Starting up in Germany: Trends in German Business Incorporations

Beauhurst

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Foreword

Beauhurst began in 2010 as a comprehensive database of UK investors, quickly evolving into a platform for discovering the country's high-growth ecosystem. Over time, we realised the potential of capturing every significant milestone for all UK private companies, from fundraising rounds and new office locations to patent filings and news. With a broad range of signals, we now track companies at every stage of growth across all sectors, offering a comprehensive view of the UK business landscape.

With this foundation, we're ready to tackle our next major challenge: international expansion.

Many of our clients already seek accurate data on private companies outside the UK in order to monitor competitors, benchmark deals, and gain a full understanding of international markets.

Our first step in this direction is Germany, Europe's largest economy and a hub for innovation and technology. As in the UK, we've started with national registry data meaning we have data on every company in Germany. From this base, just like our UK offering, we're building out our detailed company datasets — from websites and classification to trusted news and beyond.

The report you're reading marks our initial step into German and international content that leverages this new data. This is just the beginning as we continue expanding our coverage across Germany and beyond. Watch this space — there's more to come.

Chynna Brenham,
Data Strategy Manager

Methodology

All the data for this report was gathered using Beauhurst data, taken directly from the Beauhurst platform. The data for this report was finalised on 8 October 2024.

The data compromises of all companies incorporated in Germany and the UK in 2023.

Director data is exclusively active directors.

“Inactive” companies are only those which have ceased trading and been dissolved.

“Active” companies include all other company statuses, including those in administration or dormant.

Each company has been categorised into at most one WZ or SIC code (from their filings).

Incorporations analysis

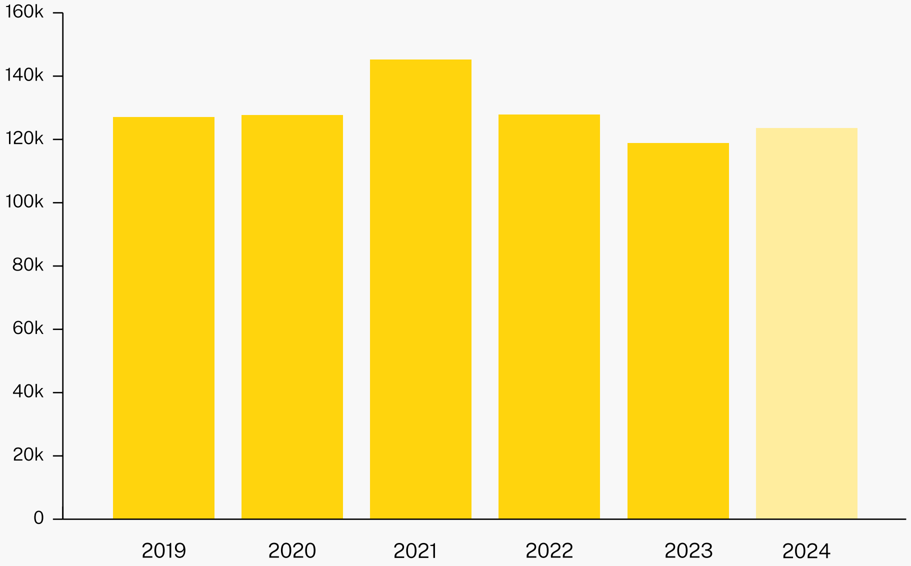
In 2023, **118,750** companies were incorporated in Germany — a 7% decrease from 2022.

Incorporations in Germany peaked in 2021 and declined in 2022 and 2023.

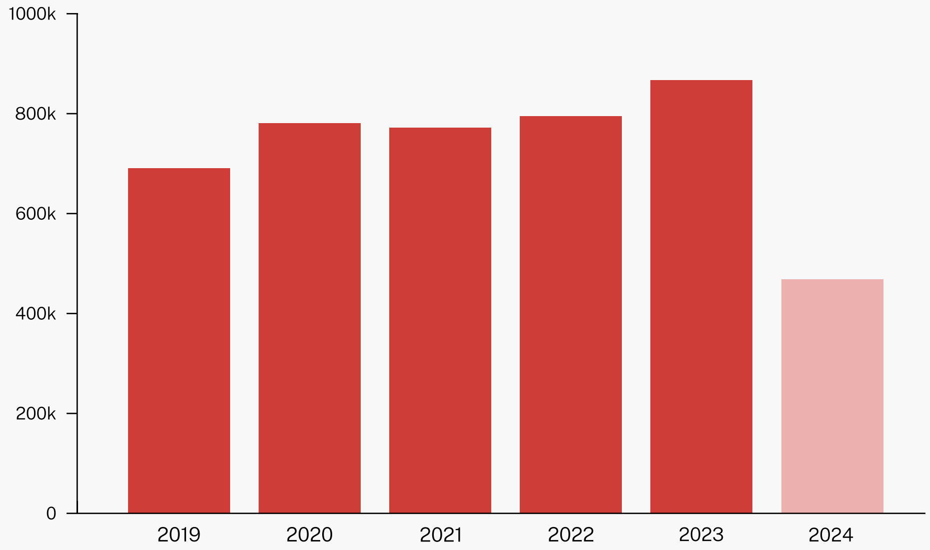
In 2023, **879,172** companies were incorporated in the UK — an 11% increase from 2022.

By contrast, company incorporations in the UK have been steadily growing each year since 2020 where there were 780k new companies incorporated. However, the UK is on track to have fewer incorporations in 2024 than previous years from 690k incorporations in 2019 to 829k incorporations 2023.

German incorporations by year



UK incorporations by year



The good news? Germany is on track to have one of its highest incorporation rates in 2024. To learn more, jump to page 12.