

# Thuringia Focus



Official groundbreaking ceremony for the CATL factory at the Erfurter Kreuz Industrial Park, near Arnstadt. Photo: LEG Thüringen/Thomas Abé

## CATL begins construction on its battery cell factory in Thuringia

With this investment, Thuringia will become the most significant location in Europe for the production of battery cells: On October 18, 2019, the Chinese corporation Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Ltd. (CATL) began construction of its first production facility outside of China, to the south of Erfurt; the company intends to invest 1.8 billion euros in the medium term and create up to 2,000 jobs. Production will begin as early as in 2022 – initially with an annual capacity of 14 GWh. The decisive arguments for building the facility in Thuringia were its central location and the availability of skilled workers, research and renewable energy sources.

The official groundbreaking ceremony was attended by Matthias Zentgraf, President of CATL Europe, Xaiokou Ma, EU Operation General Manager, Thuringia's Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee, and LEG Chairman Andreas Krey. Matthias Zentgraf praised the benefits that the Thuringia location offers: While establishing its operations here, the company enjoyed full-service guidance from the Thuringian Ministry for Economic Affairs and LEG. The site that CATL is building on is a part of "Erfurter Kreuz" Industrial Park, which is owned and developed for investors by LEG. CATL has also formed a strategic partnership with the Free State of Thuringia for the research-intensive topics of factory

automation and battery technology – Thuringia is intended not just to be a place for production, but also for a great deal of research and development. Moreover, the industrial partners and customers are never too far away: Thuringia is at the center of Europe and all German automotive manufacturers can be reached from here within four hours by truck. CATL has already signed contracts to the value of millions of euros with various OEMs, such as BMW and Daimler. For Thuringia, this investment offers an opportunity to grow to become a leading industrial and research location for modern storage technologies and electro mobility in Germany and Europe. (hw)

Three questions for...  
**Matthias Zentgraf,**  
Regional President  
CATL Europe



Mr. Zentgraf, CATL has its sights set on Thuringia, and you are here often these days. Are you a fan of local delicacies like the Thuringian sausage and Köstritzer black beer?

(Laughs) I quickly realized that Thuringia not only has a lot to offer in terms of business and technology, it also has a lot to offer in terms of cuisine. The whole package is therefore perfect in terms of quality of life – cuisine, culture and nature, it's all great. And that's currently an important location factor if we want our staff to feel comfortable here in the long run. Thuringia combines tradition and progress, which is excellent.

Keyword "technological progress": Is it correct that the availability of renewable energies was also a decisive factor in selecting the location?

Absolutely. For us, a supply of green energy was an essential factor in choosing a location, and the proportion of renewable energy sources that make up Thuringia's public power supply has already reached almost 40 percent – no other location can keep up with that! And Thuringia's strong industrial tradition also helped to win you over?

Yes, like most places in Germany, there was a strong foundation here that has matured over the years. In light of this, we believe that the combination of this long-established industrial tradition and CATL's expertise in the field of innovative battery technology will be a driver for strong growth in the electromobility industry throughout the whole of Europe. The cooperation with the Ministry and LEG has been excellent so far, and we look forward to the work we will be doing together!

**i Invest Background**

**CATL – a global market leader in a rapidly growing industry sector**

With the arrival of Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Limited from the Chinese region of Ningde, a global market leader in the fields of electromobility and energy storage systems is setting up in Thuringia (see article on page 1). CATL is one of the key global players in the development and production of lithium ion batteries. The corporation's business areas encompass research, development, production and distribution of battery systems. According to SNE Research, CATL was a global leader in production in 2018 with an output of 21.31 GWh.

The corporation was founded in 2011 by Robin Zeng and has been headquartered in Ningde ever since. After a period of rapid growth, CATL now employs around 24,000 staff worldwide. In light of the drastically increasing demand for lithium ion batteries due to the upswing in the popularity of electromobility, the corporation's growth has been extremely dynamic; international automotive manufacturers recently awarded contracts worth millions to CATL. The corporation has subsidiaries in Beijing, Liyang (Jiangsu Province), Shanghai and Xining (Qinghai Province), as well as in Munich, Paris, Yokohama, Detroit and Vancouver. Furthermore, the corporation operates battery production facilities in the Chinese provinces of Fujian, Jiangsu and Qinghai. In June 2018, the company was listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange. With its investment in Thuringia, CATL is building its first production facility outside of China.



CATL already has a presence at the Erfurter Kreuz Industrial Park. Photo: LEG Thüringen/Thomas Abé

## Thuringia is the first choice for South African global player

**The South African dump truck manufacturer Bell Equipment intends to increase activities in Thuringia: Having operated an assembly facility in Eisenach since 2003, the global player recently invested 13 million euros in new buildings and production facilities here. This will make Thuringia a secondary production location for the whole corporation and the most important location in the northern hemisphere.**

The new building was opened on September 27 in the presence of Gary Bell, son of the founder and chairman of the supervisory board, Thuringia's Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee and others. Company representatives highlighted the benefits of the industrial site: the central location of West Thuringia in Germany in combination with the direct connection to the A4 highway and the availability of skilled workers. A successful partnership has been in place with the Ministry for

Economic Affairs and LEG for many years now. The new building with its 12,000 sqm of floor space will be added to the existing 6,000 sqm facility on the 10 hectares site. Around half of the additional space will be part of the new steel construction manufacturing of tipping troughs and vehicle hoods. With this expansion, Bell is securing its position as a global market leader – by now, the company is represented in more than 80 countries across all continents. (hw)



Grand opening in presence of Gary Bell (2nd from right), and Minister Tiefensee (center). Photo: ka68 presse+pr / Thorsten Block

## Foundation laid for the future of digital construction

**At the end of October, the EMC European Modular Construction GmbH laid the foundation for its new factory near Arnstadt. As such, the industrial park „Erfurter Kreuz“ is home to one of the most modern production facilities for precast concrete elements in the world.**

The company and its partners are investing a total of 48 million euros in the new facility. By July 2020, the site measuring around 75,000 m<sup>2</sup> will be home to a production hall spanning 16,000 m<sup>2</sup>, where 45 employees will manufacture precast elements for up to 2,000 residential units annually. EMC Managing Director Frank Preiss sees the future of construction in these kinds of precast construction elements. "After digitalization of planning processes for new buildings, the next logical step in the fields of architecture and planning would be to transfer the

existing data into a quick and flexible production process for individual construction elements." EMC's first pilot client is the CG Gruppe AG, Germany's leading property development company in the field of residential construction. Thanks to the proximity to the Institute for Applied Construction Research Weimar (IAB) and the field of "Digital Construction" at the Competence Center Business 4.0, we can make optimal use of the opportunities for synergy in the digitalization of the Thuringian construction industry. (gro)

## Nobel Prize for Jena-born researcher

This news received on October 9, 2019 was celebrated not only by the prizewinners, but also by the researchers at the CEEC Jena: John B. Goodenough was one of three scientists to receive the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2019, and was honored for his work on the development of lithium ion batteries. This was not only a great honor for the Jena-born researcher, it has also given the current research in the field of batteries an additional impetus: This research is currently being driven forward primarily at the Center for Energy and Environmental Chemistry (CEEC) Jena at the Friedrich Schiller University.

Now, the CEEC will have access to an additional 4,000 sqm of floor space with its new research building. CEEC Jena II will not only allow for special experiments on new types of energy storage materials that are developed at the Jena university – the associated center for application is also intended to bring the research findings to maturity for use in industry. The new CEEC Jena II will be home to various specialist and

synthesis laboratories, as well as measurement facilities, characterization and practical laboratories. Office space for researchers as well as storage facilities and workshops are also in the planning. The key focus topics for the research to be done at the newly constructed buildings will include macromolecular chemistry, material research, electrochemistry, physical chemistry, applied mineralogy and cosmochemistry, and the researchers will work on new innovative concepts for battery systems, solar cells and integrated components. (*gro*) [www.ceec.uni-jena.de](http://www.ceec.uni-jena.de)



As early as in 2018, Prof. Goodenough was awarded an honorary doctorate of the University in Jena. Prof. Dr. Walter Rosenthal (left), President of the University in Jena, and Prof. Alexander Brenning, Dean of Faculty of Chemistry and Earth Science. Photo: Jürgen Scheere/FSU Jena

## Innovative mobility has found its home in Thuringia

Robots have replaced some delivery drivers for bringing packages to people's homes, mobility stations allow for the use of bicycles, eScooters and cargo bikes, ride-sharing and car-sharing models are creating new sustainable transit opportunities in cities. With the help of IT platforms and Artificial Intelligence, data can be anonymously collected and shared to develop innovative solutions for mobility, logistics and energy – this may sound like blue-skies thinking, but in Thuringia's capital city of Erfurt, these kinds of solutions will be piloted in one of the city's districts.

“Bauhaus. MobilityLab” is the name of the project, which was a successful participant in the Federal Ministry's AI competition. A field test will be conducted over the next three years in the district of Brühl, home to the Erfurt Cathedral, where the innovative products and services will be developed and tested. With the help of residents, the applications will be tried out, and the users will have access to apps that help them to find efficient and sustainable mobility solutions. At the same time, the researchers

involved can analyze the anonymized data and continuously optimize the mobility and energy solutions developed. Partners in the initiative include the Fraunhofer Society IOSB-AST (Ilmenau), the Bauhaus-University Weimar and Innoman GmbH (Ilmenau). With a project volume of around 20 million euros, the “Bauhaus. MobilityLab” is intended to become a guiding light for the mobility and energy transition in Germany in the coming years. (*hw*)

### **i** Technology News

#### Jena will be home to new Leibniz Center

Success for the innovation center of Jena: The **Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF)** is supporting the establishment of a new **Leibniz Center for Photonics in Infection Research (LPI)**. The BMBF selected the LPI as part of a national roadmap process and thereby evidenced the uniqueness of Jena's research infrastructure in Europe and its ability to contribute to finding solutions to the challenges society is facing. The applicants were the **Leibniz Institute for Photonic Technology**, the **Hans Knöll Institute**, the **University Hospital** and the **Friedrich Schiller University** – all located in Jena. The project funding that was applied for reached a sum of 150 million euros.

The ability to diagnose and treat infectious diseases more quickly can save lives. As more and more pathogens develop a resistance to antibiotics, efficient and time-saving diagnostic and therapeutic tools are becoming more and more important. At the new LPI, light-based technology will form the basis for developing specific solutions that will benefit patients. It will also pool the expertise in the fields of optics, photonics and infection research that is present in Jena and is committed to openness and an interdisciplinary approach: In the future, it will be a place for natural scientists, technology developers, medical professionals and medical device manufacturers to collaborate. Industrial consumers will also benefit from LPI, as the new center is intended to form the basis for an increased technology transfer between researchers and businesses in this technological and industrial sector. (*hw*)



Design of the LPI building on the premises of the University Hospital in Jena. Photo: Leibniz-IPHT

## Listen up! Thuringia is the Home of Music 2020.

Music and Thuringia, they go together so well: Be it at the places that great composers worked, or at places that inspired famous musicians, you can see and hear music almost everywhere in Thuringia.

Johann Sebastian Bach, who was born in Eisenach, spent a large portion of his life in Thuringia. Even to this day, the musical legacy of Franz Liszt, who composed one of his key works in Weimar, lives on in the university named after him and with the Weimar Masterclasses. Richard Wagner drew inspiration for his Tannhäuser opera from the Wartburg, and Heinrich Schütz and Richard Strauss also worked in Thuringia. Next year, Thuringia will host a series of events, concerts and special exhibitions to showcase the musical diversity of the state. Worthwhile are visits to Bach's house in Eisenach with hourly renditions, to Liszt's house in Weimar, and the Reiter Wagner Villa in Eisenach. Fans of jazz are also catered for with

the "Lippmann und Rau" jazz archive in Eisenach. The numerous music festivals promise an experience in sound – from the Bach Festival to the Weimarer Musiksommer, right down to countless individual concerts, there is something for all tastes! (*gro*)

[www.thueringen-entdecken.de](http://www.thueringen-entdecken.de)



Thuringia is the Home of Music 2020 and is celebrating its musical side with numerous special exhibitions and concerts. Photo: TTG/Rasmus Schübel

## Thuringia popular among Chinese tourists

The Leuchtenburg Castle in Jena sets the tone. All of Thuringia hopes to imitate it and become even more attractive to tourists from China in the future with a suitable service concept. To this end, Thuringia is highlighting the many facets and experiences it has to offer. "The Chinese market offers the greatest potential in the Asian region for tourism in Germany, and the situation is similar in Thuringia" says Bärbel Grönegres, Managing Director of Thüringer Tourismus GmbH. In terms of the most important markets for international tourism, China is currently in 12th place for Germany and Thuringia. Chinese tourists visiting Thuringia are particularly attracted to the cities of Weimar, Jena and Eisenach. At a workshop at the Leuchtenburg Castle, tourism experts collaborated to devise a suitable strategy. Even Leuchtenburg Castle itself intends to make itself more attractive to Chinese tourists. The Leuchtenburg Foundation was the only tourist destination in Germany to receive the "CTW – Chinese Tourist Welcome Award" this year, which

is one of the most important quality seal for the Chinese tourism industry. The Leuchtenburg showed its worth with its unique exhibition "Porzellanwelten" [Porcelain Worlds], which pays tribute to Chinese culture and is made accessible to Chinese visitors with strategic service offerings. There is a Chinese website that provides information about the exhibition, as well as Chinese signage at the castle to guide visitors, and a Chinese audio guide was also made available recently. (*gro*)

[www.leuchtenburg.de](http://www.leuchtenburg.de)



Leuchtenburg Castle in Jena is popular among Chinese tourists. Photo: Stiftung Leuchtenburg/Kunze Leuchtenburg LB-Marketing

### **i** Dates

› CES - Consumer Electronics Show  
January 7 - 10, 2020 | Las Vegas

› Photonics West  
February 4 - 6, 2020 | San Francisco

› Exhibition: Aggroschaft - Marc Jung & The Gang  
on until January 26, 2020 | Kunsthalle Erfurt

› Bach-Festival Arnstadt  
March 19 - 22, 2020



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