

Thuringia Focus.



In the Rudolstadt-Schwarza industrial site, the Korean company SungEel HiTech and its partner Samsung C&T Deutschland GmbH will in future strengthen the Thuringian battery cluster with a state-of-the-art recycling plant. Photo: LEG Thüringen; Michael Mehner-Amm/fotoflug.de

New investment in the battery cluster: Two South Korean companies rely on Thuringia

A state-of-the-art battery recycling plant is being built in Rudolstadt. This expands Thuringia's spectrum as a future-oriented, value-adding location for battery technology in the heart of Europe by another facet.

Lithium-ion batteries are already being researched, developed, produced and used in many places in Thuringia, and thanks to a new company investment, aged and defective batteries will soon also be professionally recycled: the South Korean company SungEel HiTech together with its partner Samsung C&T Deutschland GmbH intends to invest around 60 million euros in the construction of the new plant and to create about 150 new jobs. A state-of-the-art processing park is being built on a plot of about 6 ha at the LEG Thüringen industrial site in Rudolstadt-Schwarza, which is scheduled to go into operation at the end of 2023. The park will be able to process and re-

cycle an initial 20,000 tons of process waste annually, as well as lithium-ion batteries from electric vehicles. After a successful start, up to 40,000 tons of batteries and waste per year can be processed in Rudolstadt in the medium term. The two companies want to contribute to the local economy and help reduce CO₂ emissions by supplying the fast-growing battery market in Germany with circular economy solutions.

Founded in 2000, South Korean battery recycling company SungEel HiTech specializes in recovering key materials from secondary batteries used in electric vehicles, smartphones and energy storage systems. There are currently nine plants in operation worldwide (Korea, Hungary, Malaysia, China and India) and further investments in plants will follow, first in Europe – including Germany – and then in the United States. (gro)

IBM subsidiary opens location in Erfurt

IBM iX is an international digital agency that specializes in helping companies to digitally reinvent their businesses. The company, which has around 50 studios worldwide, is now also operating in Erfurt. The digital agency set up shop at the state's capital with a new studio with help from the State Development Corporation of Thuringia (LEG) and will initially create 20 new jobs by the end of this year. IBM iX predicts that its headcount will reach 100 by the end of 2024. "LEG is driving digitalization and economic development on behalf of the state government. We are pleased to support IBM iX with our wide-ranging set of skills and a full-service package ranging from successfully finding a location to networking with local partners and universities to helping to recruit skilled workers," stated LEG Managing Director Andreas Krey on the investment of IBM iX in Thuringia. (gro)

"We see huge potential in the Erfurt area. The quality of the education and university landscape is very good, as are the traffic connections to our other locations. In addition, the region offers a high quality of life and a wide range of leisure activities. This makes it a very attractive working environment for talented people."

Jan Gessenhardt, Managing Director IBM iX Berlin

Record year for Thuringia's foreign trade

Thuringia's foreign trade has recovered from the pandemic slump of 2020. It even set new records: almost 17 billion euros in exports and just under 13.7 billion euros in imports. These results were announced by the Minister of Economics, Wolfgang Tiefensee, to mark the 14th Thuringia Foreign Trade Day, which took place at the end of June in Oberhof in southern Thuringia, informed around 140 entrepreneurs about new ways of doing business internationally and encouraged them to compare notes. In the future, Tiefensee added, Thuringia's foreign trade policy will focus not only on new sales markets, but also on importing primary products and materials for the Thuringian economy. Due to the current supply chain problems, Thuringian companies were pushing to expand and stabilize international supplier relationships. With this in mind, he said, the state will be supporting trips to establish supplier cooperations in the future; the first one will go to Italy in November. (hw)

Another award for innovative company

SIOS Meßtechnik GmbH from Ilmenau has convinced for the second time in the 29th round of the competition „TOP 100 Innovators“ and received the seal for its excellent innovation management. The award was conferred to the company by Ranga Yogeshwar. According to Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Franke, scientific director of TOP 100, only the most innovative medium-sized companies receive this award because they are excellently equipped for future challenges. Founded in 1991 in Ilmenau, the company develops and manufactures laser interferometric and other precision measuring devices. They are used, among others, in the automotive industry for measuring body parts and engines or for non-contact and high-resolution vibration measurement in the production of miniature sensors for cell phones, etc. According to its own information, SIOS has the world's most accurate positioning system with its nanopositioning and nanometrology machine NMM, making it the world market leader. In addition to the inventiveness of the employees, an important basis for the success is the close cooperation with the Ilmenau University of Technology and other research institutions. (maa)

Successful Thuringian microchip companies rely on the Erfurt location

Thuringia and its neighbor, Saxony, are semiconductor hubs: Decades of tradition go hand in hand with cutting-edge innovation in both states. Experts have long spoken of the „Silicon Valley of Central Germany“ – and it includes Thuringia's state capital of Erfurt. Semiconductor companies are making positive headlines in the heart of Thuringia.

For example, Belgian microchip manufacturer Melexis is investing five million euros in its Thuringian site. Seven new high-volume test lines and two automated packaging machines will be commissioned before the end of this

year. Managing Director Jessica Völlger describes the expansion as a "clear commitment to Erfurt". In the past five years, the Erfurt site's headcount has increased from 220 to 250.

Melexis develops, tests and supplies integrated circuits but does not produce them itself. Chips are produced at the neighboring X-Fab Semiconductor Foundry, which invested more than one million euros to expand its cleanroom capacity in 2021. X-Fab has been successfully doing business in Erfurt for 30 years; it is celebrating its anniversary this year. (hw)

Strong support for companies doing business abroad



A visit to the British production facility of the MINI at BMW Oxford was also on the agenda of the Economics Minister's trip to Great Britain. Photo: Sergey Stefanovich

After a successful first half-year with numerous trade events and trips to countries such as the UK and Romania, our Thuringia International team is looking ahead to a packed schedule in the second half of the year. Various delegation trips, events and trade fairs will give companies guidance and momentum for their international businesses.

The first delegation trip will go to **India** in late summer (September 18 – 24) and be headed by Thuringia's Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee. A trip led by Thuringia's Prime Minister Bodo Ramelow, acting in his capacity as President of the Bundesrat, will go to **Chile** followed directly by a business trip to **Uruguay** (October 8 – 14) to deepen economic ties to the Latin American

countries. In addition, business trips to **Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan** (September 25 – October 2) and **Vietnam** (November 26 – December 3) – including participation in the „Medipharm Expo“ trade fair in Hanoi – are on the agenda.

Attendance of the following international trade fairs will be supported by the Thuringia International team: Micronora (Besançon, France), Europe's leading trade fair for micro- and nanotechnology, Africa Health/ MEDLAB Africa (Johannesburg, South Africa), Precision Fair (Den Bosch, Netherlands) and Smart City Expo World Congress (Barcelona, Spain). For more information, please visit [www.thuringen-international.de/en\(gro/maa](http://www.thuringen-international.de/en(gro/maa)

World market leader in Thuringia: asphericon GmbH



The global optical industry got its start in 19th century in Jena thanks to the inventions of Carl Zeiss, Ernst Abbe and Otto Schott. To this day, the university town in eastern Thuringia is home to world market leaders in this high-tech sector. One of them is asphericon GmbH. It is the technology leader for aspherical lenses and systems, which are significantly more precise and economical than competing optical products. The company is constantly growing and recently laid the foundation stone for a new building in Jena.

Despite last year's pandemic, the company reports that it was able to stay on course with growth exceeding 50 percent. It is now constructing a four-story building with 1,200 m² of new usable space, tripling the area it previously had. asphericon's administrative and development departments will work here in the future. This roughly 15 million euro investment is focused in no small measure on sustainability: The building will be built by Ed. Züblin AG using the MOLENO serial and modular timber hybrid construction system. (hw)



Optical products of asphericon GmbH, whose managing directors Sven R. Kiontke and Alexander W. Zschäbitz were part of the founding team in 2001. Today, the company employs about 200 people at 3 locations. Photo: asphericon GmbH

Technology/Innovation

Thuringian institute presents bio-adhesive

The Thuringian Institute for Textile and Plastics Research (TITK) recently unveiled a bio-adhesive that is both innovative and sustainable. Producing the hotmelt adhesive releases fewer greenhouse gases and consumes no fossil raw materials. The researchers are producing a bio-based, biodegradable adhesive based on polylactic acid. According to the institute in Rudolstadt in eastern Thuringia, polylactic acid is biocompatible, compostable under industrial conditions and can replace conventional petroleum-based bulk plastics. Bio-resins, plasticizers and waxes are added in the manufacturing process; that puts the bio-based content of the adhesive, known as Caremelt, at as much as 95 percent. The approximately 200 employees of the largest business-related research institute in Thuringia conduct both preliminary and applied research in the industry-related field. Chemists, process and textile engineers work hand in hand to implement research results quickly and market-oriented into new processes and technologies together with partners and clients. The focus is on native polymers and chemical research, textile and materials research, plastics research and functional polymer systems. (hw)

Thuringia invests heavily in energy storage research

Tomorrow's battery will come from Jena: Two extensions to the Center for Energy and Environmental Chemistry (CEEC) are being built on campus at Friedrich Schiller University. Researchers will develop products such as new energy storage materials in a space measuring 4,000 m², including laboratories and offices, starting in 2023/24. Upon completion, which is planned for next year, it should be possible to scale up the lab results to commercial production and start manufacturing relatively large quantities of the desired products on site.

"Energy storage is a key technology of the 21st century," said Thuringia's Science Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee when he attended the topping-out ceremony for the buildings in June together with Infrastructure Minister Susanna Karawanskij. For the energy transition to succeed, it will need efficient storage facilities, he noted; the Ukraine crisis imbued this issue with

even more urgency. The total cost of the construction project is just over 54 million euros and is financed by the federal and state governments as well as the Ernst Abbe and Carl Zeiss Foundations. Around 13 million euros are being co-financed by

European Union funds under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In addition to storage technologies, CEEC Jena also develops solutions for photovoltaics and hydrogen technology, among other things. (hw)



Mayor Thomas Nitzsche, University President Walter Rosenthal, CEEC Director Ulrich S. Schubert, Science Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee, Infrastructure Minister Susanna Karawanskij and architect Hubert Juranek (from left) during the topping-out ceremony for the CEEC Jena extension buildings. Photo: Jens Meyer (Universität Jena)

Weimar: Conservatory actively cultivates Franz Liszt's legacy

Culture has a long tradition in Thuringia – and remains alive in many places. Weimar is a prime example: It was home not only to literary heavyweights such as Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller but also to composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach and Franz Liszt. It was 150 years ago that Liszt helped to found an educational institution for musicians – which recently celebrated its anniversary as the "University of Music Franz Liszt".

The renowned artists' academy was once Germany's first orchestral school.

It still serves its mission of training professional musicians at the highest international level. It not only educates but also organizes a wide variety of events – including more than 300 concerts and performances a year, the Weimar Master Classes with their 60-year tradition and four international competitions for piano, violin and chamber music. "With its wide-ranging events, the University of Music Franz Liszt is an important part of the arts and culture scene in Thuringia," said Minister President Bodo Ramelow at the anniversary celebration in Weimar at the end of June. (hw)



University of Music FRANZ LISZT Weimar. Photo: adobe stock/pure-life-picture

Anniversary retrospective shows: LEG is a strong partner for companies

1,700 new investments and expansions supported, over 3,000 hectares of industrial land developed, almost 50 different trade fair appearances organized in and outside Germany – these are just a few excerpts from LEG's impressive 30-year retrospective. Established in 1992 as a wholly owned subsidiary of the State of Thuringia, LEG provides economic development and real estate management services.

The companies supported by LEG have invested around EUR 13.1 billion, creating or protecting some 82,000 jobs. A large number of global corporations

have been successfully recruited to set up business in Thuringia, including Chinese global market leader for battery cell production Contemporary Amperex Technology Ltd. (CATL), Rolls-Royce/Lufthansa Technik joint venture N3 Engine Overhaul Services and Daimler subsidiary MDC Power GmbH. To mark its 30th anniversary, LEG has expanded its website and online services for companies and assembled a wealth of interesting information on its anniversary website. (hw)

www.leg-thueringen.de/en
www.leg-thueringen.de/30

Dates

September 20 – 25
IAA Transportation, Hanover

September 27 – 30
Micronora, Besançon/France

October 4 – 6
Expo Real, Munich

October 11/12
Deutscher Maschinenbau-Gipfel, Berlin

November 8 - 10
AIX - Automotive Interior Expo, Stuttgart

November 14 – 21
Medica, Düsseldorf

November 15 – 18
Semicon Europa/electronics, Munich

At our trade fair booths, we will be happy to advise you on all aspects of "Investing in Thuringia".

October 1 – 3
"Germany as guest in Thuringia"
German Unity Day in Erfurt (official ceremony of the federal government and civic festival)



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