

The Five-Year Plan for 1951–1955 (1950)

Abstract

With its first Five-Year Plan, which provided detailed numerical goals for all sectors of the economy and labor for the years 1951–1955, the GDR aligned itself with the Soviet rhythm of the planned economy. At its core was the massive expansion of heavy industry. Industrial production overall was to be nearly doubled, while agricultural production would be boosted by 25 percent. This was to be made possible through stepped-up efforts to provide training to the necessary skilled personnel and through technical progress in manufacturing.

Source

[...] These are the main objectives of the first Five-Year Plan to develop the national economy of the German Democratic Republic between 1951 and 1955:

[...]

I. Industry

1. Reflecting efforts to double prewar levels of industrial production between 1951 and 1955, gross production will be set at DM 43.8 billion for 1955 for all industry, starting from a base of DM 23 billion in 1950.

To provide a secure foundation for general industrial recovery, it is of foremost importance that the existing imbalances in industry be eliminated as follows:

- a) Completion of the restoration of the power and fuel industries initiated in the Two-Year Plan and guarantee of their further growth.
- b) Reconstruction and development of metallurgy in the area of pig iron, steel, and milled materials on a scale that ensures that a maximum supply of metals from our country's own resources will be available to machine producers.
- c) Restoration and utilization of the full capacity of the most important and leading machine producers as well as construction of new enterprises producing equipment for the power, coal, and metallurgical industries.
- d) Restoration and utilization of the full capacity of enterprises that manufacture goods for foreign markets in line with the targets of the import-export plan and the republic's obligations.

2. Using the 1950 plan as a point of comparison, production levels in the individual industrial sectors are set as follows for 1955 (in percentages):

Power industry	177
Mining	194
Metallurgy	237
Machine building	221
Electronics	196

Precision engineering and optics	239
Chemicals	182
Non-metallic minerals	180
Wood processing	118
Textile industry	201
Light industry	176
Cellulose and paper	149
Food industry	187

[...]

The output of the power industry must be increased to 1.4 billion DM in 1955, an increase of 77% compared to 1950. Electrical energy generation must expand to 31.6 billion kilowatt hours in 1955. To achieve these goals, all existing electric power capacity must be fully utilized and new capacities of 2.160 megawatts must be launched. In the course of the Five-Year Plan, the disproportionate relationship between boiler and turbine plants must be eliminated by the reconstruction of boiler units and the assembly of new boiler plants. Furthermore, hydroelectric plants and power storage stations must be completely rebuilt. Strict energy conservation by consumers and electrical power producers is the most important criterion for ensuring an uninterrupted supply of electrical energy to the national economy, which requires ever increasing amounts. [...]

II. Agriculture

1. The most important agricultural objective for the years 1951 to 1955 is to increase crop yields and animal stocks as much as possible in order to meet the population's food needs mainly from the republic's own resources. Over the course of five years, peacetime levels must be surpassed as regards the volume of agricultural production, the level of crop yields, and the productivity of stock-breeding. Total yields for basic crops are set as follows for 1955 (gross yields):

Grains and legumes	7,312,500 tons
Oleaginous and fibrous plants (grains)	279,000 tons
Sugar beets	6,804,000 tons
Potatoes	17,000,000 tons

The gross yields of agricultural crops must be increased as follows over the median yearly yields of the prewar period (1934 to 1938):

Grain and legumes	about 111 percent
Oleaginous and fibrous plants	about 708 percent
Sugar beets	about 125.7 percent
Potatoes	about 125.4 percent

[...]

VI. The Allocation and Training of Workers for the National Economy

1. A large number of newly trained workers, technicians, engineers, and specialists are needed for all branches of industry and agriculture in order to ensure that the national economy of the republic progresses as laid out in the Five-Year Plan.

In contrast to West Germany, where the forced unemployment of millions is worsening – and will continue to worsen – the German Democratic Republic is already suffering from a shortage of workers in some branches of industry. To prevent an even more severe shortage, measures must be taken both to provide the national economy with the required workers, technicians, and engineers, and to continue mechanizing the production process, particularly in areas such as coal and ore mining. This will allow the country to overcome its shortage of workers and to achieve the projected production levels.

2. The number of employees in the national economy is set at 7.6 million for 1955. They fall into the following categories:

Industry	2,800,000
Transportation	468,000
Construction	570,000

Compared with 1950, the total number of employees must grow to 113.3%, or by 890,000 persons. Of these, 448,000 will work in industry, 230,000 in construction, 25,000 in transportation, and 56,000 in commerce. [...]

Source: *Protokoll des III. Parteitages der SED (20.–24. Juli 1950)*. East Berlin, 1951, p. 276, 278–80, 296–97; reprinted in H. Weber, *Von der SBZ zur DDR 1945–1968*. Hannover, 1968, p. 283–85.

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