



Christoph M. Schmidt

ECONOMIST

Boards and executive teams are being asked to commit capital to energy transition, industrial strategy, and European market exposure while the underlying policy framework keeps shifting under their feet. Reading the macro signals correctly, and separating durable reform from political noise, is now a strategic function, not an economist's footnote. The cost of getting the read wrong is years of misallocated investment.

Christoph M. Schmidt is a German macroeconomist who helps boards and policy audiences interpret European economic direction, energy transition costs, and labour market reform through the lens of a decade chairing Germany's Council of Economic Experts.

Christoph M. Schmidt's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Christoph M. Schmidt

- Seven years chairing the German Council of Economic Experts, the body that formally advises the federal government, gives him a working command of how policy is actually made in Berlin and Brussels.
- As co-chair of the Franco-German Council of Economic Experts, he reads the Paris-Berlin axis from inside the room, useful for any business whose European strategy depends on it.
- His research sits where most boardroom questions now live: energy transition economics, CO2 pricing design, labour market structure, and inequality. He has published on all of them.
- Project Syndicate columnist and contributor to the World Economic Forum Agenda and Brookings, which means audiences are getting a voice already trusted by the serious business press.
- Recipient of the Gustav Stolper Award (2016), given by the Verein fuer Socialpolitik for economists who shape public debate with empirical work, not rhetoric.

Biography highlights

- President of RWI - Leibniz Institute for Economic Research in Essen since 2002.
- Chair for Economic Policy and Applied Econometrics, Ruhr-Universitaet Bochum.
- Chairman of the German Council of Economic Experts, 2013 to 2020.
- Co-chairman of the Franco-German Council of Economic Experts since 2020.
- Gustav Stolper Award (2016); honorary doctorate, Leibniz Universitaet Hannover (2019).
- Ph.D. in Economics, Princeton University; CEPR Fellow; IZA Research

AVAILABLE FOR

- Panel Participation
- Speaking

CHRISTOPH'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Economic Forecasting
- Economic Trends & Global Markets
- Energy Transition
- ESG Strategy
- Geopolitics
- Political Risk & Policy

LANGUAGES: English

Fellow.

Biography

The German Council of Economic Experts exists to tell the federal government what the data actually says, in writing, every year. Christoph M. Schmidt chaired that body from 2013 to 2020, which means he authored or co-authored seven annual reports that shaped how Berlin framed growth, fiscal policy, labour reform, and the energy transition.

He has been President of RWI – Leibniz Institute for Economic Research in Essen since 2002, while holding the Chair for Economic Policy and Applied Econometrics at Ruhr-Universität Bochum. The combination is unusual. RWI is one of Germany's largest economic research institutes; Bochum keeps him teaching and publishing the empirical work that gives the policy voice its weight.

Since 2020 he has served as co-chairman of the Franco-German Council of Economic Experts, a body set up to surface where the two largest eurozone economies can cooperate and where they cannot. For any executive team with European exposure, that bilateral view is rarely available from a single speaker.

His training is Princeton applied econometrics, with a Ph.D. supervised in the Alfred P. Sloan tradition. The research output covers energy and CO2 pricing, labour markets, health, and inequality. He writes regularly for Project Syndicate, the World Economic Forum Agenda, and Brookings. The Gustav Stolper Award, given in 2016 by the Verein fuer Socialpolitik, recognises economists who translate serious empirical work into public debate. Schmidt is one of the few German economists to have done both at the scale the award implies.

Key speaking topics

- European economic policy and the Franco-German axis
- Energy transition economics and CO2 pricing
- German and European labour market reform
- Income and wealth inequality
- Fiscal policy and debt sustainability in the eurozone
- The role of evidence-based economic advice in democracies
- Productivity and structural change in advanced economies

Ideal for

- Boards and executive teams with European operations weighing the fiscal, energy, and labour policy outlook
- CFOs, strategy leads, and government affairs teams briefing on eurozone direction
- Investor audiences and policy forums examining the Franco-German economic relationship
- Industrial and energy sector leadership assessing the real cost trajectory of the transition

Audience outcomes

- A sharper read on where German and European economic policy is heading and why
- A working framework for thinking about CO2 pricing, energy cost pass-through, and competitiveness

- A clearer view of the Franco-German policy interface and what it means for European business decisions
- A sense of which reform debates carry durable weight and which are political theatre
- Direct engagement with an economist who has sat inside the machinery of federal advice

Christoph M. Schmidt's Videos

