



Press release

ZVEH autumn economic survey 2025

No slump, but growing concerns about the future – a turnaround can only be achieved with clear economic and energy transition policies

The business climate index is rising slightly, but other economic indicators, such as the proportion of companies with job vacancies or the average order backlog, are declining slightly. Overall, the economic situation in the electrical trade remains relatively stable. However, there is a lack of optimism about the future business situation. The overall economic situation is therefore clearly overshadowing the business expectations of the electrical trade.

Frankfurt am Main, 1. October, 2025: There have been no dramatic changes in the economic situation. However, despite a slight increase in the business climate index, the latest autumn economic survey* conducted by the Central Association of German Electrical and Information Technology Trades (ZVEH) shows that many companies are uncertain and are cautious or pessimistic about the near future. In addition, 26.5 percent of the companies surveyed stated that sales of skilled trade services had fallen (spring 2025: 23.4 percent). For 48.5 percent, they remained unchanged (spring 2025: 46.5 percent), and for 25.0 percent, they had increased (spring 2025: 30.1 percent).

Slight increase in the business climate index

The number of e-businesses reporting a poor business situation fell from 12.8 percent in spring 2025 to 10.0 percent today. Currently, 42.5 percent (spring 2025: 40.4%) describe their current situation as „satisfactory,” while 47.5 percent describe it as „good” (spring 2025: 46.8%). This means that, despite the continuing economic slump, the assessment of the current economic situation has improved slightly compared to the spring. The business climate index rose accordingly by 1.8 points to 68.8 points (spring 2025: 67 points).

Decline in order backlog

The order backlog has declined to a total of 30.6 percent (spring 2025: 32.8%) for short lead times of up to two weeks and two to four weeks, and to 19.5 percent for long lead times of more than four months. In the middle segment of one to two months and two to four months, there was an overall increase to 49.9 percent (spring 2025: 45.5 percent). On average, the order backlog fell slightly from 13.0 to 12.3 weeks. One reason for the overall robust order development is that the share of sales in new construction and renovation rose slightly to a combined 33.4 percent (spring 2025: 31.2 percent).

Future business situation

Looking ahead to the next six months, 21.9 percent of companies expect the situation to deteriorate (spring 2025: 26 percent), but only 14.4 percent expect it to improve (spring 2025:



15.4 percent). 63.7 percent (spring 2025: 58.6%) of respondents expect their business situation to remain unchanged.

„Six months after the early federal elections, we are still treading water economically, and not just in the electrical trades,” says **ZVEH Managing Director Alexander Neuhäuser**: „The electrical trade sector continues to show remarkable resilience in the face of the gloomy overall economic outlook and, as a result, companies are demonstrating remarkable adaptability and there is constant demand for services in the areas of 'electrification,' 'maintenance,' and 'energy efficiency.' However, this is no reason to breathe a sigh of relief, as the industry is concerned that this robustness is slowly being eroded by current economic and energy policies. And it asks itself the question: Why are these future markets, which are still strong, being called into question?“

Declining share of sales in renewable energies

The survey shows that the share of sales in the former growth area of renewable energies has declined for the second time in a row (autumn 2025: 7.3% / spring 2025: 7.8%). The share of photovoltaic systems and storage systems fell from 6.8% to 6.5%. There was also a significant decline in the smart home business segment, from 4.1% to 3.6%. In contrast, the figures for the e-mobility business segment rose from 3.5% to 3.8%, and for the “heat pumps and ventilation systems” segment from 3.1% to 3.4%.

„The decline in the renewable energy sector shows that the uncertainty among consumers regarding the energy transition caused by politicians is now having an impact on our businesses. If decisive countermeasures are not taken and the energy transition continues to be slowed down, the electrical trade will feel the effects even more strongly and an important economic stimulus will be stifled“, explains **ZVEH Managing Director Alexander Neuhäuser**.

Companies are more cautious when it comes to hiring new employees

The number of companies with job vacancies continues to decline but remains at a high level. While 52 percent of the companies surveyed in autumn 2024 reported having job vacancies, this figure fell to 50.8 percent in spring 2025 and to just 46.5 percent in the current survey.

„Despite the fact that there are still many vacancies, the results show that e-craft businesses are becoming more cautious when it comes to hiring new employees,” says **Neuhäuser**: „This is also due to uncertainty about future developments and a more pessimistic assessment of the future business situation.“ However, the question arises as to when demographics will have an even greater impact than they do now and qualified personnel will become scarce, fears the ZVEH Managing Director: „We must therefore urgently keep an eye on the development of highly qualified specialist personnel even during the crisis if we do not want to reach the limits of growth when the economy picks up again. Since we know that the labour force will decline in the coming years, it is important to increase efficiency through digitalization and focus on key business areas.“

The ZVEH autumn economic survey also included additional questions on the topics of „skilled workers“ and „qualifications“. The results will be announced shortly in a separate press release.

** The survey took place from September 15 to 26, with a total of 1,562 companies participating.*



Attachments:

- Graph „Development of the business climate index over the last 6 years“
- Graph „Economic indicators“
- Graph „Development of the order backlog“
- Graph „Assessment of the business situation“

The ZVEH: The Central Association of German Electrical and Information Technology Trades (ZVEH) represents the interests of 48,178 companies in the three trades of electrical engineering, information technology and electrical engineering. With 516,709 employees, including 46,481 apprentices, the companies generate an annual turnover of 84.3 billion euros. Twelve regional associations with 313 guilds belong to the ZVEH as the federal guild association.