

Thuringia Focus



At Mubea in Weißensee, the tailor rolled blanks and chassis production will be expanded in this year. The investment will result in the creation of 120 new jobs. Source: LEG Thüringen / Andreas Hultsch

Thuringia becomes key location for Mubea

Automotive supplier Muhr and Bender, known internationally as Mubea, is making a substantial investment of EUR 60 m in modernizing and extending its premises in Weißensee in Thuringia. The main offices expanded into adjacent commercial premises last summer, and now Mubea, the largest company in the industrial estate, is flexing its muscles again by starting to produce several components that are in demand internationally.

A second cold-rolling plant, a development center for chassis production, a new warehouse and a facility for the further processing of tailor rolled blanks are top of the list of the numerous extensions to be undertaken at Mubea Fahrwerksfedern GmbH in Weißensee in the near future. The 20,000 m² of hall space and 4,000 m² of office space will provide plenty of room for all this modernization and expansion. A further bonus: 120 new jobs will be created. Mubea's section that produces high-performance chassis parts has recently put its first warm forming line for bodywork structural parts

into operation, so it can now supply pre-finished components in addition to tailor rolled blanks. A German manufacturer of premium automobiles has already ordered the launch of series production of these components in 2017.

Mubea Group recorded growth of more than 10 percent in 2014 alone, with a staff of around 10,000. This growth was accompanied by various investments, both in Germany and overseas, to make the group more competitive, including two new factories in China and significant extensions to premises in Germany. (td)

News

Erfurt – X-FAB Group, an international manufacturer of analog and mixed-signal process technologies, opened a new micro-electrical-mechanical systems (MEMS) factory in south-east Erfurt in February. These switchgear systems combine electronics with slender mechanical systems and are in hot demand all over the world for use in very small devices. Of the EUR 40 m that flowed into the 1,350 m² factory, EUR 11 m came from the Thuringian Ministry of Economic Affairs. X-Fab Group has leased the hall complex from LEG Thüringen; it plans to create 94 new jobs there by the end of this year.

Arnstadt – Local food manufacturer Born Senf & Feinkost GmbH is to expand production and employ 70 more people after building a new company complex at the Erfurter Kreuz industrial estate, in addition to the existing site in Bad Langensalza. The company bought the 5.6-hectare plot of land in the industrial estate from LEG – the State Development Corporation of Thuringia. Born mustard, ketchup and barbecue sauce are mainstays of Thuringian cuisine and popular in the rest of Germany as well.

Gera – Austrian textiles manufacturer Getzner is extending its site in Gera. It is planning to invest EUR 74 m in a new production facility with space for 180 power looms. A hundred new workers will join the staff of 70 at **Getzner Textil Weberei GmbH** to assist as the capacity to produce high-quality damask from Jacquard fabric is tripled. The Thuringian Ministry of Economic Affairs has provided EUR 12 m towards the venture.

i News

Erfurt – Industrial companies in Thuringia exported more in 2014 – and made more money. Thuringian companies with 50 or more employees achieved an increase in turnover of EUR 540 m on the previous year, to take the total to EUR 28.5 bn. Exports were 7.7 percent up on 2013 at EUR 13.05 bn. The area in and around Gotha and Wartburg District benefited greatly from the large number of contracts under way in the automotive and automotive supplier sectors, which were the segments with the strongest turnover in Thuringia in 2014.

Erfurt – Thuringia's Ministry of Economic Affairs will support the establishment of an **Industry 4.0 Center of Competence**. The center will function as a point of contact for questions about any aspect of the German government's 'Industrie 4.0' initiative in the high-tech sector, from the technologies involved to data security to how it will affect workplaces in the future. The findings of research already being conducted in Thuringia will be incorporated in the digitalization strategy to be prepared for the state. Thuringia will also participate in a competition being run by the German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, which is to fund four or five such centers around the country.

i Dates**> 4 – 8 May 2015**

Delegation visit of the Thuringian Minister of Economic Affairs to South Africa

> 31 May – 6 June 2015

Visit of Thuringian companies to Mexico

> 20 – 22 August 2015

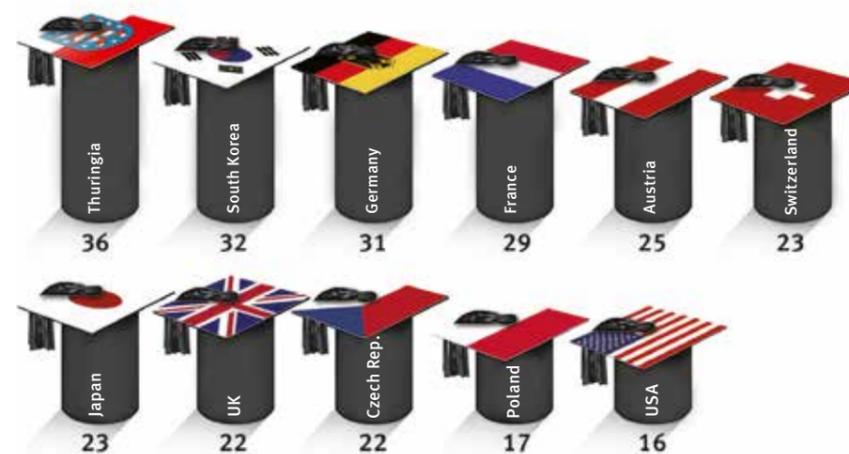
Vietnam MediPharm Expo, Ho-Chi-Minh-City (leading trade fair for medicine and pharmaceuticals in South Asia)

Number of MINT graduates in Thuringia especially high

Research by the Cologne Institute for Economic Research (IW) on the number of graduates with majors in mathematics, informatics, natural sciences and technology, known collectively as MINT subjects, puts Germany nearly at the top of the international list.

When the numbers for Thuringia are assessed in this framework, one of the 'plus factors' of the state really comes to the fore: the large pool of highly educated and motivated workforce in the region. With reference to the total number of graduates in Thuringia, approxi-

mately 36 percent of them have majored in a MINT subject. Our exceptional universities, with their focus on technical and scientific subjects and being regularly put on first places in university rankings, can take a good deal of the credit, too. (maa)



Graduates with MINT majors (as a percentage of the total) Source: Cologne Institute for Economic Research (IW), MINT report – autumn 2014, German Federal Statistical Office, 2012, Wiesbaden

More university graduates in Jena than anywhere else

Almost a third of all the people in Jena who pay mandatory social security contributions are university graduates, according to a recent survey carried out by business magazine *WirtschaftsWoche* and the Cologne Institute for Economic Research (IW) in 69 German cities.

The aim was to determine the most attractive cities in Germany for university graduates, and Jena ranked top of the list along with Erlangen, a major city in Bavaria, with a score of 29 percent. They were ahead of Munich, the capital of Bavaria, where 25 percent of all employed people have tertiary education. Darmstadt in Hesse and Stuttgart in Baden-Württemberg follow at 1 percent less. Jena attracts students from all over the world and has interesting jobs for them

upon graduation, because research institutes and innovative companies choose a location in the orbit of universities. Career opportunities for graduates are many and varied at the numerous institutions with names like Fraunhofer, Max Planck and Leibniz, and well-known biotechnology companies, along with the Carl Zeiss Group and Jenoptik. And Jena has the trump card up its sleeve with more affordable housing than in other big university cities. (td)

Polymers – strong in Thuringia



What the industry is made off: These plastic compounds offer an extensive range of customized and specific solutions in polymers and plastics. Source: LEG Thüringen

Avery Dennison Materials GmbH, ContiTech AG, Fromm Plastics GmbH, GRAFE Advanced Polymers GmbH – a string of successful companies are testimony to the fact that Thuringia offers exceptional opportunities for innovation and growth for any business involved in polymers and plastics. Yet the sector has always been underestimated, as recent research by the Thuringian Polymers Cluster PolymerMat e.V. and the Ilmenau University of Technology indicates.

There are more than 730 polymer companies in Thuringia, 320 of them in the 'primary' category, which means that at least 80 percent of their business

has to do with polymers. Most of them are suppliers to the automotive sector or the packaging, electrical engineering and medical technology industries. More than 50,000 people worked for polymer companies in Thuringia in 2014, achieving sales of more than EUR 10 bn, so the sector is not just an important employer in the region but also plays a significant role in keeping its economy humming. Products from these companies are acknowledged internationally for their good quality and are much in demand; 35.1 percent of them are exported, which is a higher percentage than for most products that originate here. (td/maa)

Unique battery research center for Thuringia

The Center for Energy and Environmental Chemistry (CEEC) at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena held a topping-out ceremony in February. In cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institute for Ceramic Technologies and Systems (IKTS), the center will host research into innovative battery designs based on polymers and ceramics.

The building offers nearly 1,500 m² of space, which can accommodate up to six of the 20 working groups in the field of organic and macromolecular

chemistry, electrochemistry, carbon nanomaterials and the chemistry of glass along with the professorial chair (shared with the IKTS) and laboratories for producing prototypes. The Ernst Abbe Foundation, the Carl Zeiss Foundation and the State of Thuringia are all contributing EUR 14.5 m. Though the center has barely started, there are already plans to extend it. "This new battery research center will make Thuringia a leader in storage technology," said Wolfgang Tiefensee, Thuringia's Minister of Economic Affairs, Science

i Technologie-News

Erfurt – A new round of 'ProExzellenz', a program organized by the state of Thuringia, began this year and will provide a total of EUR 20 m for cutting-edge research through 2019. Seven new research centers are to be set up, as well as three chairs of excellence at the state's universities. The funded projects are involved in topics as diverse as media research, questions of social and cultural change, energy storage, aging, microbiology, drugs and active substances, photonics and communication technologies.

Erfurt – The Thuringia Research and Innovation Strategy 'RIS3' is under way! The Commission of the European Union gave the green light for the strategy in December last year after a broad-ranging preparation process. RIS3 will be a channel for the state to use EU funding in ways that will benefit both businesses and investors in the long term. The aim is for the innovation strategy to be achieved in Thuringia by 2020. Implementation will be supported by ThüringerClusterManagement (ThCM), which is under the wing of the State Development Corporation and will provide both the central office for the strategy and the management team.

and Digital Society, at the topping-out ceremony. The minister added that energy and environmental technologies were "key technologies of the 21st century". The joint project between the university in Jena and the IKTS will ensure that knowledge makes its way into the business world. For example, the results of pure research will be seen in prototypes and will eventually be developed into marketable products together with industrial partners. (maa)

Thuringia picks up the pace



Faster through Germany: as from 2017 the high-speed ICE train routes will meet in the ICE City of Erfurt. Source: LEG Thüringen

As of 2017, two key ICE transport axes will meet in Erfurt, drastically reducing travel time from major centers and opening up fantastic economic opportunities as the state of Thuringia and its capital city join Germany's system of high-speed hubs.

With 300 km/h through Germany: from 2017, Deutsche Bahn's high-speed ICE trains will run on new routes and Erfurt – the city at the heart of Germany – will be the hub. The journey to Berlin, for example, will only take two hours instead of the current two and a half. Trips to Frankfurt and Munich will be much faster too – at least an hour shorter. Halle and Leipzig, key cities in eastern Germany, will be virtually a 'local trip', with trains leaving hourly and travel times of only 30 to 45 minutes.

The City of Erfurt and the State Development Corporation of Thuringia concluded an urban development contract in spring 2014 regarding the creation of the infrastructure necessary for the ICE rail hub, according to which the corporation will manage the project and build ICE-City-Erfurt. (*td/maa*)

Tourism going strong in Thuringia

A pleasing increase in the number of paid overnight stays shows that more and more people are wanting to discover Thuringia. There were almost 3.7 m arrivals (+2 percent) and 9.8 m overnight stays (+3 percent) in the last year, the highest figures yet.

The figures show that Eisenach, Erfurt, Jena and Weimar pulled the most weight, but regions like the Thüringer Wald, the Harz Mountains, the Thuringian Vogtland and the World Heritage regi-

on of Wartburg/Hainich are also gaining in popularity. In 2014 there were around 248,000 visitors from abroad (+ 5.7 percent), most of whom came from The Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria and Poland. The 41st German Travel Mart, to be held at the end of April, will put more wind in tourism's wings when 600 travel wholesalers from 45 different countries, with a pack of foreign journalists in tow, take themselves to Erfurt in order to take Thuringia to the world. (*td/maa*)

In the footsteps of Franz Liszt

Klassik Stiftung Weimar, a foundation that brings together more than 20 museums, palaces, historic houses, parks and literary and art collections, is continuing its series of concerts entitled 'Klingendes Schloss' this year, revealing another facet of the city's rich cultural history. Concert-goers at the Stadtschloss, or City Palace, will hear the dulcet tones of valuable instruments appropriate to the elegant setting with its huge paintings, sculptures and splendid furniture. The close

connections between Weimar and music are seen for example in Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna's music room and the ballroom and banquet room where Franz Liszt performed concerts. The Klassik Stiftung is providing three grand pianos this year, and there will also be stringed instruments, clarinets, guitars and singers. Dates: 23 May; 12 July; 13 September and 15 November at the Stadtschloss Weimar. (*maa*)

@ www.klassik-stiftung.de

i Dates

> 22 – 25 May 2015

Castle Festival

(Thüringer Schlössertage)
Impressive castles, flourishing gardens, historic theaters, exquisite collections

@ www.schloessertage.de

> 19 – 21 June 2015

40th Merchants' Bridge Festival, Erfurt, (Krämerbrückenfest)

> 9 – 26 July 2015

Cathedral Steps Festival 2015, Erfurt, Der Freischütz

@ www.domstufen.de



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