

# Thuringia Focus



## **i** Investment News

**Caravans to come from Gotha Westfalia**, a household name in motorhomes, is to open a production facility in Gotha, Thuringia. Now part of the French Rapido Group, Westfalia turned to the State Development Corporation of Thuringia for help finding a suitable site for producing its motorhome models Club Joker, Amundsen and Columbus. The site in the Gotha-Ost industrial estate gives Westfalia easy access to Germany's A4 highway. The company is investing more than €5 million in the project. Production was due to begin in March with an initial staff of 50. (*maa*)

### **Two hundred new jobs in Jena**

Insurance group **HUK-Coburg** recently established a new branch in Jena, where it will eventually take on 200 new employees in a leased building with approximately 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office space. The new call center will handle inquiries from customers throughout Germany. An HUK-Coburg spokesperson said the insurer wanted the branch to be not so far from the head office in Coburg and was pleased to be situated close to the tertiary institutes in Jena. The good public transport services in Jena were another plus factor. (*maa*)

In Jena – the Thuringian research hub – an institute for smart and big data will be built.  
Photo: Fotolia © ArtHDesign, Fotolia © NicoElNino

## Big Data in Jena

**The German Aerospace Center (Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt, DLR) is enriching Thuringia's research landscape by setting up a new research institute for smart and big data.**

The new center is proving a big success and is a further accolade for Thuringia's R&D infrastructure and excellent scientific competence. Its research will focus on working with extremely large amounts of data and the Internet of Things and Services, software technologies, IT security, virtual reality and artificial intelligence. "Jena's powerful research and development environment and exceptional start-up mindset make it the perfect location," says the state's Minister for Economic Affairs, Science and Digital Society, Wolfgang Tiefensee.

The rapid implementation of digitalization in business and research is accompanied by ever-greater amounts of data to be analyzed, intelligently evaluated and used. This is true in both aerospace and terrestrial observation and the control and networking of production processes with the advent of Industry 4.0. The activities of the DLR's new center will drive the process of digitalization in Thuringia by honing digital expertise, particularly amongst small and medium-sized businesses. The presence of the center will also benefit the state's up-and-coming aerospace industry, which includes companies like Jena-Optronik (Airbus Group), N3 (Rolls-Royce and Lufthansa Technik), KTN Kunststofftechnik Nobitz (Hutchinson Group) and HAITEC. (*gro/maa*)

 [www.dlr.de](mailto:www.dlr.de)

## **i** Investment News

### Attractive investment incentives

Thuringia supports investments in business in a proven way by means of investment subsidies as part of the Joint Scheme for Improving Regional Economic Structures (Gemeinschaftsaufgabe zur Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur, GRW). We are nearly half-way through the current subsidy period (2014 – 2020), and the subsidy rates will be adjusted from the beginning of 2018 in light of positive economic developments in recent years. Interested companies should therefore make the most of these subsidies before the end of the year, in order to benefit from higher subsidy rates. For small and medium-sized companies the rates are 35 and 25 percent, and for large companies it is 15 percent. Eligible are companies in the commercial sector, tourism and business services. Subsidies will decrease by 5 percent from 2018. The State Development Corporation of Thuringia is pleased to advise companies with their investment projects. (*maa*)

 [www.invest-in-thuringia.de](mailto:www.invest-in-thuringia.de)

## **i** Dates

› April 6, 2017

**Thuringia IT Exhibition (IT Leistungsschau Thüringen),**  
“The digital revolution”  
Jena

› April 24 – 28, 2017

**Hannover Messe,**  
“Get new technology first”  
Hanover

› May 15 – 18, 2017

**CMEF**  
**China Medical Equipment Fair,**  
Shanghai

› June 22, 2017

**Industry Day Automotive,**  
“Wind of change in automotive”  
Erfurt

## Networking in California

**Thuringian presence on the west coast – business people and scientists put best foot forward on business delegation trip and at SPIE Photonics West.**

35 companies from Thuringia were represented on Germany’s stand at the world’s largest trade fair for optics and photonics – more than from any other German state. “Our very visible presence there shows how strong our state is in the photonics sector,” says Thuringia’s Minister for Economic Affairs, Science and Digital Society, Wolfgang Tiefensee, who believes that the close links between industry and science are a key reason behind Thuringia’s success.

The 40-member delegation of business people and scientists accompanied by the Minister had similarly good results. The trip to California was a good opportunity for both established businesses and start-ups from Thuringia to make contacts. There has been pitches with potential investors, visits at companies like Facebook, Hewlett Packard and BMW Technology in Silicon Valley and a meeting with the German American Business Association (GABA). Besides establishing new and valuable business relations, some of the participants even



Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee in conversation with Asphericon’s managing director, Alexander Zschäbitz, at his stand. Photo: Lisa Johannssen-Koppitz

formalized arrangements to cooperate more closely; amongst this was Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, which is to cooperate with the University of California Berkeley. (*gro*)

## More industrial land developed in Thuringia

**The state of Thuringia is creating the best possible environment for companies and investors from all over the world who want to operate from the heart of Europe by expanding its two largest industrial estates, Kölleda-Kiebitzhöhe and Erfurter Kreuz.**

Already numbered among the largest industrial estates in Thuringia with a net area of 100 hectares, Kölleda-Kiebitzhöhe is to be extended by 57 hectares. The total costs for developing the expansion area amount to €40.5 million. The State Development Corporation of Thuringia (LEG) is the project developer and land owner. Nearly 4,000 jobs have been created by the 30 companies already occupying the estate, including MDC Power (Daimler), Funkwerk, Fromm Plastics and Logatec, and they are appreciating the handy location right next to the A71 highway in the center of Germany.

The biggest industrial estate in Thuringia, Erfurter Kreuz in Arnstadt/Amt Wachsenburg, is an extremely popular location for both German and international companies, as it is situated in the heart of Germany with very good transport logistics connections. It, too, is to be extended, with a fourth stage of construction in the planning, at a cost of €8 million. Once it is complete, the estate will have a further 65 hectares of contiguous industrial sites with state-of-the-art infrastructure available for companies. Once the commercial and industrial estates of Arnstadt-Nord, Thörey and Rudisleben are taken into account, the approximately 100 companies in the vicinity occupy 600 hectares and employ more than 8,000 people. In the heart of Europe, close to the A4 and A71 highways, this region is the place for businesses to be! (*maa/gro*)

## Aeropharm on the up and up



On the occasion of its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary the pharmaceutical manufacturer announces an expansion investment in Rudolstadt. Photo: Aeropharm GmbH

**Rudolstadt developer and producer of eyedrops and asthma medication Aeropharm is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary by expanding and doubling its staff. Its parent company, Swiss pharmaceuticals giant Novartis, is to invest more than €60 million in Aeropharm, which is part of Novartis' Sandoz Group.**

The upcoming extension of the successful factory in Rudolstadt – which is also the Sandoz Group's international Center of Excellence for respiratory and ophthalmological generic medications – will take the number of employees from the current 400 to 800 by 2020.

Pharmaceutical products have been produced in Rudolstadt for 140 years and under the Aeropharm name since 2002. The pharmaceutical sector's infrastructure there and the cluster of experts it has attracted, have helped the company grow successfully in the last 15 years. Its more than 120 scientists specialize in developing innovative highly effective medications for asthma and chronic lung diseases. More than 15 million units of Aeropharm medication are distributed each year in 50 countries. No doubt some more will be added to the list once the premises have been extended. *(gro)*

@ [www.sandoz.de/aeropharm](http://www.sandoz.de/aeropharm)

## On the trail of special fibers

**18 companies and three research institutes in Thuringia and Saxony have attracted €10 million in Federal Government funding by joining forces to develop tailored specialized fibers and photonics applications.**

Working together as the regional "Tailored Optical Fibers" (TOF) growth core, they will develop new types of fibers, which are in demand for applications as diverse as sensors in minimally invasive surgery and smart luminous surfaces in the automotive industry. This is the first time that manufacturers

of optical fibers and producers of components and systems have worked so closely together in a growth core of this type. The Thuringia- and Saxony-based companies contribute the expertise in the production, processing and application of special fibers that they have built up over many years to the consortium. The specialists' research, which brings with it around €5 million in funding and will be carried out over three years, will further enrich the production and technology scene. *(gro)*

@ [www.tailored-optical-fibers.net](http://www.tailored-optical-fibers.net)

### **i** Technology News

#### **Industry-Innovation-Dialogue**

"Get Connected" was the motto of the first Industry-Innovation-Dialogue (IID) at Ilmenau University of Technology. The Thuringian ClusterManagement (ThCM) team designed the series of events to significantly speed up and improve the exchange between researchers and companies in the areas of fundamental research and industrial applications. This conference offers research institutes a platform from which to present their expertise, while companies can communicate their specific needs for industry-focused research. This first Industry-Innovation-Dialogue concentrated on micro- and nanotechnology. The idea is for the IIDs to keep Thuringian companies competitive and up to speed with innovation and help them excel. *(maa)*

#### **New Research Project at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena**

Protection from "flying germs": the HyFly research project investigates pathogens in airports and aviation. Coordinated by FSU Jena (Friedrich Schiller University) as part of the InfectControl 2020 consortium, it is supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to the tune of €2.6 million. Materials science experts from Jena will investigate the role played by materials and their surfaces in the spread of infections. Ultraviolet radiation has been proposed as an alternative to chemical disinfection procedures, and HyFly will pay particular attention to the effectiveness of UV LEDs. In the course of the three-year cooperation, the partners from science and industry want to develop effective strategies for monitoring and handling the spread of pathogens in aviation. *(maa)*

## “Welkom” to Thuringia



The Dutch King and Queen in conversation with Thuringian entrepreneurs and students from the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. Photo: FSU Jena/Kasper

**King Willem-Alexander I and Queen Máxima of The Netherlands visited Thuringia in February for two days to search for cultural and historical traces in the state and to strengthen economic and scientific ties in the areas of optics, photonics and semiconductor technology.**

Accompanied by a high-ranking business delegation, the King and Queen had a busy itinerary comprising visits to Eisenach and Erfurt and an impressive business event in Jena. At the Beutenberg-Campus – Thuringia’s scientific “hot spot” – some 50 Dutch business people met more than 80 of their Thuringian counterparts at a “Pitch & Match” session, and more than 100 conver-

sations took place at the cooperation exchange held afterwards. The expertise of the two countries combined to create an integrated exhibition. The universities of Jena and Delft signed a memorandum of understanding for a joint course of studies. The following day, the members of the Dutch delegation took a closer look at Thuringia’s thriving industries: divided into interest-specific groups, they visited global players including Carl Zeiss Jena, Jena-Optronik, X-Fab Semiconductor Foundries and the CiS Research Center for Micro Sensors. They were all very interested in Thuringia, and the “Meet the Dutch” week certainly laid the foundation for future cooperation. (*gro/maa*)

## Showing off Apolda’s gardens

From 29 April to 24 September – 149 days – nature lovers and keen gardeners are invited to the 4<sup>th</sup> Thüringer Landesgartenschau, or horticultural show, at the historic Herressener Promenade in Apolda. “Blossoms and so much more” is the theme. Visitors will appreciate the fascinating display gardens, whose beds and forms follow the historic

knitting patterns that originated in the city known for its centuries-old knitting history and bell foundries, as well as a rich palette of cultural events including classical and pop music. There will also be a “climate pavilion” showcasing current and future green-tech projects from around the state. (*gro*)

### **i** Dates

› April 7 – May 1, 2017

**Thuringian Bach Weeks (Thüringer Bachwochen)**, Thuringia’s biggest music festival – venues throughout the state

› June 2 – 5, 2017

**Thuringian Castle Days (Thüringer Schlössertage)**, Enlightened! Old treasures and new faith on display in palaces and castles throughout Thuringia



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