

Thuringia Focus



Power engine first hand: the President of the Thuringian Parliament Christian Carius (right at the back) and the Thuringian Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee (right at the front) at the launch of the new production line of MDC Power (Daimler) in Kölleda/Thuringia. Picture source: MDC Power / Photographer: Dirk Wächter

Latest Mercedes engines from Thuringia

MCD Power GmbH, named 'Best Factory' in 2014, lived up to its reputation as a key driver of the Thuringian economy in October by investing about €200 million in its plant in Kölleda. A fully owned Daimler subsidiary, the company is to build two new production halls where a new series of four-cylinder diesel engines will be manufactured.

The two halls will cover an area the size of 11 soccer fields. A total of 250 new jobs will be created, as more staff will be needed to help make the new generation of high-performance diesel engines, which comprise approximately 200 separate parts and will be used in several Mercedes cars and 'Transporter' vans. Thuringia's Minister of Economic Affairs, Wolfgang Tiefensee, who was at the site to see the first engine come off the production line, said he was delighted to witness MDC Power's impres-

sive "success story" and that the company had become "an engine for growth and the region's biggest industrial employer." "MDC is known within and beyond our state as the 'poster child' for quality workmanship from Thuringia," he said. MDC Power's current staff of 1,100, or 1,700 counting service center staff, is already large for a town with a population of just over 6,000. The recently launched recruitment campaign to find more skilled workers features the theme 'We're the engine – You're the heart'. (td)

News

Merbelsrod – Pump maker **Nidec GPM**, which became part of Japan's Nidec Group last year, has announced that it is expanding its production. Already one of Thuringia's biggest employers before it was taken over by Nidec, with a staff of more than 1,000, the automotive supplier has extended its production area with the shop floor 9 by more than 3,700 m² and added a further 1,000 m² of office space. Around 60 new jobs will be created in the process. Its statement of faith in Thuringia as a place to do business is evidenced by the fact that it is planning other projects too.

Gotha – **Enercon**, an international wind energy installation fitter from East Friesland that has been involved in Thuringia since 2012, recently opened a new training center for service technicians here. The new building cost around €20 million and features a nacelle that will be used to train people to make repairs safely at extreme heights. In future, around 20,000 technicians from all over Europe, as well as from Canada, Costa Rica, Japan and Taiwan, will come to Gotha for training. All this new activity in the city will boost the hospitality industry and grow the tourism infrastructure in the surrounding area.

Eisfeld – Long-established precision technology company **Feintechnik Eisfeld GmbH** has undergone rapid growth since US start-up Harry's got involved, with new sales channels including online retail the main ingredient in its recipe for success. Now it has invested a whopping €40 million in new facilities, including a new production hall. Fifty new employees have been brought on board, so the company now has a staff of 420 making razor blades and razor systems.

i News

Additional 23 ha of industrial land

There are constant enquiries from companies interested in the industrial estate at Eisenach-Kindel in the municipality of Hörselberg-Hainich in western Thuringia, but there is almost no land left, so the local council recently decided to extend the estate. Although utilities still have to be installed for the 23 ha being developed, the first sod could be turned in 2017. The many advantages the industrial area has to offer is an excellent location next to the A4 highway and the interstate road 'Bundesstraße 84' and close to Eisenach-Kindel airfield. The large number of automotive suppliers already based on the estate, including Rege Motorenteile, Continental Emitec and South African heavy equipment manufacturer Bell makes the area around Eisenach a very important one for the automotive industry. The estate is also in a 'border triangle', close to the states of Hesse and Lower Saxony. If you are interested in a site in this industrial estate, please contact the State Development Corporation of Thuringia (Landesentwicklungsgesellschaft Thüringen mbH).

i Dates

› 25 – 28 January 2016

Arab Health, Dubai World Trade Centre

› 16 – 18 February 2016

Photonics West, The Moscone Center, San Francisco, USA

› 14 – 16 March 2016

Laser World of Photonics China Shanghai New International Expo Centre

Thuringia sets its sights on NAFTA markets

Thuringian businesses will soon be exporting more goods and services. At the 9th Thuringian Außenwirtschaftstag (Exporter's Day) in Weimar around 160 decision makers representing local government and business were offered an interesting seminar and workshop program by experts in NAFTA subjects. It is planned to make more business contacts and develop inward and outward trade with partners in Canada, the United States and Mexico, the three markets that signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Thuringian businesses have a lot to offer the NAFTA countries in the way of state-of-the-art technology in sectors such as optics, engineering, medical technology, plastics, automotive industries and more. Presently, more than 300 Thuringian companies are exporting goods and services to the US, while the number of companies exporting to the NAFTA region as a whole is 450.



Andreas Krey, Chairman of the Board of Management of the State Development Corporation of Thuringia, highlights the opportunities for Thuringian companies on the NAFTA markets.
Source: LEG Thüringen / Photo: Thomas Abé

Prospecting for investors in the United States

Already 70 US-companies have invested in Thuringia and thus created about 11,000 jobs, that makes the US the largest foreign investor to the state. Now, the State Development Corporation of Thuringia (LEG Thüringen) recently held workshops in Santa Clara and Rochester to showcase the technological expertise of the Thuringian optics sector and make contact with companies considering developing a base in Europe. A reception at the German embassy in Washington on 3 October, Ger-

man Unity Day (the anniversary of reunification) provided a further opportunity to keep the state of Thuringia uppermost in people's minds. In the presence of 2,500 of Washington's 'movers and shakers', Germany made the most of the opportunity to position itself as an innovative investment location in the heart of Europe, and the State Development Corporation of Thuringia highlighted the region's advantages as a business location and the full service for investors.

Thuringia around the globe

One of the main ways of telling the world about the top-flight competence of Thuringian companies in sectors with strong growth and attractive target markets is to have a presence at trade fairs, which is why the state's latest export strategy includes plans to involve more companies and beef up its trade fair profile. Last year saw a repeat of the proven approach of sharing stands at trade fairs, with many companies keen to participate. The State Development Corporati-

on of Thuringia attended 12 trade fairs in Germany and other countries last year and handled the administration for shared stands at ARAB HEALTH in Dubai, Photonics West in the United States, Laser World of Photonics in China and India and the Medipharm-EXPO in Vietnam. At home in Germany, it facilitated shared Thuringian stands at the Hanover Trade Fair, the IAA, EXPO REAL, the Frankfurt Book Fair and Fakuma, a plastics processing trade fair in Friedrichshafen.

2015: Silver jubilee year for East German companies



Analytik Jena AG is a global leading manufacturer of analytical and bioanalytical systems for industrial and scientific applications. Source: © Analytik Jena AG

Thuringia's commercial 'landscape', dotted with small- and medium-sized businesses, also has a rich and interesting history. After the reunification in 1990 many companies have been founded. We owe much of Thuringia's economic strength – and numerous silver jubilees this year – to the entrepreneurs and innovators of the nineties. 'Thuringia Focus' would like to introduce you to some of the key players. In this issue: Analytik Jena.

Analytik Jena was the 27th company to be entered in the commercial register after East and West Germany became one, something that is a matter of pride for its founder and chief executive, Klaus Berka, to this day. With initial capital of 6,000 East German marks and the help of two colleagues, Berka set up the measuring instrument company as soon as the Berlin Wall went down. Today, Analytik Jena is a star on the world scene. After 25 years of research and development in the field of analysis technology it exports laboratory analysis

to 90 countries. "I don't see that growth coming to an end any time soon," says Berka. "If we can invest intelligently in developing our structures, we'll have an even greater share of the market." About two years ago, Analytik Jena became part of Swiss group Endress+Hauser, which is providing a significant level of support as it grows. In 2011, Berka was awarded the prestigious Ernst Abbe Prize for his energetic efforts developing such a successful company. We wish him all the very best and continuing success. (td)

New redox flow battery from Thuringia

In order to speed up the energy turnaround, electricity is increasingly being generated from renewable sources like sun and wind. While this is a good move, these sources are subject to natural fluctuation, and ways must be found to store the electricity they produce. The decided disadvantage of the redox flow batteries that have so far been used for this purpose is that they use expensive metals and aggressive acids.

Now the research team associated with Professor Ulrich Schubert at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena has taken us all a step further toward a redox flow battery that is easy to use, safe and economical. The Center for Energy and Environmental Chemistry and JenaBatteries GmbH in Jena cooperated to develop a

battery based on polymers and a harmless solution of table salt. The most promising thing about the battery is that it is cheap to manufacture, yet still performs almost as well as its conventional counterparts. It successfully clocked up as many as 10,000 charging cycles – approximately equivalent to 20 years'

i Technology News

Injection of funds for Thuringia's tertiary institutes

Thuringia's tertiary institutes are to receive approximately €160 million in extra funding from the state by 2019, the state's Cabinet decided recently in its draft framework agreement for tertiary funding for the 2016 to 2019 period. "A four-percent increase, four times, is a huge boost and a clear political signal from the state government that it values and wants to support Thuringia as a knowledge and education state," says Minister of Economic Affairs Wolfgang Tiefensee. The funds will be used for specific academic purposes and to cover wage increases. There will also be a strategy and innovation budget for improved learning environments, more research activity and public relations and profile-building for the institutions. (maa)

Super laser from Jena

Jena company Active Fiber Systems has set a world record with its ultrashort pulse laser, the most powerful laser in the world, which is attracting great interest from biologists, medical researchers and geologists. To make the laser so powerful, the team at Active Fiber Systems split the laser beam into different channels, which were carefully enhanced individually before being combined again in such a way as to precisely superimpose the pulses. A pilot system is now under construction. The small team is a spin-off from the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering (IOF) in Jena and plans to continuously grow by taking on new projects. (maa)

operating life – in the early tests without losing too much charge. It has an energy density of 10 watt-hours per liter. Ever ingenious, the research team is already working on even higher-performing successor systems. (maa)

A quarter century of world sports in Oberhof

Top athletes from more than 30 countries and biathlon fans from all over Germany will descend on the winter sports center of Oberhof in the Thuringian Forest again from 7 to 10 January for the Biathlon World Cup. There will be individual as well as a mass start races, and the competition promises to serve up some exciting moments in the DKB Ski Arena. This will be the 25th time Oberhof has hosted the annual event, which attracts around 100,000 people. Numbers were down in the 2014/2015 season due to the mild winter and a low-pressure system over the area on the weekend of the competition, but this year's crowds are expected to be as big as ever. The snow cannons are permanently on duty producing a gorgeous white environment so everything looks set for a fabulous event.



In January 2016, the Thuringian city of Oberhof will host again the Biathlon World Cup.
Source: Tourismus GmbH Oberhof

In 2013, the International Biathlon Union (IBU) decided to run its world cup in Oberhof until 2018. The town will also host the Biathlon world championship again in 2020/21, for which it will invest €35 million in upgrading and extending its sporting facilities. *(td)*

i Dates

> 18 March – 10 April 2016

**Thüringer Bachwochen
(Bach Weeks)**

Music festival with
53 concerts in 11 places

> 16 – 17 January 2016

Luge World Cup Oberhof

Online Reformation Portal

The 'Reformation Portal', one of central Germany's largest digital archives, has been offering fresh online insights into the Reformation era since November 2014. More than 35,000 historical documents were preserved digitally and curated by experts for the portal, a joint project of the states of Thuringia, Hesse and Saxony-Anhalt. In the run-up to the anniversary of the

Reformation in 2017, it is a real treasure trove for interested amateurs and professional researchers and writers. In just a few clicks, they can travel back in time and see how the spiritual renewal movement unfolded between 1517 and 1648. *(gro)*

@ www.reformationsportal.de

Thuringian chefs earn spot at culinary olympus

Foodies are spoilt for choice in Thuringia wherever they dine. Be it Weimar, Jena, Erfurt, Mühlhausen or Eisenach, you'll get your money's worth, with plenty to tickle the taste buds. Gault & Millau, the influential French restaurant guide, handed out top marks to numerous chefs in their latest edition, including five in the city of Weimar alone. Claus Alboth from 'Alboth's' in Weimar and Marcello Fabbri from 'Anna Amalia' received 16 of the 20 coveted points and can continue calling themselves Thuringia's culinary

kings. New names on the list for Weimar are Andreas Scholz from 'Anastasia' and Sten Fischer from 'Alt-Weimar'. But the food in Jena is equally delicious: Christian Hempfe wields the wooden spoon at the 'Scala', producing taste sensations that are renowned well beyond the city limits. With 15 points and two Gault-Millau chef's hats, he is in third place in the Thuringian gastronomic ranking. *(gro)*

@ www.gaultmillau.de



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(V.i.S.d.P.), Theresa Dunkel,
Olivia Großmann, Christine Maas

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Contact:

Dr. Arnulf Wulff – Senior Vice President
Member of the Management Board
Dept. Investment, International Business
and Cluster Promotion

Mainzerhofstrasse 12,
99084 Erfurt, Germany

Phone: +49 (0) 361 5603-450

Fax: +49 (0) 361 5603-328

Email: invest@leg-thueringen.de

Internet: www.invest-in-thuringia.de