided on a working group on corporate responsibility, which began work in June 2018 and was quickly upgraded to a committee in November 2018. Its members are comprised of around 40 large and small companies from various industries in Upper Bavaria, which have already substantially integrated the topic of corporate responsibility into their corporate strategy.

Multiple mentions possible | Source: Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 2018

Fig. 7.3 Corporate values and personal attitude are the most important reasons for Bavarian companies to engage in sustainable management

The Committee Has Formulated This Self-image

“The Corporate Responsibility Committee aims to strengthen sustainability as a model of sustainable development, contribute to the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 in the region and give responsible business a voice in the political and social debate.” It thus supports the mission of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria—representing the overall interest, organising business itself, promoting companies—and contributes to the implementation of the Chamber’s brand identity *“Together we take responsibility”*.

And it is these individual objectives that the Committee is pursuing:

- To help shape the political framework, develop common positions
- Agenda setting—picking up and discussing new developments in the field of “Responsible business”
- Support the networking of committed companies
- Strengthen the image of entrepreneurship in the public eye—making the existing commitment of companies visible
- Establish an exchange with non-governmental organisations and promote an understanding of the economy

- Continue to publicise the CCI’s commitment to the topic of corporate responsibility
- Motivate entrepreneurs to systematically anchor responsibility in their respective companies

Sabine Braun, who was finally elected as deputy chairwoman, wants to work primarily towards the first goal. “It’s about creating smart and good conditions in which companies can operate responsibly.” This would require an intensive discourse with politicians, which the CCI could then lead. In this sense, Braun sees the Committee as a sparring partner, a form of backing and legitimation for the CCI, which it needs for the credible political representation of interests. “Together, we in the Committee work out the positions that the CCI can then take into politics as authentic concerns of the economy”, explains Sabine Braun in her recap. “This is not least a piece of democracy in its purest form.”

Case Study 4: CCI Working Group “Women in Business”— Making the Potential of Female Entrepreneurs Visible

In Munich and Upper Bavaria, around 30 percent of all businesses are in the hands of women. Nationwide, it is also about one third. And yet women entrepreneurs are far less noticed than their male colleagues: They are quoted much less frequently in the media, hardly ever sit on the podium in talk shows or at events. “The time had come to make women entrepreneurs more visible and at the same time to encourage more and more women to become entrepreneurs”, says Ingrid Obermeier-Osl, Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria. In 2015, for example, she became a co-initiator and the first chairwoman of the CCI working group “Women in Business”. The working group anchors the CCI’s work with women entrepreneurs in voluntary work: “With this working group, women entrepreneurs now have their own platform in the CCI. The working group gives women in the CCI itself and in politics an audible voice”, emphasises Obermeier-Osl. (Look at Fig. 7.4.)

Fig. 7.4 Around 30 percent of the companies in Munich and Upper Bavaria are run or co-run by women

Own Platform for Women in Business

The working group “Women in Business” brings together around 50 female entrepreneurs and founders from all sectors, as well as women managers and experts: from the solo self-employed and head of a company with more than 1,000 employees to the social entrepreneur and manager, to the scientist. The working group for women has two main goals:

- **Greater visibility:** It makes women and their importance in the economy visible through numerous measures. All of the CCI’s women’s activities—some of which began before the working group was founded (see below)—are now run under the flag of “AK Frauen” (or “Women’s Working Group”).
- **Specific representation of interests:** In addition, the working group participates in political opinion-forming and the representation of interests by adopting positions. It also brings its positions to the general assembly. “Women often have different experiences, a special view of business management and of the economic–political framework conditions”, says Chairwoman Obermeier-Osl. “To complement and take into account these views and experiences in positions is very important in the sense of the overall representation of interests by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and also for the success of the economy as such.”

Success of Businesswomen in the Elections for the General Assembly

A special highlight for CCI women’s work was the year 2016 and for the election of the new CCI general assembly. Until 2016, the proportion of female members of the general assembly amounted to only eleven percent and was thus far below the importance that female entrepreneurs actually enjoy in the Upper Bavarian economy. With the active support of the working group, it was possible to win enough women as candidates, and almost all of them were elected. Finally, the proportion of women in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry general assembly increased to around 30 percent—corresponding to the real proportion of women in the Upper Bavarian economy. Ingrid Obermeier-Osl says, “The foundations have been laid. Our further goals are: to continue to work on the visibility of women, to present role models via company visits or publications and to encourage more women to found, buy and succeed, to network with other women’s associations in order to increase our influence, especially to seek dialogue with politics and to assert our shared positions for female entrepreneurs and female founders”.

Women as Professionals and Managers

At the same time, this working group—and also the CCI—advocates for female specialists and executives. Here, the starting position in the Federal Republic of Germany is such that women continue to take on the lion's share of family work, reduce their weekly working hours for the family and thus forego careers. This is to the detriment of the economy, which would benefit from a higher proportion of women in the workforce and especially in management positions. It has been proven that a minimum of 30 percent of women in management positions make companies more successful. Ingrid Obermeier-Osl puts it in a nutshell, “The working group should also contribute to giving women the courage to pursue a career”.

Extensive Offers for Women

In its practical work, the CCI addresses women entrepreneurs, specialists and managers with these activities:

- **Series of events—including the annual Women Entrepreneurs' Day:** Since 2013, several series of events have been launched that specifically address women entrepreneurs, female managers and founders. The largest of these is the annual CCI Women's Entrepreneurs' Day, which regularly welcomes well over 200 participants. In addition to providing information on issues relevant to companies and women, the event's special claim is the networking of women entrepreneurs.
- **Positions and dialogue with politicians:** The working group develops positions on fundamental and current economic policy issues: for example, on start-ups or business succession by women or on legislative projects such as part-time work or equal pay.
- **Networking:** Since 2018 there has been a separate (closed) CCI Facebook group known as “*unternehmerinnen.digital*”. On this platform, women can network, exchange and support each other outside of the physical events. At the same time, the working group networks with other women's organisations with an affinity for business, such as the Association of German Women Entrepreneurs or the Digital Media Women.
- **Publication work:** Meanwhile four special issues, which are enclosed with the CCI magazine, as well as the study entitled “*Unternehmerinnen in Oberbayern*” (“Women Entrepreneurs in Upper Bavaria”) have shed a great deal of light on the importance of women entrepreneurs as well as of specialists and managers for the economy in both a journalistic and scientific way.

Ingrid Obermeier-Osl, who is a busy entrepreneur, is happy to take time for the working group, but is also pleased—like the other members of the working group—that she gets a lot of energy through her work in the working group: “Women often

Fig. 7.5 Women manage companies differently than men: An overview of the decisive success factors of Upper Bavarian women entrepreneurs

address things differently among themselves than in mixed groups. This exchange with like-minded people is very important to me”. She adds, “Above all, this working group also helps to improve the image of entrepreneurs in society. Entrepreneurs make an enormous contribution to the well-being of our society. With our working group, we also leave a positive mark in this sense”. (Look at Fig. 7.5.)

Box 1: “For more women in business”—position of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The formal basis of CCI women’s work is the position “For more women in business” as adopted by the CCI general assembly in 2013. The general assembly unanimously approved the position with one abstention.

- The success of the Upper Bavarian economy is in no small way due to the quantitatively significant role of women entrepreneurs, at 30 percent.
- Women represent a significant potential of skilled workers for the companies. Especially since women in the Federal Republic have never been as well educated as they are today.
- Gender diversity, including in management positions, is central to the success of companies.

These are the demands of the position paper aimed at companies, women and politics:

- **Companies** should better utilise the potential of women as specialists and managers.

- **Women** should put themselves up for management positions and strive for independence.
- **The state** must support women and companies on this path, for example by providing better and more flexible childcare.

Voices from the working group—“I am involved in the CCI and the working group for women in business...

... because the CCI still feels very male-dominated. If you want to promote and support women, i.e. female entrepreneurs, with their needs and problems, you need such a working group. The working group also provides me with much better background information. The working group gives us women more direct access to politics and administration. Thus, we can clearly address our demands to the competent authorities and have more influence. Furthermore, the working group gives me access to women entrepreneurs whom I would not otherwise meet. I become visible, I am recommended.”

Beate Mader, VISION, consulting| concepts| implementation, communication consulting & business coach for strategic positioning, founder, owner, Bad Tölz

... because I find it incredibly important that all groups that shape the economy have a voice within the framework of a chamber of commerce and industry. And 50 percent of them are women, who until now have not been seen as such. When I started dealings with the CCI, 90 percent of people I met were men in black suits at almost every CCI event... That’s why it is a special concern to make women in business more visible. The working group for women in business is a wonderful instrument for this. Essentially, the CCI offers a good platform to get into conversation with political decision-makers—at eye level. In addition, you get to meet other entrepreneurs: This results in new insight, good discussion on a variety of topics that concern us all and also one or two business collaborations.”

Christina Ramgraber, sira Projekte GmbH, Munich, founder, Managing Director

... because I think that a business location like Germany simply cannot afford to do without the potential of its female executives. The potential is there—we have to tap into it! From my experience as an entrepreneur over three decades, I know: Women ‘lead’ differently, and as entrepreneurs they cultivate a very individual style. Through our working group for women in business, we can address topics that are very specifically geared to the needs of female managers. The working group also acts very intensively as a network. And last but not least, with the working group, we give women in business the powerful voice that they undoubtedly deserve. At the same time, the development of Upper Bavaria as a business location is close to

my heart. In my perception, the CCI is an enormous network and a large think tank from which companies can benefit in many ways. I am literally sitting in the front row of the CCI. And I use this information advantage. Through my involvement in the working group for women in business, I would like to introduce other female entrepreneurs to the CCI network.”

Yvonne Molek, w&p Wilde & Partner Communications GmbH, Co-Founder, Member of the Advisory Board, Munich

... because there are issues where success can only be achieved through exchange and shared action. These are, above all, the topics that have socio-political relevance. Unfortunately, what female entrepreneurs experience in 2018 still differs substantially from what male entrepreneurs experience. For example, it is still easier for male entrepreneurs than for female entrepreneurs to obtain loans. Exchanging information about the opportunities and challenges that women entrepreneurs face in the working group for women in business is beneficial for all female entrepreneurs and can help to improve the conditions for future female entrepreneurs. Through the working group we are more visible, we are noticed, we get to know many interesting women and different perspectives, and see that we are not alone in our perception. In addition, we get many new impulses and ideas. 100 eyes always see more than two!

Dr. Nadja Tschirner, Cross Consult GbR, Munich, founder, Managing Director

... because the CCI can only successfully implement its legal mandate to look after the overall interests of those businesses belonging to it if it has sufficient knowledge of the respective interests. Therefore, I am fundamentally involved in the CCI for the medium-sized retail trade. However, the interests of female entrepreneurs are sometimes, but by no means always, identical with those of male entrepreneurs. Therefore, it is very important to point out the needs of female entrepreneurs and to sensitise others to these needs. Our entire working and living world is permeated by gender-specific role expectations and behavioural patterns. The visibility of women entrepreneurs in no way mirrors their actual importance for the economy.

Michaela Pichlbauer, GÜNTHER RID-STIFTUNG for the Bavarian retail trade, Munich, Member of the Board.

Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry—Bolstering Credibility by Embodying Key Values

With the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the Free State enjoy a strong, supra-regional representation of their interests—especially with regard to state politics. In an interview, Dr. Eberhard Sasse, entrepreneur and president of the CCI for

Munich and Upper Bavaria and of the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry describes how forces can be bundled, positions developed and campaigns designed.

Dr. Eberhard Sasse, Photo Credit: CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria/Goran Gajanin_Das Kraftbild

Why does the principle “chamber of commerce and industry” also need a supra-regional structure? The strength of the CCI actually lies in the bundling of regional interests and competences...

Its regional competence is undisputed. But when it comes to who we want to reach with our work and our messages, we must also keep an eye on Germany’s federal structure. In this structure, responsibilities are divided and structured. And we cannot reach all levels if we focus solely on the respective chamber district.

So how have you solved this challenge?

On a national level, we have the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which is based in Berlin. It is the umbrella organisation for the 79 Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Germany and addresses all issues that are the responsibility of the federal government and Europe. The Association of Bavarian chambers of Commerce and Industry & bundles the interests of the nine Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry vis-à-vis state politics in Bavaria, while a chamber of commerce and industry then bundles the interests of the members of its respective chamber district. Finally, in the individual CCIs, the regional committees represent the interests of companies at district and municipal level. From this point of view, the structure of the CCI organisation reflects the division of Germany according to its political levels: Nation—State—District—County. This ensures that our work arrives where it is needed—and where it can have an effect.

Let's take a look at the example of Bavaria, where you, as president, head the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Can this be understood in such a way that the state organisation sets the tone and the individual CCIs follow it?

No, quite the opposite. Our organisation is structured from the bottom-up. Just as the individual CCI builds its knowledge and positions on the input of the representatives of sectors and regions in the general assembly and the regional committees, so the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry bundles the input from the nine regional CCIs in the Free State—in order to then speak with a strong voice and introduce our positions into state policy.

Has this always been the case?

The Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has a very long tradition, it has been in existence since 1909 and has been organised as a separate association since 2009. The association also defines the responsibilities and roles in the organisation.

For example?

The President and the Chief Executive of the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria form the executive committee of the association, because they represent the so-called “local chamber”, i.e. the CCI at the seat of the Bavarian state government.

So the decisions are made in munich?

The fundamental preparations are made by the association's advisory board. All the Bavarian Chief Executives are represented in it. The decision-making body of the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry then builds on this preparatory work and this is—as in a CCI—its general assembly. In this assembly, the Presidents and Chief Executives of all Bavarian CCIs are present as members and make all decisions together. One man, one vote—the democratic principle—runs through the entire CCI organisation. It is then the task of the Board to represent the decisions vis-a-vis politics, administration and the public.

How strong is the association of bavarian chambers of commerce and industry, and how representative its position?

Through the nine individual CCIs, we unite the interests of a total of 990,000 companies in Bavaria. This makes the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry the strongest Bavarian business organisation. Precisely because we use our federal structure to develop our positions from among the business community and make democratic decisions on them in the general assembly meetings, we have a high degree of credibility and are accepted as a serious discussion partner on all political levels. It is undoubtedly one of the absolute strengths of the CCI organisation that we bring together the knowledge and interests of so many companies and allow everyone to participate in these combined forces. This exchange is structured by our statutes. In this sense, we have embraced the “Sharing Economy” even before this term existed...

What role does voluntary work play in this context?

It is, literally, the “social” component in our country’s economy, which continues to draw its strength and credibility from the concept of the “social market economy”. The acceptance of the work in the CCIs and in the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry is essentially based on the fact that entrepreneurs place themselves free of charge and without regard to their own advantage into the service of the general public. That is the “honourable merchant” at its purest—along with actively sharing one’s own strength and power with everyone.

Does this form of cooperation also Give you the credibility you mentioned?

Without a doubt. This is because it is the basis of our non-partisan approach and our independence. The CCIs and the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry always represent the overall interest of the economy. This also means that we take up considerable minority opinions and integrate them into our positions. Finding only the lowest common denominator is not enough for us. This is why the upstream regional and specialist committees and, ultimately, the general assemblies sometimes struggle intensively to achieve a viable result.

Does that really work?

When it comes to issues such as energy system transformation or transport infrastructure, it is not only the sectors and companies directly affected that have their say, but also all other sectors of the economy, which can also take a different, and sometimes even contradictory, stance. This is fully reflected in our positions: There is no advocacy on the part of a Chamber of Commerce and Industry or the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry for partial interests or lobbying in favour of a specific industry.

But aren’t such processes sometimes also counter-productive because they drag on for a long time and their balanced results are not as effective in the public eye as rather pointed demands?

When we talk about productivity, no one on the Boards of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry needs to explain to us entrepreneurs what that means. The processes of decision-making in the committees are just as efficient as in the companies. The entrepreneurial swarm of intelligence contributes to this just as much as mutual trust does—which is based precisely on the principle of not favouring individual interests. And as far as the balanced result is concerned, unlike some unlikely “shop window” positions, the positions of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry have a realistic basis and provide practical approaches for politics and administration. This efficiency is a mark of quality for the CCIs as well as for the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry—and helps us in our own organisation as well.

In what way?

Not every CCI has to reinvent the wheel with regard to certain questions. The Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry sees itself as a transformer of existing knowledge and acquired insight from which each individual chamber can draw for its own needs.

As far as efficiency is concerned, does the association of bavarian chambers of commerce and industry address every economically relevant topic or do you set priorities?

As a constantly evolving organisation that comprises companies that are constantly learning, there are no topics we leave out. Where we recognise the need for action and where our member companies demand action, we naturally become active. On the other hand, we remain target-oriented in our efforts if we focus our work on certain overarching issues that affect all sectors and companies.

Which of these core topics is the association of bavarian chambers of commerce and industry been concerned with at present?

At present five topics are the focus of our activities. We call them “Excellence” topics, because they have a very high and practical current relevance for companies, issues that companies find most pressing. First and foremost, this is the work on education policy. We are concerned here with strengthening and further developing the dual vocational training system. This intensive combination of practical training and school-based support is a non-negotiable quality feature of “Made in Germany” and requires our special attention in the wake of global change and the superficial attractiveness of “learning on the job”. Together with the Chambers of Trades and Crafts and the Ministry of Economics, we are working intensively to maintain and optimise the dual vocational system for the benefit of both the economy and society.

And the other four topics?

The first is to secure skilled workers for the needs of all companies. This is closely related to vocational training issues, but extends further to questions of qualification and the immigration of skilled workers from other countries. Secondly, we are addressing the challenges in the energy and raw materials markets as well as the change or development of existing structures for the use and distribution of resources. In the field of internationalisation, we are committed to free and fair trade and stand up against protectionism and state egotism. Bavaria is an exporting nation, but it also depends on a functioning import system—this applies to each and every one of our members. And, last but not least, we are moving the model of the honourable merchant back into a perception that befits it.

Do you think the honourable merchant had lost in terms of significance?

Let’s put it this way: Numerous other role models for corporate management (some of them very short-term), such as the shareholder value approach or the unrestrained buying up of other companies, have caused a great deal of economic unrest in the recent past—which put the supposed old-school ideal of an entrepreneur for whom the “preservation of the decency and morals of the honourable merchant” is a key factor for responsible action on the back bench. With the rise of Corporate Social Responsibility, this attitude, which had temporarily lain dormant,

regained its reputation. In 2015, the Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry then made the honourable merchant a guiding principle, because entrepreneurial tasks and challenges can be mastered in a credible and responsible manner. This has real potential for the future: an in-depth, long-term joint project, in other words, not a short-term marketing campaign—in keeping with the tradition of our self-image that we do not chase trends but rather open up perspectives.

In other words, you see yourself challenged to “set the agenda”?

This is how you might describe it with modern terminology. In principle, there is nothing more to it than entrepreneurial thought and action: We not only react to changes in the market and other, mainly political influences. Rather, we independently define topics and goals that we want to occupy, shape and implement. Innovation—that’s entrepreneurship and that’s why it’s also CCI.

In your opinion, what is the most significant success that the association of bavarian chambers of commerce and industry has achieved with agenda-setting?

That we, the Bavarian industry, have found a way to give refugees a binding and immediate sense of perspective in our state. The initiative entitled “Integration through vocational education and work” is holistic and sustainable, it provides concrete measures and overcomes bureaucratic obstacles. Figures are only part of the truth behind this, but 4,695 training contracts concluded in 2017 with young people from countries of origin that are typical for refugees have not only made a positive contribution to the training balance. They are also strong evidence of the social commitment of our companies. Not least as a result of our influence, we understand that Bavarian Minister President Markus Söder wants to support cutting-edge technology to the tune of EUR one billion.

And what other topics are currently occupying you most—also with regard to their impact beyond the economy?

With regard to recent times, I would like to mention the campaign “Training makes parents proud”, with which we have increased awareness throughout Bavaria of the value of vocational training. This campaign has demonstrably influenced the attitude of parents, whose advice plays a key role in their children’s choice of career. Another example is the constructive and critical support of the “Bayern Digital” offensive by the state government. We have presented a total of three catalogues of demands in this regard. In our view, the Bavarian digitisation strategy, for example, is still characterised by its limited gearing towards concrete support for user SMEs and IT companies, even though there are some good approaches. Who, if not the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, could make it clear from the broad application knowledge of their member companies where the actual need for action lies?

Dr. Sasse, thank you very much.

The Tasks of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry

The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents the entire commercial sector in Germany. Its members are the 79 Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCIs) with several million companies from industry, trade and services—from kiosk owners to large corporations.

The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry is committed to these companies in its dealings with politicians, administrators and the public. It advocates for a commercial economy at the federal and European level—for example, for less bureaucracy, free trade or fast internet. The goal is good framework conditions for a successful business.

The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry bundles the interests of businesses across all sectors and branches of the economy in a democratic and deliberative manner. These are conveyed to it by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The spectrum of opinions on the various economic policy issues is as diverse as the business landscape in Germany.

Comprehensive Information from the German Business Community

The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry takes this spectrum of opinion into account when probing and weighing up the feedback. It also includes minority positions in its representation. After all, politicians and administrators depend on information from the business community being conveyed to them as comprehensively as possible. In this way, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry develops joint positions of the German business community and helps to shape the economic policy opinion-forming process in Berlin and Brussels in a balanced and authentic manner.

Entrepreneurs in honorary positions play a key role in developing the economic policy positions that the Association represents. The honorary bodies are supported by more than 200 employees in Berlin and Brussels. The Chief Executive Officer manages the business of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry and is appointed by the General Assembly.

Internationally Active for Germany's Businesses

In addition, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry coordinates the network of more than 140 foreign chambers of commerce, delegations and representative offices of German business in 92 countries.

The institutional seat of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry is where the federal government and the federal parliament are located. From June 1949 to September 1999, this was Bonn. Since October 1, 1999, it has been Berlin. The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry is registered in the Register of Interest Representatives of the European Commission (No. 22400601191-42).

In pursuit of overall interests in business and the economy using five examples

First example: The integration of refugees—creating a secure environment

When several hundred thousand refugees came to Germany in the summer of 2015, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry also felt challenged. The business community wanted to help in accordance with the model of the honourable merchant, and the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria, as their representative body, lobbied for the appropriate framework conditions.

We can do it! Behind this much-quoted sentence of the German Chancellor Angela Merkel is indeed a high claim: Almost one million refugees came to Germany within one year from summer 2015. They had fled from war, oppression, torture and poverty. Merkel was determined to accept and integrate them. She wanted to achieve this. Her appeal met with an open ear, especially in the business world. Many entrepreneurs were not unaffected by the fate of the refugees. They wanted to help according to the standards of an honourable merchant who looks beyond his own business concerns and takes responsibility. The best way to help seemed to them to integrate the refugees into work or training. The welcome side-effect is the refugees could help to alleviate the shortage of skilled workers from which both Germany and the state of Bavaria suffer. In this way, humanitarian aid, social responsibility and securing skilled labour come together.

Refugee Integration as an Expression of the Representation of Interests

Initially, the entrepreneurs repeatedly asked the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria how they could employ the refugees in their companies and what conditions they had to meet. It quickly became clear that the economy, as part of society, has and wants to assume responsibility—and that the best way to do so would be integration through work and training. Translating

the Chancellor's quote from "We can do this" into "We are doing this", the CCI tackled the task on behalf of and together with the honorary office. It understood its commitment to the refugees primarily as a representation of the interests of the companies vis-à-vis politics and government: The economy needs legal and planning security, but also practical support for the integration of the refugees. Both could only be achieved together with politicians, it was argued. Together with the other Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the "Bavarian Integration Pact" was created. This pact ultimately formed the basis for the joint alliance with the Bavarian state government—"Integration through training and work" which was concluded in autumn 2015.

Concerted Action by Business and Politics—The Integration Pact

With the initiative "Integration through training and work", the Bavarian state government, the Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Chambers of Trades and Crafts, the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Bavarian Regional Directorate of the Federal Employment Agency have committed themselves to get more than 60,000 refugees into training and work by 2019. Together they have made almost EUR 100 million available for this purpose. The Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry alone had their general meetings release a total of EUR 9 million for the joint initiative. The strategic package of measures foreseen by the initiative had previously been developed mainly by the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Practical Support for the Companies

Even four years after the big wave, the Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry continue to support their companies with many services and concentrate their integration work primarily on the training of refugees. A brief overview of the services offered by the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria is given. (Look at Fig. 7.6.)

- **Information for companies:** Companies are kept up to speed as part of a comprehensive online presence, articles in CCI publications and leaflets on all facets of integration practice, best practice brochures and numerous events. In the beginning, there was also a special company-oriented asylum law guide, which clearly presented the complicated asylum law for companies.
- **Individual case advice:** Since German asylum, residence and labour law is complicated and constantly changing, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry also supported companies with individual advice from its specially established integration team (see below). This team also works together with authorities or vocational schools.

Fig. 7.6 Important support services: With these services, the Bavarian Chambers of Industry and Commerce are making a strong case for the integration of refugees into the labour market

- **Professional language courses accompanying training:** For the companies, but also for those refugees who have taken up vocational training, the German language is the key to success. This is why the Chambers of Commerce and Industry have made a political commitment to the expansion of language courses at Bavarian vocational schools. To explain, in Bavaria, young refugees are integrated into the education system primarily through integration classes in vocational schools.
- **Competence assessment:** Companies want to know what talents the refugees bring with them. Since certificates and other documents can be lost during a person's escape from such awful circumstances, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry developed "check.work", a test that can be used to quickly determine talents, professional experience and competences. check.work is available in German, English, Arabic, Persian and Somali. The CCI FOSA, the central recognition office of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry for professional qualifications, also helps to quickly determine and recognise foreign qualifications with minimal bureaucracy.
- **Special offers for refugees:** In order to bring the refugees into contact with companies, they are invited to the CCI training fair jobfit!, which takes place several times a year in Munich and in the regions. In addition, they get to know training companies—and training professions—on tours with the specially designed CCI training bus. Before the start of an apprenticeship year and during the training year, there are also special workshops for refugee trainees.
- **Intercultural knowledge for trainers and human resources managers:** For operational cooperation, companies must also have a better knowledge of the culture of refugees and the conditions in their home countries. For this purpose, the CCI Academy has developed special intercultural seminars for trainers and personnel managers.

Legal Initiative of the CCI

Just as important as the practical support was the Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's solid legal stance and the associated planning security for the companies. This was therefore also the subject of interest representation. It is to the special merit of the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria that the so-called 3 + 2 regulation was created and finally even found its way into the Federal Integration Act of 2016.

3 + 2 Regulation—Legal Certainty for Refugees and Companies

This regulation grants refugees whose asylum application has not yet been rejected and who begin a three-year vocational training course, regardless of their current legal residence status, a secure residence during the training period and for a further two years.

Creation of Appropriate Internal Structures

In order to implement all these services, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry also created new structures internally and supported nationwide structures created by the umbrella organisation—the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry:

- **Establishment of a new integration team:** With the Integration Pact, the Bavarian CCIs also committed themselves to establish a “caretaker structure” or integration teams. In the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria, this team consists of six experts. They are familiar with all facets of asylum law, speak many languages and are well networked with authorities, schools and other actors in asylum law. This enables them to provide active and practice-oriented advice and support to companies.
- **Nationwide network “Companies integrate refugees”:** The umbrella organisation of the CCIs, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry, has set up a nationwide network of companies entitled “Companies integrate refugees”, which also supports the companies with information, events and advice.

Visible Success and Further Goals

In the meantime, the structures are well established. All offers are known and used by the companies. Professional integration into companies is basically making good

progress. Nationwide, a quarter of all refugees are now in work or training. Every third company intends to invest in the training and employment of refugees. The training statistics of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria show that without the recruitment of young refugees, many training positions would have remained unfilled. The drop-out rate among refugee apprentices is only marginally higher than among local young people; around 75 percent of the first year of training have successfully completed their final examination. The overall representation of interests has thus been fundamentally successful. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is now safeguarding what has been achieved through constant communication with politicians and through the continuous support of the companies. This includes, above all, the constant commitment to the 3 + 2 regulation, because this is what the CCIs stand for when representing companies and businesses. In addition, the CCIs are of the opinion that a pragmatic and non-bureaucratic way must be found for those refugees who are well-integrated and still reside under a “tolerated” status, in order to ensure their secure working residence in the country.

Case Study 1: Bayerische Blumen Zentrale GmbH—Training Refugees Despite Official Uncertainties

Sonja Ziegltrum-Teubner, Managing Director of Bayerische Blumen Zentrale GmbH in Vaterstetten, had a great desire to help refugees, but also approached her commitment pragmatically—in an entrepreneurial manner, that is the 3 + 2 regulation of the Integration Act came in very handy for her. It allows refugees in training to stay in Germany for the duration of their training and for two more years. The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria had developed this solution. “An insecure prospect of staying was and is the biggest problem for us entrepreneurs”, she says. The economy wants to train refugees, invests time and money—and then the young people may not be allowed to stay or are deported because their reasons for asylum are not recognised. “Especially when several refugees in vocational training are involved, their deportation would upset the whole business plan.” With 3 + 2, the training of refugees is now actually easier to manage. No wonder Ziegltrum-Teubner is always annoyed by the narrow interpretation of the regulation by the Bavarian state government. “It’s incomprehensible”, she says, and likes to air her annoyance in the media as well. She is currently training four young men on a permanent basis, and two others are deployed as helpers. The 3 + 2 rule does not yet officially apply to two of the trainees. The entrepreneur only has a verbal assurance from the responsible district office that they will not be deported during the training period. “Such an unclear situation is, of course, not good for the refugees themselves either. They are very unsettled, which in turn has an effect on learning and working in the company.”

In spite of the official difficulties, Ziegltrum-Teubner does not allow herself to be stopped. Applicants among the refugees were (and are) found mainly through the voluntary local refugee helpers' circle, in which a friend of hers is very active. This random recruitment process turns out to be very advantageous: "The personal recommendation is very helpful for the selection. The helpers can usually assess whether the candidates are suitable and could fit in with us". The recommendation is checked by an initial discussion and trial work in the flower centre.

When people from other cultures with severe traumas due to persecution and flight have to settle into new social contexts, it can also lead to problems. Sonja Ziegltrum-Teubner remains calm: "In contrast to many a German trainee, we have no problems with our refugees in the form of unexcused absences or delays", she praises. "The main problems are actually the school issues: the German language, which is not yet very good in some cases, or the lower level of school education in some cases."

It is also important to the entrepreneur that her core workforce is on board. She explains in good time when refugees are going to be taken on and need to be integrated. "As we have already worked together in pairs in most areas where refugees are deployed, we have now transferred the principle. This results in a 1:1 form of supervision that gives the refugees a great start." Another advantage is "Through close cooperation, the permanent staff and refugees are becoming increasingly closer, and mutual understanding for each other's problems is growing. This has also helped to break down barriers with regards to refugees among the German permanent staff".

Case Study 2: Stadtwerke München GmbH—Facilitating Operational Integration

Stadtwerke München (SWM) has long had a heart for young people who have not been so well off in life: young people with family problems, with a criminal or drug-related background. For 30 years now, SWM has been helping them back on their feet in the Stadtwerke project together with Spectrum e.V., a legal entity of several independent institutions for helping the disadvantaged.

When the large streams of refugees came to Munich in the summer of 2015, the management of SWM decided to become involved as a company and use the Stadtwerke Project for this purpose. As part of a vocational preparation measure, 20 refugees have been placed in work or training since 2016. The measure is financed in equal parts by the Federal Employment Agency and Stadtwerke München GmbH and, in terms of the personnel setup and underlying concept, is designed to meet the needs of refugees. The trainer in the training centre is supported by a sociologist and a German teacher, so that practical training, subject-related German lessons and individual social pedagogical support are directly intertwined.

The municipal utility trainers first find out whether the young people fit in with the vocational offers of the SWM and thus with the project by means of vocational taster days. During the vocational preparation year, they are then employed together with the other trainees in the various technical (non-commercial) areas of SWM, but also in other companies, and get to know plant construction, network and plant service or even the power plant area itself. This year, they are expected to reach apprenticeship maturity and receive targeted support in choosing a career and during the application process, in order to ultimately find their way into subsequent dual vocational training at SWM. Of the original 16 participants, twelve have so far succeeded in doing so. Two of them have started training at the SWM, ten at other companies.

The Spectrum e.V. association, which is co-financed by the city of Munich, among others, is of particular help to the SWM. The association helps with the recruitment of the refugees, but also supports the Stadtwerke project during its course. In addition, the company exchanges information with other companies on the subject of refugees in a working group of the German Association for Personnel Management (DGFP). SWM Personnel Manager Werner Albrecht is very pleased with the refugees: “Although there are sometimes challenges in terms of language, issues such as punctuality or meeting deadlines. But they are consistently committed, grateful and hard-working”.

Second Example: Digitisation—Making Companies Fit for the Digital Future

The CCI motivates and empowers companies to position themselves digitally with many offers. “Pack ma’s digital”—translated from Bavarian: “Let’s be digitally successful!”—is the motto. At the same time, the CCI is committed to the state government for the expansion of high-speed Internet and financial support for the economy.

No company can avoid digitalisation. Those who do not engage in Internet-based processes, who do not adapt their business model accordingly, will sooner or later lose their competitiveness. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria began to address the issue around 15 years ago. Back then, the buzzword digitalisation, which is on everyone’s lips today, was not yet familiar to most entrepreneurs. However, some pioneering companies and also the primary office of the CCI had already recognised that the economy would increasingly be based on digital technology. The CCI wanted all companies to be as well prepared as possible for this change. With foresight, the CCI therefore defined two main tasks: The companies need an infrastructure that makes digitalisation technically possible—the keyword being high-speed Internet. At the same time, the companies must be enabled to implement digitalisation. The support of politics was and is necessary, especially for the development of infrastructure, but also for the

empowerment of companies. The commitment of the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry to digitisation is, therefore, also a prime example both for the representation of interests and for the promotion of business.

Commitment to Better Infrastructure and Funding

The following two initiatives, which the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Munich) presented to the state government on behalf of all Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and which the state government accepted and implemented, are examples of how the CCI is clearing the way towards the digitisation for companies.

- **Broadband expansion:** An efficient broadband network is a decisive location factor for the economic success of all of Bavaria. The Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, therefore, sought talks with the Bavarian state government at an early stage and succeeded in getting the state government to set up a funding programme for broadband expansion. Since 2008, this programme, which now has a total volume of around EUR 1.5 billion, has been supporting local authorities in developing high-speed Internet. In the meantime, 98 percent of Bavarian municipalities are in the funding process for the expansion to at least 50 Mbit/s. In the first funding years from 2008 to 2011, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry acted as the contact point for the municipalities when submitting applications for funding. In the meantime, the Bavarian Broadband Centre, which was set up specifically for this purpose, has taken over the processing of applications. With this programme, the CCI, in cooperation with the political sector, created the basis for the digitisation of its members. Since the demand for bandwidth is continuously increasing, there is still a lot to be done: In May 2018, the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria surveyed its volunteer entrepreneurs on the supply of fast Internet and mobile communications. The result is sobering: For roughly 40 percent of the companies, the current fixed and mobile network infrastructure is not sufficient. So the Chamber of Commerce and Industry made eleven demands for better broadband supply and remains on the ball in its representation of interests.
- **The Bavarian Digital Bonus:** Getting ready for the digital world is a major challenge, especially for small- and medium-sized companies. The CCI therefore proposed the introduction of a so-called “Digital Bonus” to the Bavarian state government, which would enable small- and medium-sized companies in particular to use modern IT systems, develop digital products, processes or services and improve IT security. The state government accepted the proposal and has been providing extensive subsidies since 2017. The digital bonus has been extremely well received. The first tranche of funding was even used up prematurely, before being increased immediately.

- The CCI also lobbied the state government for education vouchers to help companies promote the digital empowerment of their workforces. This demand was met. The cheques have been available since 2019 to supplement the digital bonus.

Services to Support Company Digitalisation

But the CCI did not leave it at the political representation of interests. It was also concerned with enabling companies to cope with digitisation in practice. In this way, it supports its members in becoming more and more digital with a variety of formats. With its service, it links the offline with the online world.

- **The “netzblicke” series of events and much more:** It is easier to cope with digitisation if companies and experts can meet and exchange ideas in person. The “netzblicke” series of events is the first format that the CCI established for this purpose. The free event series, which started back in 2004, provides practical tips on a wide range of topics from the digital world. Traditionally once a month, interested parties meet at the CCI or in a company and talk about current and helpful topics such as search engine optimisation, online marketing or IT security.
- **CCI webinar series:** Many people use YouTube videos and webinars to get practical information: from building manuals to repair instructions. This was taken up by the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Munich), which established its own webinar series on important topics of digitisation. These deal with e-commerce, data protection, IT security, blockchain technology and much more. In these films, which last about one hour, interested companies receive basic information prepared for practical use.
- **Guideline Industry 4.0:** The Guideline Industry 4.0 on the website of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry is intended as an entry aid for industrial companies. It offers information, practical examples and interviews with experts. As a special feature, the guide contains a digital self-check. Entrepreneurs can use it to ascertain the digital maturity level of their company. How digital are my production, company organisation, technology and products at this stage? The self-check provides answers, further information, suggestions and explanations.
- **Work 4.0:** To a considerable extent, digitisation also affects the world of work. Digitisation opens up structures, people not only have to master the new media technically, but they also have to work differently, more flexibly, in a more self-determined way and more team-oriented. Methodical approaches such as Design Thinking, Scrum or Business Model Canvas make this possible. The CCI also supports the establishment of such approaches in companies, initially bringing them closer to managers: with roadshows through companies that have already mastered the new work, with congresses or publications.

- **Digitalization initiative “Pack ma’s digital”:** The initiative “Pack ma’s digital” or in High German: “Werden wir digital erfolgreich!” (“Let’s be digitally successful!”) provides concrete support to small- and medium-sized businesses in developing digital strategies. Initially with a roadshow through the CCI region, the CCI and its partners from the business world brought practical concepts and recipes for digitisation to the companies. The “Pack ma’s digital” concept now covers all of the CCI’s digitisation activities.

According to the latest surveys, one third of Bavarian companies now feel fit enough to cope with digitisation. The CCI considers this to be a realistic estimate, but also sees that Bavarian companies still have a lot to do. Thus, digitisation will remain an important task in the area of representation of interests, but also for business development. Infrastructure and competence development must continue. The CCI also wants to strengthen the companies’ focus on future technologies such as artificial intelligence or Blockchain: there is a lot of potential for the location here.

Case Study: “Pack Ma’s Digital”—Informing and Networking Companies for Digitalisation

Digitisation is not an end in itself, but a necessity for every company. With the initiative “Pack ma’s digital”, or in High German: “Werden wir digital erfolgreich!” (“Let’s be digitally successful”), the CCI has developed a concept that particularly involves small- and medium-sized businesses in digitisation. The Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs took on an oversight role here. At the same time, the CCI brought digitally experienced partners from the business world on board. The founding partners of the initiative were the internationally active social media platforms Facebook and LinkedIn, the telecommunications service provider Telekom Deutschland, Giesecke & Devrient, which specialises in printing banknotes and chip cards, and the retail company MediaMarktSaturn Retail Group. In the meantime, other interested parties, regional IT SMEs as well as Google have also joined in. “Pack Ma’s digital” can currently be proud of around 100 supporters.

Huge Range of Content

The “Pack ma’s digital” category now includes all the digitisation services offered by the CCI. Hardly a day goes by when interested parties do not have the opportunity to attend events or network meetings and to catch up and exchange information on digitisation in all its facets—from company visits and workshops to congresses in Munich, in the regional offices or even in local companies, in publications, on the web or in social media. These activities are accompanied by an extensive collection of material in the online download centre, the CCI website and

YouTube. The programme of content is extremely impressive: Topics such as search engine optimisation, e-commerce, new training occupations in e-commerce, data protection, cyber security, Blockchain or Industry 4.0 are just a small selection.

Politics, Companies and CCI Hand in Hand

“Pack Ma’s digital” also reflects the fact that the digitalisation of the economy has become a cross-cutting issue for all areas of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry—just as it has become a cross-cutting issue for the economy itself. Not only the ICT speakers, but every department contributes something to make companies digitally fit. In addition, “Pack ma’s digital” shows how politics, business and the CCI are working hand in hand to tackle a topic that is crucial for the future, shape the general conditions and make the location and its economy fit for the future. (Look at Fig. 7.7.)

Third Example: Transport Policy—Taking a Position in Infrastructure Development and Delivering on Tomorrow’s Mobility Needs

Every company needs a flawless transport infrastructure as a prerequisite for its economic success. The CCIs are, therefore, committed to maintaining and expanding the existing transport networks and facilities. The Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry as a whole also attach great importance to future mobility.

Transport policy is a high priority on the agenda of the representation of interests of all CCIs. After all, efficient airports, seaports and inland ports as well as well-developed and demand-oriented road and rail networks are indispensable for a flourishing economy. But transport experts predict double-digit growth rates for many rail and road routes in the coming years—a development for which the existing infrastructure is not prepared. The chambers of commerce and industry, therefore, regularly point out to politicians and the public the necessity of expansion and modernisation measures as well as new roads and railways and warn of their timely realisation. This also includes the demand for the implementation of long overdue transport projects. After all, many an infrastructure project for which federal transport infrastructure plans identified an “urgent need” more than 20 or even 30 years ago has still not been realised today because budget funds are lacking or legal proceedings are blocking the planned start of construction. At the same time, however, the chambers of commerce and industry are always concerned with preparing the economy and society for the transport and mobility of the future.

Fig. 7.7 Digitisation permeates all sectors of the economy in Munich

Joining Forces in Bavaria

The view to Bavaria: In representing their interests, the Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry act independently of each other, but also seek to close ranks with other chambers of commerce and industry or other chambers and associations. The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria, for example, adopted a comprehensive transport policy agenda (see case study below) for Munich and Upper Bavaria in 2016, which listed all the transport policy points of importance for the chamber district and backed them up with constructive proposals: from financing to the strategic expansion of roads, railways and waterways in Upper

Bavaria, to the optimisation of local public transport. The agenda had previously been discussed intensively in the transport committee, the regional committees and the general assembly.

Intensive Public Relations Work

The CCIs present such papers in an attention-grabbing manner at press conferences and other public events and discuss them at conferences with politicians, transport experts, environmentalists and other stakeholders. They also make it clear to the public that they are persistently on the ball when it comes to campaigning for well-developed traffic routes. And although the commitment to transport policy projects really does take a long time and sometimes takes years, there are certainly successes to be had. For example, the members of the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry were recently able to celebrate the three-lane extension of Autobahn 8 in the direction of Ulm.

Focus on the Needs of the Population

In doing so, the chambers of commerce and industry do not ignore the fact that an expansion of the transport infrastructure can create burdens for the local population and must therefore be designed as environmentally friendly and sustainable as possible. They therefore support strategies that seek consensus with residents and local politicians in important construction measures. For example, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Munich) is clearly behind the communication concept of Deutsche Bahn for the four-lane expansion of the rail connections to the future Brenner Base Tunnel (BBT). Deutsche Bahn wants to discuss this expansion with the population at community and regional forums in the affected Inntal valley region. Given that the federal government had already promised to build the BBT in 1994, the Chamber of Commerce is urging haste. This is because the 64-kilometre-long tunnel will be part of the pan-European transport corridor between Scandinavia and southern Italy. Austria and Italy began construction of this “project of the century” in 2008. Germany must therefore make further progress here.

Focusing on the European Dimension: Third Runway for Munich Airport

The Brenner project also demonstrates the European dimension of transport policy: It shows that the representation of interests by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry is also in demand at the European level. Several rail and road routes in Bavaria are part of the pan-European transport infrastructure, and the European Union (EU) wants to expand and modernise them as quickly as possible. The CCI

supports these projects because an internationally well-networked infrastructure also ensures locational advantages for Bavaria. This also applies to Munich Airport's project to build a third runway, which is supported by the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The runway was initially rejected by the population in a referendum. But there will certainly be a next round, in which the CCI will play an active role.

Preparing Members for the Traffic of the Future

In addition to representing interests in relation to the transport infrastructure, the CCIs also discuss the mobility of the future with their members, educate them, encourage them to take new paths and show how a changeover can be organised with the greatest possible economic efficiency. In doing so, they take a holistic approach to the topic—as the example of the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry shows.

- **Automotive:** Initially, the focus is on the automobile and its technical development. Alternative fuels such as hydrogen, natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas are gaining ground and can play an important role in the transport market of tomorrow. In addition, e-mobility is a major topic for the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as the number of registrations of electric vehicles is rising sharply. The Chamber is committed to the development of an electric charging infrastructure (see box below) and provides information on funding. It encourages its members to initiate pilot projects and communicate their commitment to the general public. And in the distance, autonomous vehicles beckon, reaching their destination completely or largely without a driver. The first projects have already started. In the spring of 2018, test trials for so-called “platooning” started on the Munich–Nuremberg motorway. This means that trucks drive one behind the other as a convoy with the help of a high-tech control system without the drivers having to intervene.
- **Alternative means of transport:** At the same time, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry is also introducing alternative transport scenarios to individual transport, such as transport with freight bicycles or car sharing. Or it looks for solutions when new digital car-sharing platforms such as Uber create competition for the traditional taxi companies.
- **Transport and climate protection:** The Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry does not neglect the role of transport in climate protection. Here, it clearly weighs up environmental protection and economic interests. In order to make transport more environmentally friendly, it focuses on alternative solutions and in particular on the expansion of local public transport.

Box: Electric Avenue—Driving Forward e-mobility

In many cities, drivers of electric vehicles have problems charging. Often there are only a few electric charging points, which are used by other road users or occupied by people illegally parking their cars there. With the project “Electric Avenue”, the CCI Munich wants to solve this problem. Parking spaces with charging stations are to be created at central locations that have sufficient space and are less frequented. At such hotspots, there could be a few dozen charging stations operated by private companies. During the night, car-sharing cars could recharge here, thus increasing the economic efficiency of such facilities. Now the CCI has commissioned a research project for “Electric Avenues”. It wants to know which locations are suitable for such an infrastructure, how their efficient operation can be guaranteed and what technical framework conditions must be in place to ensure that the electricity networks are not overloaded. The research project will be completed in 2020.

Case Study: Transport Policy Agenda of the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry—Optimising Traffic Flows and Promoting e-mobility

The great importance of transport for the region’s economy prompted the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria to draw up a transport policy agenda in 2016. Primary and honorary members worked together intensively on this matter. The summary of the positions not only shows the demands, but also the complexity and expertise of the CCI’s representation of interests.

- **Improve infrastructure development:** In the prospering region of Munich and Upper Bavaria, the number of inhabitants is increasing just as significantly as the volume of traffic. A strong infrastructure is necessary to meet the growing demand of the economy and population for transport services for goods and passengers alike. It is essential to maintain the existing network of transport modes and to link them intelligently. In early responsible dialogue with the public, the framework conditions must be optimally adapted.
- **A strategic approach to infrastructure financing:** Infrastructure is a service of general interest. Whether roads, railways or waterways—the financing of their maintenance and expansion in line with demand must be secured, regardless of the current cash position. This can be achieved, for example, by earmarking the truck toll or funds from the Municipal Transport Financing Act (GVFG). Private capital in PPP (Public–Private Partnership) projects also serves as a useful supplement to investments in transport infrastructure

- **Develop road as a mode of transport:** Roads are the most important means of transport and form the backbone of our transport routes. According to current forecasts, road traffic will retain the highest share of total traffic volume. Innovative concepts are needed to ensure that road traffic meets the expected challenges. When transporting goods, for example, extended trucks score points with efficiency gains and fuel savings.
- **Promoting rail transport:** The better interlinking of road and rail freight transport will bring strategic advantages in terms of future traffic growth. Easily accessible combined transport terminals and efficient freight transport centres promote the transfer of transport to rail. In addition, the completion of the EU transport corridors is decisive for the business location of Upper Bavaria and the future-oriented use of international main transport axes.
- **Strengthen international and intercontinental air traffic:** Munich Airport has excellent flight connections and an efficient infrastructure. To maintain its position as a hub in Europe in the long term and to meet the forecast growth in air traffic, the construction of a third runway is essential. It must also be quickly accessible from all parts of the region. Another focus is the creation of a “Single European Airspace” together with globally binding climate protection regulations.
- **Expanding inland waterways:** Reliable year-round shipping conditions are a prerequisite for ensuring that the Danube can be used continuously as a federal waterway. This is opposed by the restricted navigable section between Straubing and Vilshofen. Its expansion in line with demand ensures the efficiency of this economically and ecologically sound transport route and the development opportunities for freight transport centres in the Danube ports.
- **Optimise local public transport:** Local public transport plays an outstanding role in connecting rural regions and the mobility of the population, but also as a location factor in the Upper Bavarian economic area. In order to keep it cost-effective and efficient, the bus sector, which is dominated by small- and medium-sized enterprises, must be strengthened and the urban railway (S-Bahn), underground (U-Bahn) and tram (Strassenbahn) networks expanded. Each of these factors relieves the road network and thus contributes to improving the traffic situation and air quality.
- **Keeping cities accessible for commercial traffic:** The urban road network makes it possible to reach businesses in trade, services and industry. It must be available to commercial traffic without unnecessary restrictions. It is therefore important to ensure an efficient main road network and, at the same time, to reduce the volume of traffic in the inner cities, for example by offering attractive public transport services, a well-developed bicycle infrastructure and intelligent parking management approach—also with a view to acceptance by those affected.
- **Making urban traffic environmentally compatible:** The economy and the population with their different mobility needs on the one hand and EU-wide air quality standards on the other hand require sustainable concepts for inner city traffic. New services such as car sharing or trans-shipment areas for delivery

vehicles can help to reduce the volume of traffic. Low-noise and low-emission electromobility and digitalisation in transport also offer great opportunities. The aim is to reduce environmental pollution.

- **Logistics in Germany for growth and employment:** Many other industries depend on the transport and logistics sector. Policy-makers must also take greater account of this at the state level. Bavaria especially, with its strong logistics industry, and Munich, in particular, need an integrative concept if it is to remain internationally competitive. This includes sufficient space and real estate for logistics services as well as appropriate framework conditions for delivery traffic, but also effective measures against the increasing shortage of skilled workers.
- **Projects in Upper Bavaria for transport infrastructure:** Nine examples of infrastructure projects clearly show where the fields of action in Munich and Upper Bavaria must lie. They aim to develop all modes of transport appropriately, to link them more effectively with one another and to make overall use of their respective strengths: for a demand-driven connection of regional commercial transport to the supra-regional transport network, for a high-performance, functioning transport infrastructure.

Position on e-mobility

At the same time, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry also adopted a position on e-mobility. The short version is:

In the opinion of the CCI, e-mobility must be promoted. Especially in urban commercial traffic, electric mobility has clear advantages. However, this requires significant improvements at federal, state and municipal levels. Among other things, the CCI demands tax relief such as special depreciation options. The position paper adopted by the CCI Transport Committee calls for this at the federal level:

- Tax relief in the form of special depreciation options to offset the acquisition costs of electric vehicles.
- The further improvement of the charging infrastructure on federal motorways and federal roads.

At the state level, the position paper calls for, among other things:

- The change of rules in building law. For example, it would be necessary to move away from the unanimity principle on issues such as that of charging stations in multi-family houses and switch to simple majorities.
- Funds from the parking space replacement should also be used to improve the construction of the charging infrastructure. For example, it should be possible to use these funds to set up electric charging stations for electric cars at Park and Ride sites.

At the local political level, the CCI is committed to this, for example:

- to enable free parking during the charging process
- to simplify the authorisation procedure for setting up private charging stations.

Fourth Example: Tourism—Expanding Horizons and Bundling Interests

Munich and Upper Bavaria are sought-after destinations for tourists from all over the world—and not only because of the world-famous Oktoberfest. Nevertheless, success for the industry is not a foregone conclusion. Support is provided by the representation of interests by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria.

The tourism and leisure industry plays a major role in the holiday destination of Upper Bavaria. With lighthouse offers such as the beautiful Alpine world, the castles of King Ludwig II, the Oberammergau Passion Festival or the world-famous Oktoberfest, as well as sporting spectacles of global appeal such as the architecturally unique Olympic Stadium, FC Bayern Munich or international championships in Nordic and Alpine disciplines, the region has a strong appeal on national and international markets. An effect that can also be felt in the market for meetings, incentives, conferences and events (MICE), making Munich and Upper Bavaria an attractive destination for conferences, seminars and corporate events. Not to mention the sought-after backdrop for film and TV productions. In some areas, holidaymakers and travellers are even the strongest economic factor of all. (Look at Fig. 7.8.)

Fig. 7.8 Many industries benefit from tourism in Upper Bavaria

Special Need for the Representation of Interests

As a cross-sectional industry with a far-reaching impact on location quality and other economic sectors, the tourism and leisure industry is, therefore, also an important field of activity for the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The following applies to all lighthouse locations: The near-exclusive small- and medium-sized industry needs a strong and credible political representation of interests more than others. By jointly developing positions from the Tourism Committee of the CCI and presenting them to the general assembly, the entrepreneurs create the basis for a sound and efficient representation of interests. Especially in view of the fact that numerous social and economic developments such as succession planning, the shortage of skilled workers, globalisation, the sustainability debate and digitalisation are also triggering the development of a special dynamic in the tourism industry.

Great importance of the industry

Tourism may be a pleasure for consumers, but for the companies active therein it is as challenging and exhausting as any other industry. By perceiving the role of the tourism and leisure industry in its true meaning and integrating it into its work, the CCI polishes the supposedly easy-going image of this industry in the sense that, as a designated service industry, it was and is a model and pioneer of many developments—and for some locations in Upper Bavaria, it is vital for survival. No other branch of industry has such a long and wide-ranging experience in dealing with foreign cultures and customers from all over the world.

We also factor in the following points: Tourism policy is also, without fail, a structural policy. In particular, failed projects, such as the City of Munich's bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics, show that opportunities which are not seized or achieved are tantamount to delays or even a standstill in regional development and/or innovation. The CCI sees its task in actively counteracting this dynamic in partnership with the relevant industry associations and locations. This is done, among other things, by promoting young companies and start-ups and by participating in forward-looking, sustainable initiatives in the industry.

Important task: Moderating interaction with other branches

From the point of view of the CCI, an important task also lies in accompanying and moderating the networking and interaction of the sector with other branches of industry.

- For example, developments in the retail trade, the food industry or the construction industry must always be considered in the context of tourism.

- For the quality of the location in terms of employer attractiveness and work-life balance, appealing leisure facilities for individuals and families are of existential benefit.
- Finally, the CCI's commitment to an efficient infrastructure benefits not only the local economy and resident population, but also guests from all over the world, who thus experience high-quality travel.

Foundation of the Munich and Upper Bavaria Tourism Association—TOM e.V.

Thanks to its own structure with regional committees and a general assembly that has an overview of the entire economic area of Upper Bavaria, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry is able to balance out the different interests of individual sub-regions and counteract parochial thinking. In this way, not only can isolated individual decisions be avoided, but different forces and talents can be bundled in the sense of maximising on a common strength. The CCI specifically seeks suitable partnerships in order to prepare a strong basis for innovation and change. This was also the idea behind the CCI's involvement in founding a new tourism association for Munich and Upper Bavaria. After the dissolution of the previous umbrella organisation had left a serious gap, the CCI along with its location and tourism experts provided the tourism industry with organisational and personnel support in order to deliver on a new, higher-level representation of interests. As a founding member of *Tourismus Oberbayern München (TOM) e.V.*, the CCI continues to contribute its know-how to the work of the association to this day.

Digitisation offensive “Upper Bavaria—really digital”

In addition to joint initiatives with TOM, examples of the CCI's representation of interests include those with the Dehoga Bayern hotel and restaurant association, which flow into the development of the location and help to open up future potential. This is also where the potential of the CCI becomes apparent, which does justice to the local characteristics of the leisure industry through its regionalisation and knowledge transfer. Conversely, a successful host industry positively shapes the image of the entire economic region—beyond its own borders. A current example of such an initiative is the digitalisation offensive “Upper Bavaria—really digital” (“Oberbayern—Echt digital”). Together with TOM e.V. and Dehoga Bayern, District of Upper Bavaria, the initiative was launched in response to the digital hot spots in the industry. Through various measures, such as workshops for sector companies, the training of eCoaches in the destination management organisations and the establishment of an eLearning programme, the level of digitisation is to be increased on a sustainable basis. This will, in turn, have a positive effect on regional service providers for digital tools and services. They bring both their

know-how and their regional proximity into play in order to create innovative solutions together with their customers—which in turn can then be marketed outside the domestic economic area. This ranges from the development of apps to comprehensive support for the “customer journey”, i.e. the path travellers take from searching for and booking a holiday, through to the stay and its evaluation, to subsequent rebooking out of a conviction that what they have found is great. Another positive consequence of this strategy is a strengthening of the local start-up scene—also a central concern of the chamber of commerce and industries.

Fifth example: Legislative work—the general representation of interests with statutory knock-on effects

In a constitutional state such as the Federal Republic of Germany, the overall representation of interests always involves the assessment of laws and regulations. The Chambers of Commerce and Industry are involved in this—by examining and commenting on new draft laws for their consequences for companies or by making their own regulatory proposals. In this way, they are always very successful—not least at federal level.

An important task of the CCIs is their legislative work. It is one of its public tasks assigned by the state, but above all, it is also an expression of the overall representation of interests and the associated advisory role vis-à-vis the political sphere. The CCIs examine draft laws, estimate their consequences, but also take the initiative and bring their own reform proposals into the discussion. From the point of view of the CCIs, the same questions are always behind the assessment of draft laws or the initiation of new rules. What consequences does an existing or future regulation have for companies? What advantages and, above all, what disadvantages does an existing or new law have for a company? Does it hinder the company in its activities or does it promote the company? Does it also ensure equality of competition or, if necessary, inequality in an international comparison? What can be done better for the economy? Which solutions fit? Because laws should not be written without taking into account the economy and its interests.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria is very active in the field of legislative work—both in Bavaria and throughout Germany and Europe. Primary and honorary offices work closely together as a well-rehearsed team. In order to gain more clout, the CCI Munich cooperates with other Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Bavaria, the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, as well as with the CCI umbrella organisation, the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry, other networks, associations and organisations and also with the scientific community. The CCI disseminates the positions adopted in the expert committees, working groups or the general assembly not only through all available communication channels, but also by participating in Germany-wide working groups and committees, by maintaining contacts and networks with political and official decision-makers. Often, however,

face-to-face meetings with politicians also take place directly in talks and discussions with members of parliament and government—so that the role of the CCIs in legislation is not immediately visible.

The list of laws on which the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry in particular has also exerted influence is now quite long: It was in the federal government's expert group on the Mediation Act, it managed to have the 3 + 2 regulation for refugees included in the Integration Act (see also Article "Integration of refugees" above). Various issues of labour and banking laws are currently on the agenda. Just how persistent legislative work leads to advantages for companies and how the discourse with politicians is carried out in practice are illustrated in several case studies below: on insolvency law, tax law and the general data protection regulation.

Case study 1: Law to further facilitate the restructuring of companies (ESUG)—revitalising crisis-torn companies instead of winding them up

It is 2009, and Germany, like many other countries at this time, has also been plunged into an economic crisis by the turbulence in the financial sector. Even in economically stable Bavaria, the number of corporate insolvencies is rising significantly. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria has taken this as an opportunity to make a differentiated analysis of the existing insolvency law situation and has noted that the number of insolvencies is rising, on the one hand because of the crisis, but also because companies often file their insolvency applications too late and, in addition, because they make too little use of the existing so-called insolvency plan procedure, which is designed to enable ailing companies to restructure. The consequence is that companies can then only be broken up and wound up by the insolvency administrator instead of being restructured. Why is this the case? Applying for insolvency is accompanied by shame, fear of stigmatisation and loss of control. So the insolvency application is delayed until it is too late. Failure is not allowed in Germany—a belief that is firmly anchored in the collective German consciousness. At the same time, however, the insolvency plan procedure is proving to be practically insufficient to really save ailing companies and is, therefore, hardly ever used as an option. Analysis by the CCI experts is confirmed in many consulting discussions with companies, lawyers and insolvency administrators. Conversely, however, this analysis also means that, particularly when seen against the background of the current crisis at the time, more companies could be saved if they had filed for insolvency earlier and if the insolvency plan procedure had been improved, i.e. they would not have to be broken up or wound up.

Obvious necessity for an insolvency legal form

The logical conclusion is that Germany needs a comprehensive reform of insolvency law that focuses more than ever on rescuing companies. In other countries such as France or Great Britain, a similar debate is underway at this time, while the United States of America has long had a model in place with its famous Chapter 11, which places reorganisation before liquidation. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria joins forces with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Swabia in Augsburg and two insolvency lawyers to form a group of experts who have drawn up ten precise theses for a reform of insolvency law. These include these four central measures for preserving the company, which are seen by entrepreneurs on the one hand, but also by creditors, as playing an expanded role:

- **Introduction of a business protection shield like Chapter 11 in the USA:** The experts recommended a creditor protection procedure prior to insolvency, as it exists in the USA. This protects a company in crisis from access by creditors for a certain period of time, thus giving it time to undertake further restructuring attempts or to prepare the insolvency plan procedure to restructure the company.
- **Strengthening the principle of self-administration by the entrepreneur—including during the insolvency phase:** This should make it possible for the entrepreneur to remain in a position of responsibility in the insolvency plan and restructuring phase and not to have to relinquish all decision-making authority to the external insolvency administrator who is placed at their side in this phase under German law. This means that the entrepreneur's knowledge, competence and network are also available for the restructuring.
- **Possibility of creditors becoming shareholders:** Here, creditors should be given the option to convert their previous debt into equity and thus become co-owners. According to the CCI, this increases the creditors' interest in maintaining a company.
- **Stronger influence of the creditors on the choice of the insolvency administrator:** The insolvency administrator has so far been appointed by the insolvency judge, but the creditors are the ones affected and should be able to have a say, according to the arguments put forward.

Representation of Interests in Practice

In this chronology, the ideas became a new law:

- **8 July 2009—Start:** The working group on “Insolvency Law” meets for the first time.
- **25 September 2009—Involvement of the umbrella organisation:** The working group on “Insolvency Law” meets with the CCI umbrella organisation, the

Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Berlin, and gets it on board: The result is a thesis paper with ten proposals for corporate restructuring in insolvency. These ten proposals correspond to the proposals of the Munich working group “Insolvency Law”.

- **18 November 2009—Adoption of an official position paper:** The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry Board adopts the position paper “Ten proposals for corporate restructuring in insolvency”.
- **19 November 2009—Dissemination of the position paper:** The position paper is handed over to the then acting Federal Minister of Justice Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, to members of the Bundestag and the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs.
- **20 November 2009—Reaction of the business press:** The business daily newspaper Handelsblatt publishes the wording of the business proposals.
- **12 March 2010—Visit by the Federal Minister of Justice to Munich:** Federal Minister of Justice Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger finds the paper so interesting that she pays a personal visit to the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Minister of Justice exchanges views with CCI experts, but also with additionally invited companies and launches a draft law that implements the Munich Thesis Paper.
- **24 February and 22 March 2010—CCI resolutions:** The steering committee and general assembly of the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry also adopt the paper.
- **27 October 2011—Adoption in the Bundestag:** The law to further facilitate the restructuring of companies (ESUG) is adopted by the Bundestag.
- **1 March 2012—Entry into force:** The ESUG enters into force. Among other things, the four ideas of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry outlined above have been incorporated into the law.

Case Study 2: Cooperation in Tax Procedures—Modernising Tax Law

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria is working hard and successfully for greater cooperation instead of confrontation in tax proceedings. This is also the title of the first, ground-breaking position paper on the subject, which the CCI experts and the Finance and Taxation Committee launched in 2016. In doing so, they also advocate more fairness and responsibility in the tax system. The position paper is based on a study by the Ruhr University Bochum and the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt an der Oder.

- **Idea:** Companies would benefit from a change of course towards cooperative tax procedures and authorities. This would give companies greater planning and legal certainty, reduce their liability and tax risks and cut their bureaucratic costs. But the state also benefits from more balanced, efficient and resource-saving taxation.
- **Practical concept:** The study was based on the principles of the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) in customs law. This means that a company cooperates with the tax authorities. The prerequisite is that it has a competent tax department, good tax standing and an internal control system. The company also discloses risk issues at an early stage. In return, the authorities issue tax assessment notices quickly, without reservation of review, and refrain from external audits if no risk-related facts exist.
- **Developments at EU level:** With their innovative thinking, the chamber of commerce and industry experts and the Finance and Taxation Committee are at the forefront of opinion-forming. The EU Commission in Brussels, for example, is also on the ball with the concept of the certified taxpayer, which is presented in 2017 as part of its proposal for VAT reform.
- **New practice:** Under the EU Commission's proposals, member states could declare those companies that meet certain criteria to be Certified Taxable Persons (CTP). This would be accompanied by simplifications and relief. In order to do so, the companies must prove that they meet standardised requirements, such as that they have internal control systems and are solvent.
- **Further use and further proposals by the CCI Taxation Committee:** The Finance and Taxation Committee considers this EU proposal to be a sensible idea, although it certainly needs to be further developed in terms of its details. In its position paper, it had advocated even greater cooperation in the tax procedure. Especially given that companies nowadays are prepared to participate more—in the form of increased, voluntary transparency. However, the state must provide the right incentives for this by offering advantages in the procedures to companies that cooperate. Regardless of size, every company should be able to achieve this status without excessive bureaucratic and financial burdens. The CCI continues to advocate this further development.

In its latest position paper entitled “Steuern digital—Impulse richtig setzen”, the CCI takes up the topic of cooperation again: In times of progressive digitalisation, it calls for securing competition and keeping the risks for the local location low. Therefore, politics should support companies in their innovative and investment power and not burden them. It would be important to make tax procedures modern, digitally supported and practical. There is a need for action above all in e-government and in the way the state and companies interact. At the same time, the CCI is against the digital tax. According to the proposals of the EU Commission, this new tax should, as an interim solution, tax the turnover of Internet companies in the country where the users are located. However, the CCI argues that this would create risks for local companies and for Germany as a business location in general.

Case Study 3: Inheritance Tax—Do Not Endanger Succession

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria also implemented improvements for companies that are currently in the process of succession or are planning a handover of control. It committed itself with position papers and networking to ensure that the inheritance tax rules, which were amended in 2016, are such that they do not endanger the succession—and with great success.

- **Background:** In December 2014, the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe had already criticised the existing inheritance tax law. According to their mandate, politicians should adopt the law by June 2016.
- **Mission of the Constitutional Court:** In principle, the highest judges had confirmed the inheritance and gift tax and thus also the possibility that the legislator may continue to support companies with tax benefits for succession. However, it had to correct the law in three particular points: Firstly, the court criticised the excessively broad exemption rules for small businesses. Secondly, it criticised the possibility of also being able to favour large family businesses and demanded a needs test for this. Thirdly, it called for revised rules on administrative assets.
- **Draft bill:** In mid-2015, the Federal Ministry of Finance presented a draft bill that went far beyond what would have been necessary to comply with the corrections that had been called for. The business community—including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry organisation—vehemently objected to this. Therefore, the parliamentary factions of CDU, CSU and SPD developed another compromise proposal, which contained not only positive but also problematic rules.
- **Criticism and commitment of the CCI:** The proposal still takes too little account of the structure of medium-sized companies in Germany and criticised the Association of Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and numerous business organisations at a meeting with politicians in the Bavarian State Chancellery. In a joint statement, many business associations throughout Germany subsequently warned that the reform would lead to a massive additional burden on companies. In July 2017, the then Bavarian Minister of Finance Markus Söder pushed through a special way to ensure that specific administrative rules would apply to heirs in Bavaria that would reduce the burden on them.

Case Study 4: EU Data General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)—Fighting for Pragmatic Data Protection

The cut-off date was 25 May 2018: On this date, the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) finally replaced the former EU Data Protection Directive after a two-year transitional period. And by then, all companies should have implemented the new regulations. However, expert advice is still needed on such a complex issue. The chambers of commerce and industry also felt obliged to provide intensive support to companies and are still doing so. They offered (and continue to offer) extensive reliable information material or webinars, organise events, practical seminars and roadshows, publish sample texts and forms and are available as initial advisers for company enquiries. In this respect, the level of cooperation, especially within the Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCIs), is comprehensive: If one Bavarian CCI provides helpful information or tips, the others refer to it.

Start of Legislative Work Six Years Before the Law Comes into Force

Nevertheless, the commitment of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry to the general data protection regulation began much earlier in secret. As with all extensive and momentous legal innovations for the economy, the chambers of commerce and industry were involved in the legislative process at an early stage, either individually or together, as well as through the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry, in order to finally obtain comprehensible, understandable and practicable regulations for companies in consultation with them. For example, the Legal Committee of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria had already had a resolution on this topic passed by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry general assembly in 2012, a full six years before the EU general data protection regulation came into force.

Critical 16-Point Resolution

In this resolution, the data protection experts took a detailed stand on 16 points regarding the GDPR regulations. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry agreed that it was essential to formulate uniform data protection regulations for the whole of Europe and to replace the 1995 Data Protection Directive. The latter had been created at a time when the World Wide Web was still in its infancy, so that rules for handling data on the Internet could not even be anchored in the EU Directive. At the same time, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry specifically called for the outset for practice-oriented regulations as well as for a balanced and appropriate data protection law with comprehensible wording. The following points were particularly important to the CCI:

- **One-stop-shop principle:** It wanted to avoid a situation where a company with subsidiaries in different European countries would have to deal with several data protection supervisory authorities. According to the one-stop-shop principle, only one supervisory authority in the country of the company headquarters should be responsible.
- **Consent:** It also advocated that in future, too, consent under data protection law should be generally permissible in the course of the right to informational self-determination (for example, in the context of employment).
- **Data exchange:** It stressed that data exchange with bodies in third countries must be facilitated and made legally secure. For globally operational companies, it was also important to ensure an appropriate exchange of data within groups of companies.
- **Limitation of the right of associations to take legal action:** When a new law comes into force, companies are often faced with a wave of warnings because a large number of companies fail to implement the new regulations in time or in full. As a rule, dubious warning letters are not concerned with data protection, but with financial gain. This is one of the reasons why the Chamber of Commerce and Industry spoke out against the right of action by associations and organisations and achieved a limitation of those rights to action by associations and organisations which fulfil the requirements of Art. 80 Para. 1 GDPR.
- **No extension of information and disclosure obligations:** The CCI rejected the extension of information and disclosure obligations. These would place a considerable burden on the economy but would not benefit the individual, because the content is no longer perceived once a certain amount has been reached.
- **Regulation on the obligation to report:** It found that an obligation to report any violation of the protection of personal data was too extensive. It would make sense to limit this to serious impairments affecting sensitive data. In addition, the notification of data subjects should be dropped without replacement in cases where the rights of individuals are no longer at risk.

Concerted Action by Many Stakeholders

Since one person alone can always achieve less than several stakeholders put together, the data protection experts at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria also decided to join forces. Together with other CCI experts and companies from various sectors, they formed a working group on “data protection” at the state level (Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry) with roughly 30 members. Together with some representatives of this group, they travelled to Berlin and Brussels to exert direct influence on the legislative process at the EU. They also exchanged views with other European colleagues from Austria and Italy. At national and European events (always in coordination with the responsible Bavarian Ministry when operating at Brussels level) on the subject of the GDPR, they always appeared as a Bavarian association

—sometimes also together with chamber representatives from other European countries. In this way, they were able to demonstrate the importance and unity of the topic across the states and to give sufficient emphasis to their demands. Topics were primarily those mentioned above, such as the consent rules or the introduction of the one-stop-shop principle. In addition, the latest drafts of the GDPR were repeatedly studied and discussed together, and suggestions for amendments were made with the companies in mind.

Successful Application

Even if not all the demands of the CCI were ultimately implemented, the effort was worthwhile, as the following examples illustrate:

- **Introduction of the one-stop-shop principle:** An internationally active company with headquarters in the EU and subsidiaries in other EU countries does not actually have to deal with different data protection supervisory authorities. With the one-stop-shop principle, in the case of cross-border data processing for companies and their subsidiaries, only one lead supervisory authority at the seat of the head office is responsible (Art. 56 Para. 1, Para. 2 GDPR). The one-stop-shop principle now also applies nationally to companies if they have branches in several federal states (Art. 40 Para. 2 German Federal Data Protection Act [BDSG]).
- **Consent:** It still applies. The processing of personal data is generally forbidden, unless the data subject has given his or her consent. Consent will therefore also play an important role under the GDPR in determining the permissibility of data processing and will offer companies the opportunity to process personal data on a secure basis.
- **Protection against the misuse of warning notices:** The CCI also succeeded in protecting companies as far as possible from dubious warning notices. Art. 80 Para. 1 GDPR states that affected persons who feel that the protection of their personal data has been violated can be represented by associations as plaintiffs if companies do not or not sufficiently implement the regulations of the GDPR. However, these associations must meet the strict requirements of Art. 80 Para. 1 GDPR.

Fine Tuning for Practice

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria is currently still in dialogue with central players such as the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior and for Integration and the Bavarian State Office for Data Protection Supervision with regard to the GDPR, in order to achieve further relief for companies in the process of implementation. This too is paying off: In Bavaria, for

example, general information on how to deal with data protection must now be given in the main document (e.g. contract, consent), but the rest may be shown in an overall document on the homepage—a regulation that other federal states may also adopt.

At the same time, the CCI is working in the background at full speed on further new legal regulations. The GDPR has been completed to date. But now other European and national laws regulating data protection issues must be adapted.

Communication—Strategically Positioning the CCI

A CCI must become visible, because only then can it advance its topics, especially in the sense of representing overall interests. The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria has strategically realigned its communication for this purpose and also adopts a multimedia approach to its communication efforts on all channels.

333 daily newspapers, 22 weekly and six Sunday newspapers, 1,607 popular magazines, more than 145 television stations and not to forget the countless offers on the Internet (including the many social networks)—there has never been so much diversity in the media landscape in Germany before. Anyone who does not want to be lost in this gigantic offer as a provider of content and messages, but wants to be visible, has to come up with something special. This also applies to a chamber of commerce and industry. In accordance with its legal mandate, it wants to (and must) inform its members and present its positions to the outside world in the interests of representing the overall interests of the chamber. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria has, therefore, declared communication to be a strategic field of action and repositioned it in order to achieve the greatest possible effect.

Special Communication Challenges for a CCI

Since a chamber of commerce and industry is an organisation with some legal peculiarities, it is necessary to consider various challenges when strategically reorienting communication.

- **Heterogeneous target groups:** The target groups to which a CCI must address itself communicatively are very heterogeneous. Among its members, a wide range of industries and company sizes are represented, from the solo self-employed web designer and the greengrocer with three employees to the medium-sized hidden champion or the globally operating, listed industrial group. They are all members by law. At the same time, there are the founders of new businesses, i.e. the future members. They too should also be addressed by the CCI. In addition, trainees (and their parents) and trainers must be involved in CCI communication. The same applies to all members who volunteer their time

in the general assembly, the regional and specialist committees. And last but not least, politics and administration, other business representatives, the public and the media are among the addressees of CCI communication. Their information needs are as heterogeneous as the target groups. The following also applies to the members: They must be informed individually and according to their needs, but in certain areas, they all need the same level of information. For example, the magazine or newspaper “Wirtschaft” has its own organs (see also case study), which are sent to all members and through which the CCI publishes legal regulations. This duty of notification is anchored in the statutes.

- **Balancing requirement:** To draw attention to ideas or deficits with a provocative formulation is part of everyday life in politics. However, a chamber of commerce and industry is obliged to take into account the entire spectrum of opinions of its members, including relevant minority opinions, and to argue in a considered yet not pointed manner. This is required by law and has been specified in more detail by decisions of the Federal Administrative Court and the Federal Constitutional Court, most recently in July 2017. In times of media diversity, in which everyone has to fight for attention, such a requirement can sometimes become an obstacle. Case law also demands that chambers of commerce and industry leave out certain topics: They are not allowed to comment on topics that have no economic relevance.
- **Diverse media use by members:** The last, albeit not legally driven, item on the list of challenges is the increasingly changing use of media. Germans watch almost four hours of television a day, spend an average of two and a half hours on the Internet and most of that time is now spent using social media. This development must also be taken into account in the communication strategy of a chamber of commerce and industry. While older members often still prefer print media, the younger ones increasingly expect Facebook posts and tweets.

Holistic Communication Strategy

The initial situation was therefore complex. Under these conditions, it was now a matter of developing a communication strategy that would increase the perceptibility of the CCI, especially with regard to the overall representation of interests among its members, in the public, in politics and in administrations.

The Communication Strategy in Detail

These are the pillars on which the new CCI communication strategy is now based:

- **CCI brand identity:** The fact that the CCI organisation, with 79 individual chambers of commerce and industry nationwide in 2015, has given itself a uniform brand identity plays into the broader intention behind the new strategy:

“Together we take responsibility” is the guiding principle (see also interview Chap. 2). This gave the communication work an overarching value-driven sense of orientation, a concrete promise of benefits and more visibility—even nationwide. All communication measures and contents of the CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria will also be successively aligned to the brand identity.

- **Economic policy guidelines and general assembly positions:** The regulatory policy guidelines, the economic policy positions of the umbrella organisation Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Wipos) and the general assembly positions are an important basis and framework for the CCI’s communication work for Munich and Upper Bavaria. The regulatory framework is adopted anew by the general assembly in each legislative session, the Wipos are adopted annually and the general assembly position papers are adopted on a case-by-case basis (see also the article on Standards, Chap. 2).
- **Uniform Corporate Design (CD):** The CCI’s self-image also includes a homogeneous visual appearance. This creates recognisability, which also leads to greater visibility. Everything published in the name of the CCI Munich has a uniform look and feel. A separate colour, form and image world was developed for this purpose. It is the visual anchor of the CCI CD and can be found on the website, on all print products, in PowerPoint presentations or on the external appearance at events.
- **Sound, relevant—and differentiated—content:** It goes without saying that content published by a chamber of commerce and industry should always be relevant, well-founded and practical. This is also part of the legal mandate of corporate promotion. This is where the specialist departments come into play. They are well informed on all specific issues—from training to customs documents—and recognise relevant topics at an early stage, for which they prepare members. The specialist departments provide the basis for the content that the CCI publishes. The communications department translates this content into understandable information that is tailored to the target group. By differentiating the content and preparing it in various forms from print to online, the CCI can also meet the heterogeneous specialist information needs of its target groups.
- **Representation of interests and values:** In addition to specialist information, a chamber of commerce and industry is always concerned with the overall representation of interests. This means that a chamber of commerce and industry takes up topics that are currently (or will be) relevant to the economy in the future and on which the general assembly has made decisions. In doing so, it responds to government work and current challenges such as the shortage of skilled workers or the energy transition. But it also sets forward-looking topics.
- **Authentication of the published contents and positions by business voices:** The information and positions of a chamber of commerce and industry are based not least on the input and assessments of its members. This is why they always have a voice in the communication of the CCI Munich—and thus share their knowledge. This is more important than ever for the CCI. President and vice-presidents, committee members or even members without a mandate are

quoted and thus make the communication of the CCI both authentic and credible.

- **Multi-channel communication:** The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria is equally at home in print and online communication. Within the respective media, it harnesses the most diverse channels and utilises them to their full potential in a cross-medial setup. The individual measures are coordinated in a playbook so that they can mutually reinforce each other's effect. At the same time, the CCI also serves the heterogeneous media needs of its members and reaches both older and younger members.
- **Website:** Online the website presence forms the basis. Clearly structured content with search engine optimised texts guides through all specialist topics and provides users with useful information as well as political positions. This happens in texts for reading or downloading, in blogs, photos, films and webinars. A separate CCI online download centre has been created for downloads, where users can also find information material from other Bavarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.
- **Special websites:** The basic website is combined with special websites such as the "Weiterbringer" or "Pack ma's digital" online presences. Here, special contents are summarised on separate sub-websites. The "Weiterbringer" portray initiators, role models and encouragers, i.e. people who are breaking new ground in business. "Pack ma's digital" summarises the entire range of digitisation services offered by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (see also the article on digitisation in this chapter).
- **E-mail newsletter:** In order to keep members up to date with the latest developments and to inform them, there is also an e-mail newsletter that can be ordered individually according to the topic of interest.
- **Social media:** At the same time, the CCI makes use of social media diversity. It is present on the portals Xing, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Snapchat and WhatsApp. In addition to the general CCI offerings on these channels, there are also individual groups such as the closed CCI Facebook group "unternehmerinnen.digital", which specifically connects female entrepreneurs.
- **Print:** The CCI also publishes a wide range of printed matter. The CCI magazine is published every month and the CCI newspaper every three months (see also the case study below). Both are classic corporate publishing media. In addition, the specialist departments produce many different brochures on relevant content or even publish studies.
- **PR:** Classic press work is also part of the communication strategy: The CCI implements around 600 press releases and around 50 press conferences every year.

Volunteer Communication

For the honorary office, i.e. the members who volunteer in the general assembly, in specialist and regional committees, the Munich Chamber of Commerce and Industry has established its own protected Internet communication, which can only be used with special authorisation. The volunteers receive additional information here—such as documents relevant to the respective meetings.

Employee Communication

A holistic communication strategy also includes the employees. They are also to be understood as a target group for communication: On the one hand, employees receive up-to-date information on all employee matters on the Intranet—such as new employees, staff council meetings or visits to the company doctor. The Intranet is also an important information and networking platform for their work. In an internal Wikipedia, they can find information on general content and formal regulations that are important for their work. They can also make suggestions and improvements here.

A Look into the Future

The new orientation of communication was accompanied by the demand to make communication work measurable. The CCI regularly evaluates its communication measures, checks claims and achievements and thus optimises the overall strategy.

With its strategic communication, the CCI has set high standards for Munich and Upper Bavaria. At the same time, it is only one, albeit the largest, of 79 CCIs. In order to make the CCI organisation more visible overall, the Munich-based CCI believes it would be important not only to bring the entire CCI organisation together under one brand, but also to give it a uniform visual face more clearly than before. The CCIs are now conducting this discussion. Some have adopted the Munich Corporate Design.

Case Study: CCI Magazine and CCI Newspaper—Scoring with Printed Content

If the CCI general assembly is newly elected, or adopts a political position, adjusts fees and membership dues, accepts the budget or appoints a new Chief Executive, the members must be informed in writing. This is required by law. The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria embeds such information in a journalistic environment:

The legally prescribed publications appear in a printed magazine and newspaper and are accompanied by business journalistic articles that are of high quality both in terms of layout and text. This means that readers not only receive the legally prescribed announcements themselves, but also relevant added value.

Target Group-Oriented Communication Through Two Publications

The CCI for Munich and Upper Bavaria is the largest CCI in the Federal Republic. Its members consist of medium and large, but also very small companies or solo self-employed persons. In order to meet the partly different needs of these two groups, the CCI issues two publications. Both are entitled “Wirtschaft” (“Business”): The magazine is aimed at all companies entered in the commercial register, which are predominantly medium-sized companies. The newspaper, on the other hand, also focuses on the small to very small companies not entered in the commercial register. The circulation of the approximately 80-page magazine is around 110,000, while the 16-page newspaper has a circulation of around 240,000 copies. The magazine is published monthly, and the newspaper quarterly.

Development of the Contents

In terms of content and strategy, both publications are integrated into the overall communication strategy and cross-media networked with the other channels. The content is created in the editorial conferences, in which the specialist departments provide their input. But readers and collaborating journalists also stimulate certain topics. The articles reflect the entire range of tasks of the CCI—from service topics to respectable business people.

Implementation of the Contents

The CCI explicitly relies on professional journalism for the realisation. For both publications, a team of business journalists with a chief editor at the head writes the texts. In order to ensure that the expectations and needs of the readers are met in the long term, there are rounds of newspaper reviews. Here, readers are allowed to comment on everything from layout and forms of presentation to content and style, so that the magazine and newspaper can continually adapt to the needs of the readers. The credo here is the magazine and newspaper should be so attractive that they can compete with the popular magazines at the newsstand. And they do. The feedback from readers is clear: Despite their limited time, entrepreneurs enjoy reading magazines and newspapers because they feel well informed.

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