

First sole female DAX CEO Belén Garijo (Merck) wins CEO Image Ranking

- Much has changed in the new CEO Image Ranking after the second quarter of 2021: Just after assuming her office, the skillful approach of Merck's new CEO Belén Garijo brings her to the very top of the top 10 and made her indispensable at the company.
- Christian Sewing (Deutsche Bank) and Theodor Weimer (Deutsche Börse) follow in second and third place, respectively.
- New E.ON CEO Leonhard Birnbaum makes his debut in ninth place. The company's share price is on the rise.

New Merck CEO Belén Garijo has won UNICEPTA's DAX CEO Image Ranking for the first half of the year. The Spaniard is the first woman to single-handedly run one of the DAX listed corporations, because "she is definitely the best in her field. It should be that simple," notes *Capital*. Garijo succeeded Stefan Oschmann, who left the company as planned after ten years on May 1, 2021. She benefits from the positive reputation she had built up at Merck in the years before. The top manager had helped restructure the company and thus "became indispensable in Darmstadt," writes *Handelsblatt*. Garijo expects Merck will see an increase in revenues of six to eleven percent, the newspaper adds.

Deutsche Bank CEO Christian Sewing comes in second in the CEO Image Ranking and is showered with praise by the media. The extension of his contract by another five years and his new role as president of the Association of German Banks are only two points which boost the manager's image. Once considered a stopgap, Sewing is now seen as a stroke of luck for the company, writes *WirtschaftsWoche*. "Deutsche Bank has not been used to so much praise for many years," *Handelsblatt* finds. With significantly better-than-expected figures, the CEO is an important step closer to achieving his restructuring goals. *Welt* writes that "Sewing has not only regained the trust of investors, but also has the backing of the supervisory board."

Weimer (Deutsche Börse) as a favorite for the role of supervisory board chairman, Klein (SAP) celebrates major order

Theodor Weimer completes the winners' podium. The name of the CEO of Deutsche Börse is often mentioned in the context of the discussion around the successor to Paul Achleitner as supervisory board chairman of Deutsche Bank – even though Weimer signaled his intention to fulfill his contract at Deutsche Börse until 2024. Nevertheless: *Handelsblatt* notes that Weimer is "experienced and competent enough" to take over the post. *WirtschaftsWoche* agrees, writing that "the head of Deutsche Börse is considered an ideal candidate by investors and among supervisory board members."

SAP CEO Christian Klein comes in fourth in the Image Ranking and has a new major order to celebrate. "His company has won Google as a major new customer for its accounting software. For Klein, it is a prestigious success in the competition with arch-rival Oracle, with whom Google was previously a customer," writes *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Henkel CEO Carsten Knobel, a new entry in the ranking in fifth place, mainly scores with his sustainability-related plans. He plans "to make all packaging in the group recyclable until 2025," writes *Welt am Sonntag*.

Three new entries complete the top 10

Munich Re CEO Joachim Wenning and Allianz CEO Oliver Bäte follow in place six and seven, respectively. Another new entry also scores with climate protection: Martin Brudermüller (BASF, eighth place) "was one of the first top managers who publicly advocated a change of climate policy and did not shy away from being close to the German Greens," writes *Der Spiegel*.

Leonhard Birnbaum (E.ON, ninth place) made it into the top 10 of the Image Ranking on the first try. Shortly after he assumed the post as CEO of E.ON, the company's share price rose noticeably. "Apparently, the change to Birnbaum raises high hopes among shareholders," speculates *Handelsblatt*.

Another new entry completes the top 10. Daimler CEO Ola Källenius scores with his consistent focus on sustainable luxury cars and surprises "with fast cost-cutting successes and remarkable profits," writes *Handelsblatt*. Investors recognize this as well. They "praise and laud Team Källenius for a superb job," reports *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*. "Källenius, at any rate, is now sitting as firmly in the saddle as one can sit in these troubled times."

For the CEO ranking, UNICEPTA evaluated around 8,450 articles published from January to June 2021 in leading German media outlets as well as the New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, The Financial Times and Neue Zürcher Zeitung. The ranking is based on results from the UNICEPTA "DAX Benchmark". With the DAX Benchmark, the provider of media & marketing intelligence continuously records the media presence of all DAX-listed companies and their CEOs as well as the tonality of media coverage.

About UNICEPTA

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