



## News Release

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## **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, to Appoint New CEO: Kai Beckmann Takes on Role on May 1– Annual General Meeting Decides Dividend of € 2.20**

- **In-person Annual General Meeting in Frankfurt am Main**
- **Dividend of € 2.20 per share approved**
- **All resolutions proposed by the management passed**
- **Belén Garijo symbolically passes the baton to Kai Beckmann**

Darmstadt, Germany, April 24, 2026 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, today symbolically marked the change of the company's leadership at the Jahrhunderthalle in Frankfurt am Main on the occasion of the 31st Annual General Meeting. Kai Beckmann is to be appointed Chair of the Executive Board and CEO of the company on May 1, 2026, succeeding Belén Garijo whose contractual five-year term in office is coming to an end.

The shareholders approved all resolutions proposed by the management, including a dividend payment of € 2.20 per share, through which the shareholders will participate in the company's success in 2025. This is thus the 15th consecutive year with an increasing or stable dividend.

### **Garijo reflects on five-year transformation**

In her final speech to the Annual General Meeting, Belén Garijo acknowledged the development of the company during a period of global uncertainty:





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“In the last five years, we have led the company through a time of extraordinary volatility and strengthened it considerably at the same time. (...) I am convinced that, under the leadership of Kai Beckmann, the Group will continue to strengthen and advance on this basis.”

### **Beckmann: Focus on progress and adaptability**

After the symbolic handover, Kai Beckmann announced his intention to continue developing the company upon this strong foundation:

“In everything we do and all our business endeavors, innovation drives us forward. Our portfolio is perfectly aligned with the spirit of the times. I see a key task of my tenure in fully leveraging the enormous potential of this combined portfolio. I am determined to drive the transformation forward with strength and, together with our more than 62,000 employees, to set the course for the Group’s successful development.”

In the last few months, Beckmann has visited numerous sites across the world to gain perspectives from employees, customers and partners.

### **Supervisory Board pays tribute to Garijo and looks ahead to new leadership**

Michael Kleinemeier, Chair of the Supervisory Board of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, thanked Garijo on behalf of the Board for her leadership in challenging times while also acknowledging the upcoming change in leadership:

“Belén Garijo has shown great commitment to strengthen the company during a period of major global uncertainty and deployed her strategic skill to develop the company further. For this, she deserves our utmost gratitude. At the same time, I have full confidence that Kai Beckmann will lead the Group into the next growth phase with his profound knowledge of the company and his clear vision,” said Kleinemeier.

### **Resolutions of the Annual General Meeting**

Around 92.1 million of the 129.2 million shares issued (71.28% of the share capital) were represented in the votes. A detailed summary of the voting results can be found at [Annual General Meeting - Investors | Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany.](#)



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### **About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany**

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, operates across life science, healthcare and electronics. More than 62,000 employees work to make a positive difference to millions of people's lives every day by creating more joyful and sustainable ways to live. From providing products and services that accelerate drug development and manufacturing as well as discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2025, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 21.1 billion in 65 countries.

The company holds the global rights to the name and trademark "Merck" internationally. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, operate as MilliporeSigma in life science, EMD Serono in healthcare and EMD Electronics in electronics. Since its founding in 1668, scientific exploration and responsible entrepreneurship have been key to the company's technological and scientific advances. To this day, the founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed company.

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