



# MGCC® Annual Report 2023

**Stability and success in the face of rapid change**



Malaysian-German Chamber  
of Commerce and Industry  
Deutsch-Malaysische  
Industrie- und Handelskammer





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# Message

## Dear members of MGCC,

I am pleased to share with you our Annual Report for 2023! What can be said about a year that felt so intense we hardly realised it was over.

We kicked off the year with the visit of Germany's Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, a momentous milestone that saw a German president touring Malaysia for the first time in 26 years and such a visit signals the intensifying ties between Malaysia and Germany which I am certain will only grow to greater heights.

To put things into perspective, Malaysia's total trade with Germany from January to November 2023 increased by 7.2% to RM58.37 billion (USD12.81 billion) compared to the same period in 2022. Such figures fill me and my organisation with a sense of immense pride knowing that the work we do plays a part in enabling this achievement.

We also saw the launch of two very crucial policies – the New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP) 2030 and the National Energy Transition Roadmap that was lauded by many industry players including those in our network. As we face an unprecedented climate emergency, businesses must step up to do their part to preserve the planet for the next generation. I am pleased to say that we have expanded our services in this area by rolling out the Supply Chain Due Diligence check which helps businesses decode Germany's new law that stringently vets supply chains to ensure the environment and human rights are respected.

2023 marked the first full year of Malaysia's Unity Government under Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim who has been campaigning hard to woo investors from all corners of the globe. We are also delighted to see so much emphasis being given to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and one of the most pleasant surprises we received was Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi who also chairs the National TVET Council announcing a collaboration with the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) to share expertise and experience with MGCC taking the lead to promote the German Dual Vocational Training (GDVT) programme. Those of you who know me know

that I can go on about the uniqueness and effectiveness of such a programme that has been credited for Germany's industrial success which I foresee Malaysia experiencing with the right policy implementation.

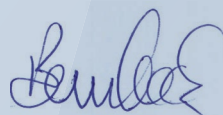
To say that we entered 2023 without any anxiety would be an understatement. Higher interest rates that never seemed to come down due to rising inflation caused businesses to worry about growth, escalating US-China tensions that led to more economic decoupling, the ringgit's depreciation, high energy prices in Europe due to Russia's war on Ukraine, China's slower-than-predicted recovery and the bloodshed in the Middle East being put back into the spotlight were all major events that shaped the year.

As a trade support organisation, we know all too well what these seismic shifts mean for businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. One way MGCC empowers its members to continue to thrive in challenging and uncertain times is a unique combination of effectively deconstructing new policies and offering our network a diverse range of resources and services to support them.

This includes being a trusted source of information for starting, operating and expanding your business through our platforms. We have witnessed first-hand how our events which have always been rated highly by you build meaningful relationships in the community and have helped you gain business opportunities by creating brand awareness.

To our members, stakeholders and partner agencies, thank you for your support every step of the way as we navigate the deep trends that shape businesses and our society.

I want to also thank our Board of Directors who have been supporting our growth over the past year and special thanks go out to our employees for their commitment to delivering second-to-none service to our members and always bringing their best selves to work.



**Daniel Bernbeck**

MGCC Executive Director from  
September 2015 - February 2024





# The year in numbers

**100%**

APPROVAL RATE FOR  
**PLS@XPATS  
PERMIT**



**GERMAN  
DUAL  
VOCATIONAL  
TRAINING™**

**61**

**GRADUATES**

**436**

**MEMBERS**  
7% INCREASE

APPROXIMATELY

**56k**

**UNIQUE  
WEBSITE VISITORS**

**84%**

OF MEMBERS POLLED  
SAID

**HIGHLY  
SATISFIED** AND  
**SATISFIED WITH  
EVENTS**

**550**

**CARE PACK  
ITEMS  
FOR STAFF**

**101**

**VISAS  
PROCESSED**

**1,013**

**ENQUIRIES  
HANDLED**

23% INCREASE

**41**

**MECHATRONICS  
APPRENTICES**  
14% INCREASE

**1,679**

**EVENT  
PARTICIPANTS**  
15% INCREASE

**27**

**HIGHEST NUMBER  
OF PREMIUM  
MEMBERS**

**56**

**GERMAN  
INDUSTRIAL BUYERS  
FOR PURCHASE  
INITIATIVE**

**23**

**APPRENTICES  
FOR PRECISION MACHINING  
PROGRAMME LAUNCH**

\* percentage figures in comparison to 2022

# Market entry

Malaysia continued to be a destination of interest for investors in Germany as businesses looked beyond Europe due to high energy prices and rising interest rates for a more conducive investment environment. The likes of China, whose economy bounced back slower than expected after its strict zero-Covid policy, prompted global manufacturers to spread their bets to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia as a means of diversifying and bolstering their supply chain. Consistent campaigning by the Anwar administration to position the country as a favourable and stable investment destination as well as the launch of two major frameworks the New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP) 2030 and the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) further placed Malaysia in the spotlight.

## Projects

**2023**

April – June

Purchase Initiative Southeast Asia (BME)

From April until June 2023, MGCC successfully finished the second Purchase Initiative Southeast Asia together with Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Fifty-six industrial buyers from Germany sourced for suppliers in Malaysia under MGCC's guidance.

**5 – 7**

July

Healthcare Delegation

MGCC welcomed a delegation of medical experts from Germany to Malaysia in cooperation with SBS Systems for business solutions (SBS) on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK). In partnership with the Malaysian Organisation of Pharmaceutical Industries (MOPI) and the National Institutes of Biotechnology Malaysia (NIBM), the three-day business initiation visit included presentations by 10 German pharmaceutical companies, business matchings and visits to Duopharma Biotech Bhd and the Centre for Tissue Engineering & Regenerative Medicine (CTERM) at the University of Malaya's Faculty of Medicine.

**2023**

September

Confectionary Delegation

MGCC hosted a Confectionary Delegation from the German association BDSI in Kuala Lumpur. The 10-member delegation was given a market entry briefing, store checks and a visit to a certified palm oil plantation to source for sustainable palm oil.

**23 – 27**

October

Waste Management and Recycling Delegation

The Chamber hosted 11 companies from Germany for five days to showcase their sustainable development solutions in waste management and recycling to Malaysian stakeholders. A conference, business matching event and tours of the Jeram Sanitary Landfill in Selangor and the Recovery Initiative Sustainable Eco-facility (RISE) in Kuala Lumpur took place during the five-day visit.

**6 – 10**

November

Hydrogen Economy Fact-Finding Mission to Germany

MGCC together with its project partner eclareon GmbH planned a fact-finding mission in and around Berlin on energy infrastructure and storage with a focus on the hydrogen economy. The delegates from Malaysia met and networked with German market players, attended the Smart Country Convention and visited the self-sustaining village Feldheim as well as prominent companies specialising in renewable energy and hydrogen such as Enapter GmbH, APEX Energy and Siemens Energy.

**6 – 10**

December

Economic delegation from the federal state of Rheinland-Pfalz (Ministry of Economics of Rheinland-Pfalz)

A business delegation from the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate arrived in Malaysia to present their well-known, high-quality products and services. They visited Faber-Castell Malaysia, travelled to Penang for B2B meetings and also toured Kulim Hi-Tech Park in Kedah and dropped in on Beflex.

## Intercultural training

MGCC harnessed its strength in intercultural knowledge by completing two training sessions for a renowned German multinational company's newly-hired IT staff working in a European setting. One training was conducted in June and a second one took place in the second half of 2023. It has also become standard practice for the Chamber to include intercultural briefings to delegates visiting Malaysia to equip them with the cultural knowledge of the country for an enhanced experience.

## Trade fairs

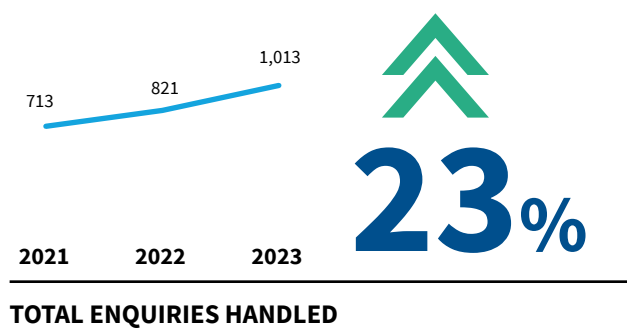
MGCC represented major German trade fairs including Spielwarenmesse and Messe Munich and sold tickets to Malaysian participants for German and Chinese trade fairs, such as BAU (Munich), Transport Logistic (Munich), IE Expo (China), Rail Solutions Asia, Iba, Productonica and ISPO during the reporting period.

Although the visitor numbers have not reached pre-pandemic levels, the reopening of China's borders contributed to more activity in the trade fair space. While the response was positive, securing visas for China proved to be a challenge due to the long waiting times. MGCC is positive that China's visa-free announcement in late 2023 for Malaysians and several European countries including Germany will attract more attendees to attend trade fairs held in the Republic.

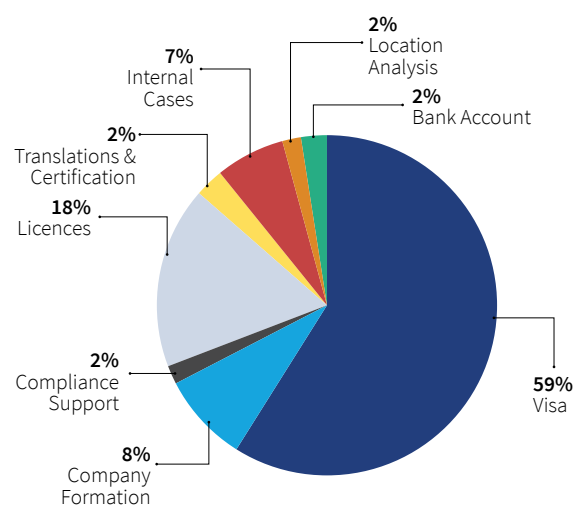




# Corporate services



Percentage of cases as of December 2023 (total: 128)



The Corporate Services department kept busy consulting clients with their Malaysian visa application expertise, especially employment passes, dependant passes, professional visit passes, residence passes (talent), digital nomad passes, appeals and follow-ups.

A popular request was for the short-term emergency work permit (PLS@Xpats) – a service introduced in 2022 – for which MGCC has a 100% approval rate. In 2023, 101 completed and paid visa cases were recorded against an internal target of 100 visas.

In addition, MGCC solved over 1,000 enquiries during the year mainly on the investment climate in Malaysia, suitable corporate set-ups, general market information, market-entry, suppliers, legal reliability, authority practices, customs and import procedures as well as tax, in particular withholding tax, together with the Accounts department.

As the subject matter experts of immigration policy in Malaysia, the department consistently monitored news and updates in this area to accurately provide timely information to members and the wider community.

Members and clients were also informed about the new rules to convert German driving licences in Malaysia. Currently, a theory class and theory exam are required and successful applicants will only get a probationary licence which can be converted into a full driving licence (called competent driving licence) after a two-year probationary period without any violations.

## German Business Centre

The German Business Centre (GBC) had three vacant offices out of nine, three tenants in the shared office and one virtual office. In addition, 10 out of 14 workstations were taken which equals to an increased occupancy rate of 76.92%.

GBC's tenants continue to approach MGCC about other services, particularly related to visas, licences, compliance support, company formation, payroll and accounting services.

The benefit of setting up an office at the German Business Centre is the flexibility of budget and space without compromising on facilities and security.

It also gives tenants direct access to MGCC and Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI) for important information about the economic situation in Malaysia. GTAI is a German subsidiary of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) in Berlin. It provides official reports on the economies of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei to the German government.





# Payroll & accounting services



## 17

**PAYROLL CLIENTS**

## 9

**ACCOUNTING CLIENTS**

## 34%

**PROFIT GROWTH FROM 2022**

The Accounts department closed off 2023 with 17 payroll clients and nine accounting services and serves as a pivotal point of contact for German businesses in Malaysia requiring payroll, taxation and book-keeping assistance and consultation.

Following the visit of German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in February 2023, interest in Malaysia spiked and is best evidenced by an increase in several of MGCC's services including accounting and payroll. This was translated into the department's stunning revenue for the year which was 10% higher than budgeted.



# Membership services

2023

# 51

NEW MEMBERS

# 27

PREMIUM MEMBERS

2023

# 436



7% INCREASE  
FROM 2022

TOTAL MEMBERS

2023 was a record-breaking year for memberships where the Chamber saw the highest number of members in its history at 436. This marks a 7% increase from 2022. While 2023 recorded 27 resignations, the overall increase in membership is a stunning

record breaker that reflects the enhanced economic relationship between Malaysia and Germany as more businesses see the former as a promising investment destination in the region and outside of Europe.



## An exclusive club

As MGCC's membership grew in 2023, so did its circle of Premium Members. The year recorded the highest number of Premium Members at 27, breaking last year's record. From exclusive luncheons with key opinion leaders to greater visibility among the Chamber's network, this tier of membership continues to grow. Special thanks go out to MGCC's Premium Members for elevating the Chamber's value.



## Market research survey

MGCC embarked on a market research survey in 2023 that concluded in September with Malaysian-based data research company INVOKE to explore membership categories and fee restructuring. The survey interviewed current and prospective members to gather insights on services and how to price the membership fees to remain competitive against other Chambers. The survey discovered that company size is not the main determinant of membership fees but rather based on the benefits offered. It found that networking events were ranked highly in terms of the value they brought businesses and information was ranked the second-most relevant aspect for members while non-members named advocacy as a valued support service. Some areas of opportunities included a strong incentive to offer new membership categories based on different services likely to attract more members, investing in marketing communication to target untapped audiences and promote the MGCC brand, elevating and diversifying event topics and formats as well as providing exclusive information in the adjusted categories in future.

## Membership relations

In 2023, MGCC paid visits to companies that reached a membership milestone of 10, 20 and 30 years with a small delegation to present them with a special anniversary certificate. Apart from anniversary milestones, members were also paid a visit based on the department's activity list that tracks inactive companies to raise awareness about MGCC's events and services. In the past two to three years, member companies were visited based on anniversary milestones and activity status, in addition to an overall increased frequency of dedicated appointments with members. These have become the cornerstones of our membership engagement strategy, majorly contributing to high membership satisfaction and event participation.



## Promotional services

Multiple campaigns were launched in 2023 for member companies to achieve more brand visibility among the German and Malaysian business communities through advertising and sponsorship opportunities. The department continued to roll out its staple festive packages during Chinese New Year, Hari Raya, Merdeka Day and Malaysia Day. The yearly Membership Directory was also an avenue for many companies to have their brands displayed and many opted for single-running page advertisements. When it came to event sponsorships, the 3rd German-Malaysian Business Forum welcomed three sponsors, the Penang Sundowner received one sponsor, the E&E Industry Outlook received three sponsors and the Oktoberfest received overwhelming sponsorship with nine sponsors. It was an exceptionally successful year that saw a record number of sponsorship income. The year closed with RM161,450 in promotional services. This demonstrates that members value the wide range of benefits that come with sponsoring MGCC events from increased brand visibility to expanding their network.

# RM161k

EARNED FROM PROMOTIONAL SERVICES

## Event services

Two special events were held in 2023 showcasing the department's expertise. The first was a webinar in May organised on behalf of Swiss consulting firm KVALITO titled 'Transforming business with the power of Artificial Intelligence'. A second event in collaboration with Citi Malaysia in November saw a panel discussion zooming in on the strategies available for organisations to reduce their Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions.



# 37

EVENTS

# 1,679

PARTICIPANTS

# 15%



INCREASE FROM 2022

# 84%

OF MEMBERS SAID THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH OUR EVENTS

## Membership activities

Touted as a key component of membership services, 37 events were held in 2023 that were attended by 1,925 participants. Events continued to demonstrate their strength as a meeting place for members and like-minded people to congregate, discuss ideas and forge business relationships. Compared to 2022 where 40 events were hosted, 2023 saw higher participation recording a 15% increase in headcount. A survey conducted by data research firm INVOKE further confirmed this when a collective 84% of members polled said they were “highly satisfied” and “satisfied”. In addition, 38% of members believe that MGCC distinguishes itself through its abundant events and programme initiatives.

### PREMIUM MEMBER BUSINESS LUNCHEON

Two Premium Member Business Luncheons were hosted last year. The first took place with World Bank Malaysia Chief Economist Dr Apurva Sanghi and the second was with Pos Malaysia Chief Executive Officer Charles Brewer.

### SUNDOWNER



MGCC’s beloved networking cocktail event was held six times in 2023 and continues to be a meeting point for members to exchange ideas and grow their network. To add a bit of fun and twist to this beloved gathering, the Sundowner has various themes and formats. In addition to the yearly Penang Sundowner, there was a Business Speed

Dating Sundowner and the Chamber also introduced a sporty version featuring the newest game in town, padel. Networking and industry events were praised for the value they bring businesses by members in a survey.



### INTERCHAMBER LADIES SUNDOWNER

The ever-popular Interchamber Ladies Sundowner brought together 12 bilateral chambers with over 80 women from various business backgrounds. Held in conjunction with International Women's Day, this ladies-only networking event creates a platform for women to make meaningful connections, knowledge-sharing and confidence building. In 2023, the event featured an exclusive guest speaker, Dato' Ami Moris, the Executive Coach and Advisor from 30% Club which aims to improve diversity on Malaysian corporate boards and senior management.

### THE TUESDAY CLUB



MGCC's signature monthly event strives to be a platform for information sharing and it continued to do that in 2023 with 13 Tuesday Clubs in total that was attended by 328 participants, marking a

7% increase in attendance. Among the topics presented by subject matter experts included immigration policy updates, ways to diversify supply chains and investments, Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender equality, navigating the media landscape, e-invoicing guidelines and employment trends.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

2023's Annual General Meeting (AGM) marked an election year that saw the appointment of Tim Groth as President and Geetha Kandiah as Vice President. The AGM featured a special dialogue session with InvestKL and MDEC where topics such as the main tools available to potential investors in Malaysia and how Malaysia's digital economy plays a role as a key sector to spur the country's growth as well as reasons investors love Malaysia were discussed.

### E&E OUTLOOK: THE HEARTBEAT OF THE MALAYSIAN EXPORT ECONOMY

MGCC hosted an electrifying industry outlook on electric and electrical (E&E), a key driver of the Malaysian economy in a session that looked into areas of opportunities and challenges for the sector that began in the country in the '70s. The keynote address was delivered by Matrade chief executive officer Sharimahton Mat Saleh while the panel discussion comprised industry captains and subject matter experts from Infineon, Siemens, MIDA, Powerwell, TS Electrical Marketing and Malaysia Semiconductor Industry Association (MSIA). Sponsors for the event were Infineon, Siemens and Klose, supported by MSIA and AMCHAM.

### 3RD GERMAN-MALAYSIAN BUSINESS FORUM

The one phrase that has become ubiquitous for businesses is Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), aimed at making corporations more responsible through enhanced transparency and accountability. The forum which was attended by 71 guests looked at how an organisation's supply chain is at the frontlines of ESG. Assessing one's supply chain can expose hidden risks and it is the perfect starting point for businesses wanting to fulfil ESG requirements. The forum's keynote address was delivered by the Deputy Minister of Economy Dato' Hanifah Hajar Taib and featured speakers from Infineon, Luther, Bluenumber, MITI, Standard Chartered, Cargodian and BASF. The event was sponsored by BASF, Infineon and MAN Truck & Bus, while the UN Global Compact Network Malaysia & Brunei, the Business Council for Sustainable Development (BCSD), the British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce (BMCC), Parkroyal Collection and Trustnet Trade were event partners.



Scan to watch  
our 3rd GMBF  
video

### OKTOBERFEST

Following the success of 2022's Oktoberfest, the Chamber's most popular social event returned in 2023. With 600 guests, a live band from Germany and authentic Bavarian dishes, the event received overwhelming positive feedback and was a financial success. The Oktoberfest event was made possible with sponsors, Allianz, Commerz Trade Services, Dachser, Jungheinrich, Klose, Lisega, Lufthansa, MAN Truck & Bus and Siemens.



Scan to watch  
our Oktoberfest  
video

### JINGLE & MINGLE CHRISTMAS PARTY

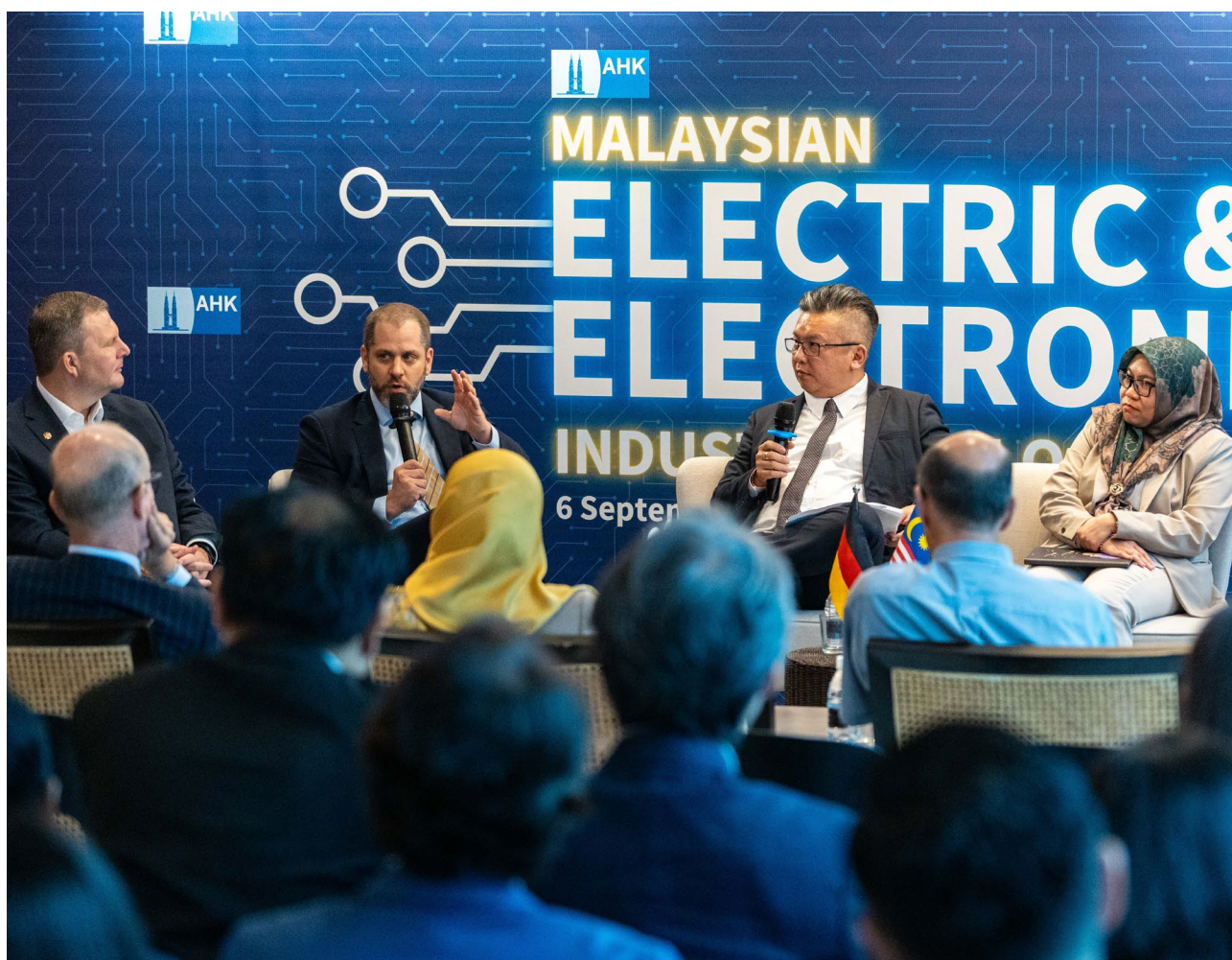
The Chamber wrapped up 2023 with its signature year-end Christmas bash held at WIP at the Park in Kuala Lumpur. Raffle prizes were handed out and a massive holiday feast awaited the 86 guests who ushered in the festive season.

# Calendar of events in 2023

19 January 2023	New Year's Reception
26 January 2023	Webinar: Economic Outlook by Bank Negara Malaysia
9 February 2023	New Members Welcome Coffee
14 February 2023	The Tuesday Club – Policy Changes 2023: Navigating new immigration and administrative rules
28 February 2023	The Tuesday Club – Emerging tax issues: First impressions of 2023 Budget's tax announcements
6 March 2023	Premium Member Business Luncheon with Apurva Sanghi, Lead Economist at The World Bank
14 March 2023	The Tuesday Club – Diversification of Investment and Supply Chains
15 March 2023	InterChamber Ladies Sundowner
21 March 2023	The Tuesday Club – SDG 5: Is your company adopting Sustainable Development Goal 5?
12 April 2023	3rd German-Malaysian Business Forum (GMBF) - ESG in the Supply Chain Management
18 April 2023	The Tuesday Club – Amendments of Employment Act
16 May 2023	The Tuesday Club – OSHA Amendments: What are the key changes employers should know?
17 May 2023	MGCC x KVALITO Webinar: Transforming business with the power of Artificial Intelligence
17 May 2023	Johor InterChamber Business Mixer
18 May 2023	Sundowner + Business Speed Dating
23 May 2023	New Members Welcome Coffee
7 June 2023	InterChamber Networking
13 June 2023	Premium Members Business Luncheon with Charles Brewer, Group Chief Executive Officer of POS Malaysia
13 June 2023	The Tuesday Club – Transfer Pricing: Find out the latest updates made
22 June 2023	Annual General Meeting
11 July 2023	The Tuesday Club – SDG 5 Part 2: What is your company's stand in achieving this goal?
8 August 2023	The Tuesday Club – Media landscape: What companies should do to navigate brand presence?
22 August 2023	New Members Welcome Coffee
25 August 2023	Penang Sundowner
6 September 2023	E&E Outlook: The heartbeat of the Malaysian export economy
14 September 2023	The Tuesday Club – Webinar on current immigration updates business travellers and expatriates should know
19 September 2023	The Tuesday Club – E-Invoice Guidelines: IRBM requirements that companies should know.
21 September 2023	Sundowner



10 October 2023	The Tuesday Club – Employment Trends: Is your company ready to adopt the current law?
26 October 2023	Sundowner
4 November 2023	Oktoberfest
15 November 2023	New Members Welcome Coffee
21 November 2023	The Tuesday Club – Budget Briefing 2024: Highlights businesses should know.
22 November 2023	MGCC x Citi – Panel discussion: How corporates can actively manage emissions?
1 December 2023	Jingle & Mingle













# German Dual Vocational Training (GDVT)



TVET was thrust into the spotlight in 2023 by the Malaysian government, especially during the Federal Budget where it was announced that RM6.7 billion would be allocated to boost the country's TVET agenda. The GDVT programme under MGCC has the potential to play a key role in advancing Malaysia's TVET ambitions due to Germany's long history of vocational training and it remains the best pathway for school leavers who want a skills-based career. The year closed off with an announcement by Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi that MGCC will lead the knowledge and expertise collaboration between DIHK and the National TVET Council, giving GDVT greater prominence.

**41**  **14% INCREASE FROM 2022**

**MECHATRONICS APPRENTICES IN PENANG**

**61**

**GDVT GRADUATES**

**10**

**INDUSTRIEMEISTER MECHATRONICS CANDIDATES**

**23**

**PIONEER GROUP OF APPRENTICES FOR THE INAUGURAL PRECISION MACHINING PROGRAMME**

## Visit by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany

Together with our GDVT partners B. Braun Medical Industries and the Penang Skills Development Centre, MGCC attended the state visit to Malaysia by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, His Excellency Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and First Lady, Her Excellency Elke Bűdenbender from 16 to 18 February. The German President toured the production facilities at B. Braun and exchanged views with some of the young people who are completing the GDVT and Industriemeister course at B. Braun in Malaysia. The visit also featured a session in which PSDC ex-CEO ET Tan explained its role in developing the GDVT in cooperation with MGCC and the industry.



## AHK Vietnam and Bosch Vietnam network session

MGCC organised a networking and knowledge-sharing session with AHK Vietnam and dual vocational trainers from Bosch Vietnam, focusing on the structure of the final examination in GDVT Mechatronics. Together with the examiners in Penang, the visitors observed the examination at the Penang Skills Development Centre and had a visit to the training Centre at Robert Bosch Malaysia guided by the well-experienced GDVT trainers of Robert Bosch. AHK and Bosch Vietnam will utilise this knowledge and experience to establish the examination structure in Vietnam.

## GDVT Industry Engagement Session 2023

On 21 March, MGCC together with Koerber Technologies held the GDVT Industry Engagement Session 2023 to engage in discussions related to the training and development of the industry and foster connections with GDVT industry partners. Koerber Technologies led a sharing session and the highlight was the success stories and career pathways of the graduates who were trained and employed at the company.





## Industry 4.0 Specialist Certification Ceremony

On 2 May, the first four participants who completed the MGCC Industry 4.0 Specialist Training programme received their certifications. The programme runs in cooperation with Bosch Rexroth and the Kedah Industrial Skills and Management Development Centre (KISMEC) and was first launched before the pandemic. The training is followed by an upcoming quality management meeting between all training providers to assess training satisfaction and meet the objectives of the training participants.

## GDVT Mechatronics Alignment Session (GMI & Training Company)

On 23 August, an alignment session between the trainers of the German-Malaysian Institute and the technical trainers of the GDVT training companies from the central and southern regions was held to review the training curriculum, compare it to the institute course outline and company training plans, and calibrate the course outline where necessary. This exchange was vital to harmonise and synchronise the practical and theoretical contents of the training leading to a well-rounded dual vocational structure and to form a stronger network between the company and institute trainers.



## Smith & Nephew Operations becomes training company

MGCC welcomed a new GDVT training company Smith & Nephew Operations that has come on board for the Precision Machining Programme. In October, the GDVT team visited Smith & Nephew's training centre which is equipped with the necessary machinery, classrooms, and tools to facilitate a comprehensive learning experience for apprentices. This strategic collaboration is poised to strengthen our training programmes with fresh insights and innovative approaches.



## Precision Machining Programme launch

On 9 October, a total of 23 apprentices signed up for the inaugural GDVT programme in Precision Machining. The course is a new training occupation in cutting-edge precision machining skills under the GDVT scheme and runs with PSDC as a cooperation partner for the theoretical portion of the training. The practical training is conducted by the host company B. Braun Medical Industries Sdn Bhd, VAT Manufacturing Malaysia Sdn Bhd, and Smith & Nephew Operations Sdn Bhd.



## GDVT Mechatronics intake 2023

The 2023 GDVT Mechatronics programme that commenced in September saw two groups Batch 15 and Batch 16, with a total of 41 apprentices being ushered in. The intake consisted of 22 apprentices from B. Braun Medical Industries, seven apprentices from Robert Bosch (M), three apprentices from SCHOTT Glass (Malaysia), two apprentices from Inari Technology, three apprentices from BBS Automation, two apprentices from BAUER Equipment Malaysia, and two apprentices from Koerber Technologies. As for the Industriemeister Mechatronics course, B. Braun Medical Industries recruited a total of 10 participants for the year.

## PSDC's 28th GDVT Graduation Ceremony and GMI's 29th Convocation

A total of 39 apprentices of the GDVT in Mechatronics from the July 2019 intake in Penang graduated with SKM Level 5 in Advanced Skills Diploma and obtained the MGCC-DIHK certificate in the A-category. This cohort consisted of 26 apprentices from B. Braun Medical Industries, four apprentices from Osram Opto Semiconductors, eight apprentices from Robert Bosch (M), and one apprentice from BBS Automation. The best student title was awarded to a B. Braun Medical Industries trainee who achieved total marks of 87% for the Mechatronics Final Examination Part 1 and Part 2. The 29th GMI Convocation ceremony took place on 18 November featuring 13 trainees who completed the Mechatronics and Logistic Operations Management programmes. For Mechatronics, BAUER Equipment, Koerber Technologies Sdn. Bhd. IKA Works Asia, and Muehlbauer Technologies collectively presented 10 graduates while the Logistic Operations Management programme yielded three bright talents from R. Bosch Malaysia and Schenker Logistics.







# Communications



Malaysian-German Chamber  
of Commerce and Industry  
Deutsch-Malaysische  
Industrie- und Handelskammer

## Annual communications plan

The Chamber rolled out its first Communications Plan that will serve as an annual guiding document designed to promote and enhance the activities of each department under the focus areas and five-year strategic goals. The plan came into being after meeting with various departments and these meetings will take place regularly to formulate content ideas and strategies and will continue to be refined as a key tool for the Communications department moving forward.

# 80

MEDIA MENTIONS

# RM1.6mil

PR VALUE IN 2023

## Media engagement

The Chamber received 80 media mentions across print, online and broadcast media in 2023 which translated to a PR value of RM1.6 million. The year recorded several notable media features that resulted from the increasing attention Malaysia is gaining as a favourable investment destination. Former Executive Director Daniel Bernbeck was interviewed by independent business radio station BFM89.9 on the Federal Budget that was re-tabled after the Anwar administration took office. The Chamber also earned media coverage later in the year representing the views of the foreign business community when the New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP) 2030 was launched by the government. In a bid to raise awareness on TVET and GDVT, the Chamber released an opinion piece to media outlets on the vital need to streamline TVET in Malaysia which was picked up by prominent news outlets such as *The Edge*, *The Malaysian Reserve* and *Business Today*. A media pitch was also sent out to media outlets on GDVT which resulted in an in-depth feature for World Youth Skills Day.

Press releases that were issued such as the announcement of MGCC's new president and vice president post-AGM and the World Business Outlook Fall results received positive media coverage. The year closed off with a surprise announcement of the DIHK and the National TVET Council to share expertise which will be led by MGCC recorded significant media coverage following Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's visit to Germany to enhance Malaysia's TVET landscape.

## Social media

LinkedIn was MGCC's most active social media platform and in 2023, the channel saw 1,353 new followers and recorded a 26% increase in overall followers which brought the total number of followers to 7,515 by 31 December. The platform's most popular posts ranged from our Executive Director signing membership certificates, the state visit of Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and a social media journey detailing Malaysian delegates who were in Berlin for a hydrogen fact-finding mission. MGCC garnered 389,406 LinkedIn impressions. Facebook recorded 6,253 pageviews as well as a 9% increase in followers from 2022 bringing the total to 410 while X, formerly known as Twitter received 32,802 impressions for the year.

26% 

INCREASE IN LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS FROM 2022

## Digital marketing

Following the success of last year's marketing campaign to promote the Chamber's flagship German-Malaysian Business Forum (GMBF), the same approach was adopted for the 3rd GMBF. The promotion for the 3rd GMBF on ESG has generated a total of 14,269 reach with 3,228 clicks and 207 engagements in overall posts on LinkedIn and Facebook and was the top-performing campaign for the year. The paid campaign was launched in March and in the same month, another paid campaign was launched to promote the Immigration Portal. Both campaigns generated the highest number of visitors to the MGCC website that month. Other paid campaigns during the year included GDVT's recruitment period and the E&E Industry Outlook in July and August.





# Website

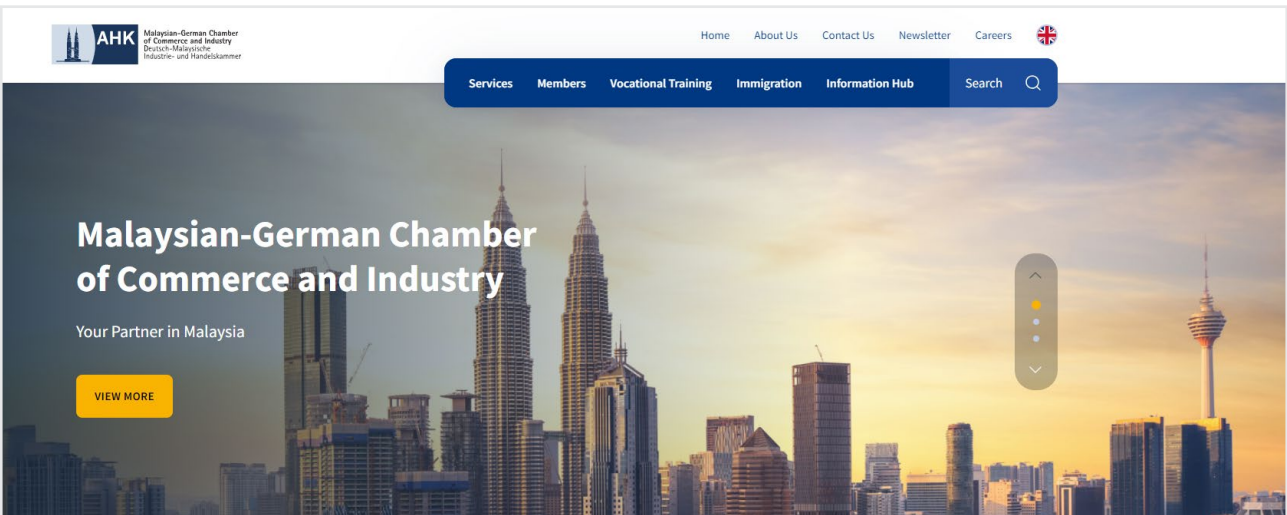
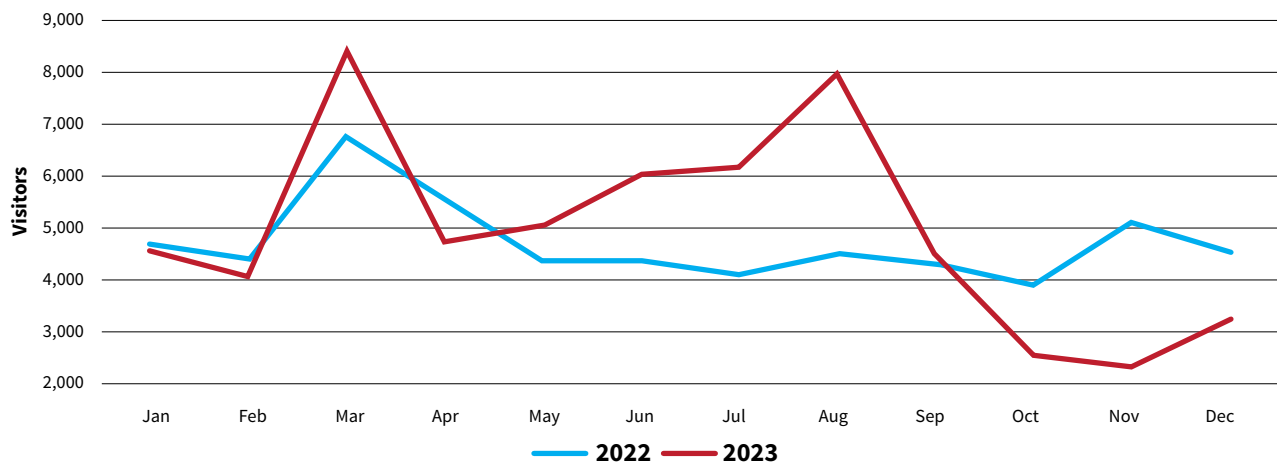
MGCC was one of two AHK pilot chambers worldwide to adopt the new IBEXA website and is the current subject expert for AHK Worldwide. The MGCC website recorded a total of 56,003 visitors, marking an increase of 7.7% compared to 2022, demonstrating its role as an information provider. From January to August the MGCC website had an overall increase in visitors and pageviews compared to 2022, however from September onwards a drop was detected following the switch to IBEXA due to the retiring of old pages and a change in (search engine optimisation) SEO. To counteract this, improvements were made to the SEO to help boost clickthrough. In terms of content, the website continued to announce important news as well as provide updates on

Malaysia’s state elections in August and Anwar Ibrahim’s 100 days in office. It was also populated with a new format of articles that were written to commemorate 10, 20 and 30-anniversary milestones for members.

7.7% 

INCREASE IN WEBSITE VISITORS COMPARED TO 2022

## Website Performance





## Pressespiegel

As a trusted source of information, the Pressespiegel continued to bring members a weekly snapshot of Malaysian headlines in an easy-to-read format for busy executives. In 2023, the average open rate was 35%, which rose from 32% in 2022. In line with one of the Chamber's focus areas, an ESG section was introduced in June 2023. The aim was to bring readers government announcements about this framework especially in the area of renewable energy and best practices by companies.

## MGCC app

The Chamber continued to promote the convenience of the MGCC App to members in 2023 along with an array of improvements since its launch in 2022. Several new implementations that improved the user experience included complimentary event sign-ups, a closeout of registrations once the event has reached full capacity, allowing app notifications to link third-party events or news as well as design updates for member logos. The app received 153 downloads in 2023 and it is the Chamber's goal that this handy pocket companion is used by all members.

## Press services

German-Dutch stainless steel recycling specialist Oryx Stainless engaged MGCC to assist with managing a signing ceremony with SIRIM QAS to ensure the imports of stainless steel scrap fully comply with Malaysia's green agenda. In addition, the Chamber crafted a press release for the announcement, which garnered 12 media mentions, translating to a PR value of RM150,600. In 2023, a Press Services brochure was produced and the department met with several member companies to raise awareness of the availability of affordable public relations and media consulting services to enhance brand awareness.

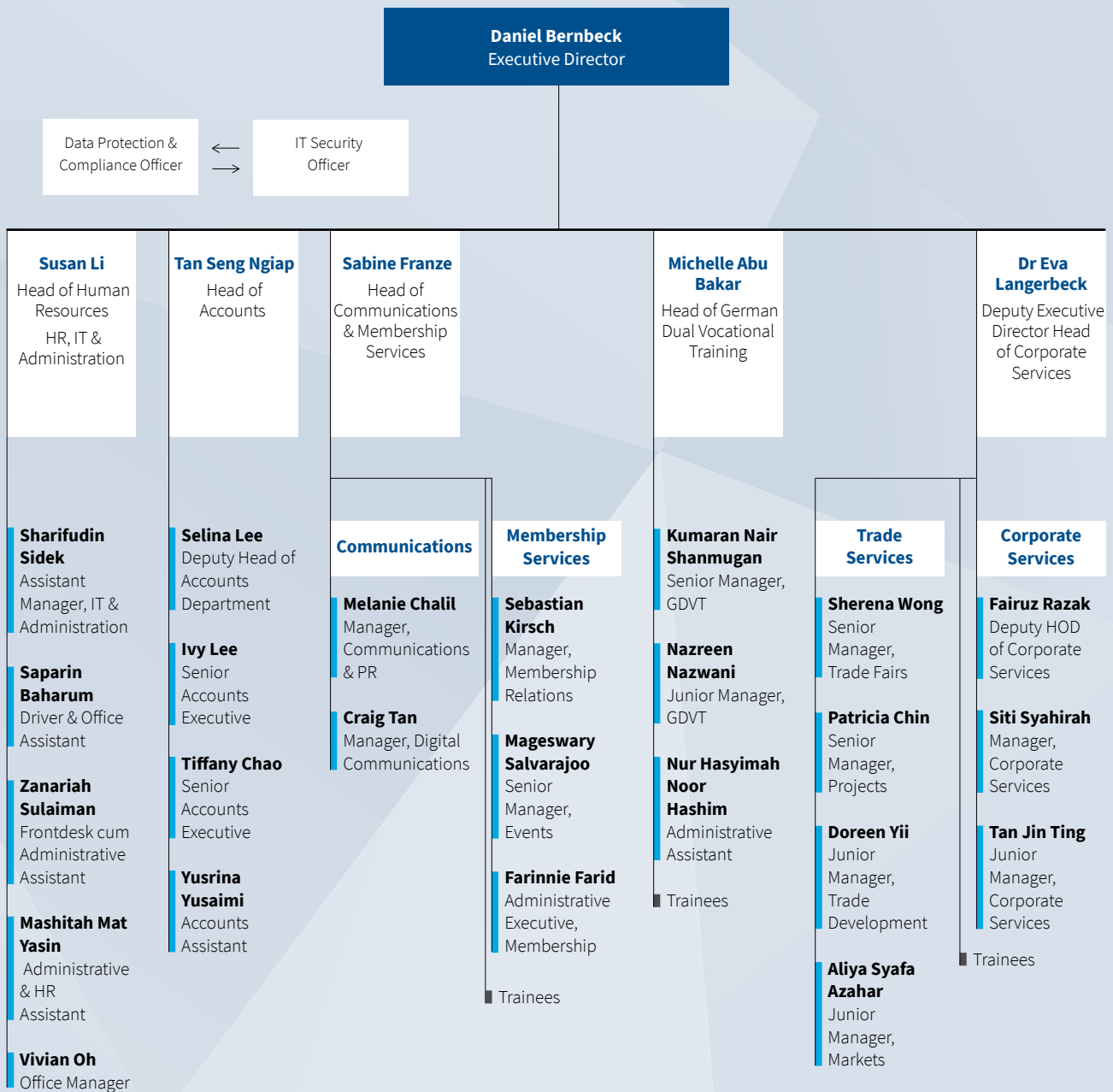


Scan to  
download the  
MGCC app

# Inside MGCC

## MGCC organisational chart

31 December 2023



### Legend:

■ Management of MGCC   ■ Head of Department   ■ Employee   ■ Trainees   ■ Vacancy





## 31% of women directors

MGCC reached a gender diversity milestone in 2023 by having 31% of women as board members. The Chamber started with an all-male Board and the conscious decision to have more women on the Board changed around 10 years ago. It is MGCC's goal to become a progressive chamber of commerce and an increased female board presence will help us head in the right direction due to their diversity of skills and valuable perspectives.

## Happy For No Reason

In October, the Chamber organised an internal workshop titled Happy For No Reason with a motivational speaker from Germany to inspire employees to seek inner happiness with the tools that they have learned during the workshop. This forms part of the mental health support MGCC is committed to providing all employees.

## Management kitchen cookoff

The Management team got together in November for a cookoff challenge as part of this year's team building to cohesiveness, communications and leadership skills through using a kitchen environment. The aim was to help the Management team form better team communication and understanding in an informal but disciplined space.

## How to network like a pro

Small talk can be a challenge for introverts but there is a simple formula to overcome this in any social setting as staff members learned during an internal training session led by the Membership Relations Manager. The session which looked at sharpening conversation skills and how to network like a pro featured hands-on exercises and role-playing for staff members.

## The MGCC t-shirt

2023 marked the debut of the MGCC t-shirt, an idea that started during the pandemic to boost team spirit. A departure from the stereotypical corporate t-shirt, our version features a varsity vibe instead. The white and blue t-shirt displays MGCC team values on the inner hem as well as an inspiring message that only the wearer can see on the inside when putting it on. The team first wore the t-shirts during the AGM and has been lovingly worn for various occasions since.

## Making accounting fun

An internal workshop titled “Understanding Fundamental Accounting Concepts” demonstrated that numbers can be fun by looking beyond what is often perceived as a tedious and complex process. The training looked at analysing financial statements, balance sheet basics and the crucial role a Profit & Loss (P&L) statement plays. The main takeaway was understanding how these documents keep any business in good financial health which can also be applied to personal finances. The workshop relates to one of the Chamber’s strategic goals which is streamlining financial processes as well as ensuring a financially savvy mindset among staff.

## IT security and strategies

The Chamber upgraded its IT Server Infrastructure to the High Availability Server Infrastructure where in the event of hardware failure, the virtual machine will be moved to another server. The existing server will also be upgraded to serve as a backup window and this upgrade will improve the performance, scalability, and manageability of the server and also able to support high-performance workload.

## Keeping up with digitalisation

The Chamber’s efforts to continue digitising its work processes spilled over to this year’s Membership Directory 2023/2024 where it engaged the services of DefDevice to develop a subdomain and system that allows members to review and update their profiles that sync with our customer relationship management (CRM) portal.







## Internal working groups

### #LIFEATMGCC IN LANGKAWI

In October, MGCC staff embarked on a three-day, two-night trip to Langkawi that was organised by an internal working group. The trip included an energetic team challenge on the first day that tested teamwork while the second day of the trip saw staff members exploring the legendary island as well as high roping and zip lining in the rainforest as well as go-karting, all curated to foster better bonds between employees.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

2023 marks the second of the Chamber's **one-year and long service awards** as a way of commemorating an employee's time here as well as to inspire them. This year, five staff members received the one-year service award, three received the five-year service award and two staff members received their 10-year service award. In true MGCC fashion, the Chamber closed off the year with its signature **care pack** this time featuring a whopping 550 items in total, incorporating Malaysian and German goodies as well as items from the social enterprise Mangosteen where 100% of their profits go to empowering women and children in Southeast, and Bake x Dignity that trains underprivileged and refugee youths. A **year-end luncheon** was also held in the office to bid farewell to 2023.

### PRODUCTS & SERVICES

With ESG being all the rage in the business community, the working group kickstarted discussions on an ESG microsite on the website to provide important information on this framework. It also introduced a new ESG due diligence service to cater to businesses in the region that will be affected by the new German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act. In addition, the Chamber underwent an ESG assessment with an independent contractor to evaluate areas of improvement within the organisation in this area.

### STRATEGY

Almost two years into the Chamber's five-year plan **#MajuMGCC27**, our strategy and especially the core focus areas have in many ways become an integral part of many of our activities, best reflected in the communications plan, personal target setting, choice of event topics and project partners. The SWOT analysis, which is part of MGCC's annual risk management exercise, has furthermore revealed that due to the dedicated long-term strategy and related annual goals, some of the Chamber's previous weaknesses or threats have turned into opportunities and strengths. In addition to monitoring the progress of the strategy through annual indicators, the working group also looked into ongoing and planned activities related to a potential ESG framework for MGCC as well as used the UN Women Women's Empowerment Principles Gap Analysis Tool (WEPPs Tool) to help identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities to improve our performance on gender equality.



# Financial reports

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the financial year ended 31 December 2023

	2023 RM	2022 RM
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Entrance fees and subscriptions	1,181,546	1,042,214
Trade promotions, fairs and direct mailing	2,325,574	2,436,829
Subsidies from DIHK, Berlin	4,257,199	3,105,380
Interest income	49,127	44,348
Other income	551,656	459,909
Membership activities	445,954	277,370
Gain on foreign exchange	34,761	55,176
Site analysis	60,478	126,613
Vocational education	634,270	703,992
	<b>9,540,565</b>	<b>8,251,831</b>
Less:		
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Staff costs	4,254,279	3,872,715
Director's remuneration	1,254,191	1,131,225
Operational and administrative costs	3,562,562	3,228,930
	<b>9,071,032</b>	<b>8,232,870</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>469,533</b>	<b>18,961</b>

# Outlook

## An exciting chapter ahead for Malaysia and Germany

As the official voice of German trade and industry in Malaysia, being given a front-seat view of witnessing how the relationship between the two countries grows has been nothing short of exciting.

2023 was a year that kept the Chamber bustling with activity as companies looked beyond China to diversify their operations and into Malaysia for its friendly business climate and lower operating costs at a time when energy prices were at a record high in Europe.

2024 is shaping up to be a wonderful year of promising opportunities. It began with the visit of Germany's Foreign Affairs Minister Annalena Baerbock in January which set the tone for the year, a most welcomed continuation of last year's visit by President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Shortly after, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim travelled to Germany for a six-day visit to woo companies to invest in Malaysia, a trip the 10th Prime Minister described as "extraordinary" in success.

While campaigning to position Malaysia as a favourable investment destination, the Prime Minister's visit generated new investment interest with a potential value of RM45.4 billion and this is great news not only for the German business community in Malaysia but raises Malaysia's portfolio in the global arena.

Malaysia's interest in joining the Climate Club, an intergovernmental forum for exchange on accelerating climate change action and industry decarbonisation will propel the Southeast Asian nation's green ambitions to new levels and as ESG continues to dominate conversations and shift the way businesses rethink priorities, this signals a promising commitment to addressing the climate emergency.

TVET was much talked about in 2023 as the Malaysian government has identified its value in propelling the country into a skilled economy that will fuel its talent pool. As coordinators of the GDVT programme, this is exciting news for us because we have seen first-hand how a vocational approach can transform economies and livelihoods. The Chamber is off to a successful start with the GMI's Industrial Committee Summit in March which saw Germany being invited as the first country to sit on the National TVET Council.

The shared interests of both nations seem to be converging in 2024 and one hopes this momentum can be sustained not only for the year but for decades to come.

As always, the Chamber's doors are always open to bridge Malaysia and Germany, and we are ready to support your journey into Malaysia.



# Imprint

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS as of 31 December 2023

### President

**Tim Groth**

*Rieckermann (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd*

### Vice-President

**Geetha Kandiah**

*KASS International Sdn Bhd*

### Treasurer

**Florian Herrmann**

*Infineon Technologies (Malaysia)  
Sdn Bhd*

### Executive Director

**Daniel Bernbeck**

*Malaysian-German Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry*

**Dato' Steven Aroki**

*Smane (M) Sdn Bhd*

**Arne Graeber**

*Commerz Global Service Solutions*

**Wendy Lau**

*TRANSEARCH Malaysia Sdn Bhd*

**Peter Lenhardt**

*A. & H. MEYER Sdn Bhd*

**Eva Maegerlein**

*B. Braun Medical Industries Sdn Bhd*

**Martin Metzger**

*YTL Power Services Sdn Bhd*

**Datuk Muhammad Azmi Zulkifli**

*Invest KL Corporation*

**Marco Neelsen**

*Port of Tanjung Pelepas*

**David Ng**

*International SOS (M) Sdn Bhd*

**Trina Sim**

*Lufthansa Group Airlines*

**Teoh Tsu-Shien**

*Henkel Malaysia Sdn Bhd*

**Datuk Adam Yee**

*Powerwell International Sdn Bhd*

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January – December 2023

## PICTURE CREDITS

Unsplash: Page 8.

Bundesregierung/Johannssen: Page 19, top right.

Dato' Sri Anwar Ibrahim official X, formerly Twitter account: Page 31.

All other pictures are MGCC's own.

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by the German Bundestag







# PartnerInMalaysia

The Malaysian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MGCC), or AHK Malaysia as it is known in Germany, is the official representative of German industry and trade in Malaysia. Established in the year 1991, MGCC has since been a strong and reliable partner for its members and clients with a widespread, result-oriented range of services and a successful track record.

**[www.malaysia.ahk.de](http://www.malaysia.ahk.de)**