

Thuringia Focus.



Matthias Zentgraf (Regional President Europe of CATL), Anja Siegesmund (Environmental Minister) and Mario Suckert (President of TLUBN) at the ceremonial handover of the operating license. Photo: CATL/ Paul-Philipp Braun

CATL gets green light – big investment picks up steam

The first construction stage of Contemporary Amperex Technology's (CATL) factory in Thuringia has received its operating permit: Thuringian Environmental Minister Anja Siegesmund presented CATL Regional President Europe Matthias Zentgraf with the permit notice as the state's Economics Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee looked on. Zentgraf announced plans to start production in the second half of the year and hire the first 1,500 employees by the end of the year.

A location project that has attracted attention all over Europe is thus making important progress: Construction began at the end of 2019 after CATL, the China-based global market leader for the production of battery cells for electric vehicles, picked Thuringia as the site of the first factory that it decided to build outside China. The project will make Thuringia one of the largest hubs for battery cell

production, development and research. CATL is investing a total of 1.8 billion euros at the Erfurter Kreuz industrial park and creating up to 2,000 jobs. The first construction stage that just received its operating permit will achieve a capacity of eight gigawatt-hours. As Zentgraf explained, that represents the annual battery capacity for around 120,000 electric cars. CATL has reported that it will be supplying battery cells to all major German car-makers. 500 employees already work for CATL; workers are currently finishing the interior of the roughly half-kilometer long new building. LEG Managing Director Andreas Krey and LEG Department Head Dr. Arnulf Wulff attended the presentation ceremony as well – LEG has been guiding CATL through every step of the project process and beyond. It also develops and markets the Erfurter Kreuz industrial park where CATL acquired its land. (hw)

Munich-based software developer picks Erfurt

It's no secret that Thuringia's economic players have extensive but close-knit networks - and that's a big locational advantage. For example, automotive thüringen (at), a cluster organization, put LEG in touch with **jambit GmbH**, who had contacted at for help with its site search. LEG was able to offer jambit a comprehensive investor service package, and the Munich-based team visited Thuringia within one week of the initial contact. The company's most pressing concerns were finding a location and the availability of skilled workers. Attractive office space in Erfurt was visited and the Thuringian Agency for Skilled Personnel Marketing - ThAFF advised comprehensively on staff recruitment. LEG was also able to assist the company with important contacts to universities and colleges. After only three months of evaluation, the company has decided to expand to Erfurt; it will create up to 50 jobs. "LEG's service was a huge source of assistance for us and helped us make our siting decision," confirmed owner and CEO Markus Hartinger. Established in 1999, jambit GmbH provides software services from the backend to the frontend, from prototyping to serial development. Located in five offices in Munich, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Frankfurt and Yerevan (Armenia), it develops custom software solutions and accelerates digital transformation projects. (maa)

Thuringian-engineered medical devices – Swiss company expands in Stadtroda

Thuringia is fertile ground for business growth: The specialist company in medical technologies, Mathys Orthopädie, has decided to concentrate its production operations at one location in the Bollberg industrial district in Stadtroda near Jena, is investing more than 50 million euros in the expansion and creating up to 120 new jobs in the process. The company, which is part of Swiss-based Mathys AG Bettlach, is increasing its production capacity and will have space for future expansions at its new location. Construction is scheduled to begin in the third quarter of 2022; production is slated to start in early 2024.

“LEG has provided Mathys with extensive assistance in finding and assessing locations and advised it on government incentives,” explained LEG Managing

Director Andreas Krey. “We are thrilled with the expansion in Stadtroda. The investment shows that Thuringia is an attractive site for growing companies.” LEG presented many of the advantages of the Eastern Thuringian location in its discussions. “The industrial district offers easy access to the junction of the A4 and A9 highways, putting Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt and Dresden within close reach,” noted Dr. Arnulf Wulff, LEG Department Head. “Mathys also benefits from the extensive capabilities in ceramic production and precision machining seen throughout the Jena, Hermsdorf and Gera region.”

Mathys AG Bettlach, the Swiss parent company, employs around 540 employees worldwide and generated around 125 million Swiss francs in revenue in 2020, according to its own information. Mathys

AG has been part of Enovis™, a listed US company, since mid-2021. The Thuringian operation focuses on producing shoulder, hip and knee prosthetics. The new 4.5 hectare site in Stadtroda will be home to a new 5,000 m² metal shop, a 2,900 m² ceramic production facility and a modern office building. (hw)



Visualization of the planned production and office building. Picture: Mathys

Desay Automotive: Rapid growth in Weimar

Desay Automotive Europe GmbH is expanding rapidly in central Thuringia: The Chinese group recently officially opened a new production and logistics center at its new location at Schwanseestraße 143 in Weimar. At the new site about 40 people will produce radios, displays and other infotainment solutions for the vehicles of the future.

A Hungarian factory used to assemble, test, store and ship the components. Desay’s management decided to relocate these activities to Weimar, a city where

Desay already has a large operation: In the industrial area in Weimar-Legefeld the company has been operating a development center and prototype laboratory where manufacturers have been having their “development mules” (i.e. pre-series vehicles) equipped and tested. This new site will also be home to a state-of-the-art 3D antenna measurement chamber and a laboratory and office building. So, the company still has big plans in Thuringia, as a result of which the number of employees will increase to about 300 until 2025.(hw)



At the official inauguration, the ribbon was symbolically cut (from left to right): Site Manager Lukas Seel and Managing Director Dr. Michael Weber, both Desay SV Automotive Europe, Peter Kleine, Lord Mayor of Weimar. Photo: Desay Automotive Europe GmbH

Japanese Kuroda Group invests in a new plant



At the topping out ceremony of the new building: Wilm Schwarzpaul, Managing Partner of EcoPARKS, project developer, and Dr. Olaf Pösse, CEO of Jenaer Gewindetechnik (r.). Photo: LEG Thüringen

Sending out a clear signal for Thuringia: With the state’s support, Jenaer Gewindetechnik GmbH is investing nine million euros in a new facility and in new manufacturing technology in the city of Jena.

This move will enable the specialist for high-precision ball screws and gears, which is part of the Japan-based Kuroda Group, to continue growing and modernizing: The company’s current building is too old to continue meeting the demands of modern, energy-efficient production. “Given their specialized products, Thuringia’s mid-market companies need to constantly evolve to remain competitive. By investing

in a new plant, Jenaer Gewindetechnik is not only modernizing its production; it is also setting itself up to keep up with constantly growing demand,” said Wolfgang Tiefensee, Thuringia’s Minister for Economic Affairs, whose office has provided one million euros in investment incentives. This will also create modern workplaces for the currently about 100 employees.

The company has been manufacturing ball screws since 1970. These devices are primarily used in the mechanical engineering, semiconductor, optical, medical device and aerospace sectors. (gro)

Global market leader in Thuringia: Somag AG Jena



One cradle of advanced technology is Jena, where Carl Zeiss, Ernst Abbe and Otto Schott once founded modern optics. Today, the university town is home to numerous global market leaders. One of them, Somag AG Jena, develops and manufactures stabilization platforms for aerial cameras that can be used to capture detailed geodata – even from fast boats or aircraft. The company recently announced plans to build a new production and office building in Jena.

Somag AG, whose customers include Google Maps, has been very successful despite the coronavirus pandemic. The sophisticated mechanics underlying the Jena-built platforms keep camera movement as smooth as possible, enabling precise data collection and complex images taken from the air and water. Sales of the products are growing worldwide.

And that brought this Thuringia-based global market leader up against the limits of its available space. The remedy: a new facility costing around three million euros. It comes with several advantages: The company is optimizing its processes by making workstations task-specific, expanding the testing capacity of its own equipment, and assembling all of its growing workforce under one roof. (hw)



Virtual view of the new Somag AG building. Picture: Somag AG

Jena precision optics in space

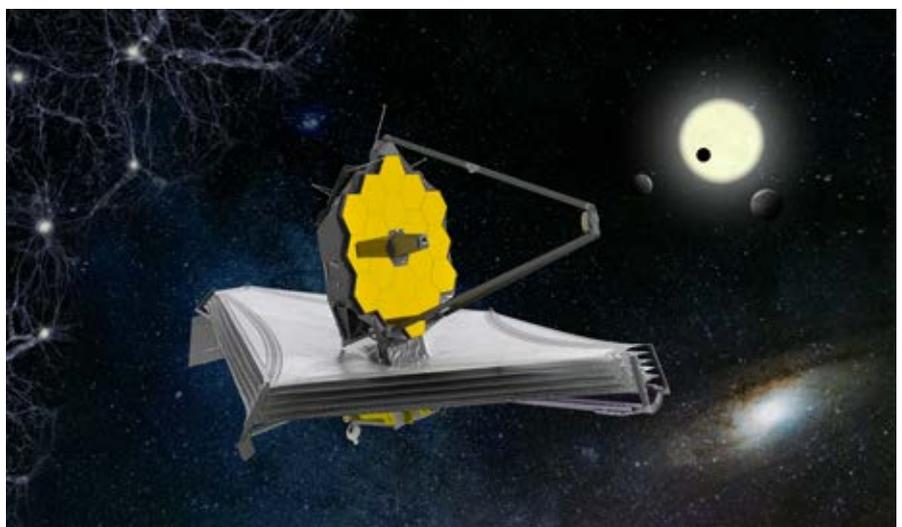
Does outer space hold alien life forms or something never before seen? The James Webb Space Telescope is expected to provide new insights into the universe, thanks in part to high-precision mirrors from the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering (IOF) in Jena.

Researchers were amazed by the first test image, which the telescope beamed down to Earth in March following its December launch: After the 18 mirror segments were correctly aligned, the new space telescope – considered the successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, which has been stationed in space since 1990 – sent back the image of a spiky star surrounded by many previously invisible galaxies.

It caused a sensation and raises hopes of more spectacular images and, with them, answers to how the universe arose and whether alien life forms or habitable planets exist in space.

The telescope carries four scientific instruments. One of them, the Mid InfraRed Instrument (MIRI), features mirrors manufactured at Fraunhofer IOF in Jena. These ultra-precise mirrors were diamond-tur-

ned and coated there, too. Diamond turning is a powerful manufacturing process for producing planar and curved optical surfaces. However, MIRI is not the only instrument that Jena experts helped get ready for the mission. They were also involved in building the Near Infrared Spectrograph (NIRSpec). NIRSpec is the telescope's "super-eye" and can analyze light at wavelengths of 0.7 to 5 micrometers. (gro)



Visualization of the James Webb Space Telescope, which is designed to look deeper into space than any other space observatory before. Picture: ©ESA/ATG medialab/Fraunhofer IOF

Four Thuringian firms in top 50

A total of four innovative Thuringian companies have made it into the 2021 renowned and annually eagerly awaited ranking of Passion4Business Germany's TOP 50 start-ups since 2016. Pramomolecular, Tediro, Polytives and Robust AO, Thuringia's award winners, represent a broad spectrum ranging from biotechnology to Industry 4.0 and automation applications to intelligent solutions in medical technology and plastics innovation.

The Pramomolecular team from Gera and Berlin ranked fifth with a unique approach to muting cancer proteins in the pancreas and lungs. Robust AO from Jena took 35th place with its idea of increasing resource efficiency by industrially applying adaptive optics for high-power lasers. The start-up was spun off from the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering (IOF) and has already received the ThEx Award. Tediro came in 41st with its intelligent mobile robots, which can be used primarily in medical diagnostics and treatment in the future and can thus effectively support medical personnel and reduce their workloads. Polytives, a start-up founded in Jena in 2020, develops products and solutions to optimize plastics and support recycling. This Thuringian company landed in 44th place in the ranking. (gro)



New hotel and conference facilities in Erfurt – must-see venues!

Erfurt is an attractive destination for tourists and conference guests. Thuringia's capital not only boasts impressive tourist attractions, including a historic old town and Martin Luther sites, but is also easy to access, being located in the heart of Germany and Europe. And services for guests and visitors are growing every day.

Announced for June is the opening of the new Légère Hotel directly at the Erfurt trade fair. Once again, an attractive hotel investment has been successfully brought to Thuringia: Fibona GmbH from Wiesbaden is investing 18.3 million euros in the new building. The hotel will feature 150

rooms, a restaurant, a bar, four conference rooms, a fitness center and a sauna.

Also in June, the COMCENTER Brühl, the event and conference location of LEG Thüringen at the Erfurt Cathedral, will celebrate its re-opening: After a major renovation, it now has modular expandable meeting and conference rooms and a spacious atrium that can accommodate up to 180 guests. All rooms are equipped with state-of-the-art conference technology. It supports various event formats, including hybrid events, live streaming and video conferencing.

www.comcenter-bruehl.de

Health is a top priority in Thuringia

Thuringia has always appealed to the executives and professionals who live and work here and care about their health and quality of life: Nothing demonstrates this better than two very different projects in the south and east of the state.

In the southern Thuringian town of Maserberg, located in the charming Thuringian Forest, the state is funding the conversion of a thermal spa into a forest bathhouse. The building will take up the “forest” theme in many ways – in its lighting, acoustics, and natural materials such as wood and stones. With at-

tractive amenities such as a panorama sauna, forest spa, mountain meadow blossom pool and a new restaurant, the bathhouse will allow forest bathers to indulge all their senses starting in 2023.

Health is also the focus of Waldkliniken Eisenberg in East Thuringia, a new kind of hospital created by Managing Director David-Ruben Thies. A wide range of services offered at the facility are designed to provide an atmosphere and working conditions that make patients and staff feel as comfortable as possible. Thies calls his new hospital a “patient hotel” – the name says it all! (hw)



The hospital's new bed house in Eisenberg designed by the famous architect Matteo Thun. Photo: HGEsch

 **Thuringia digital**



Born in Thuringia!

Over 90,000 businesses, most of them small and medium-sized enterprises, value Thuringia as a place to innovate, do business and develop technology. Deeply rooted in the country and its people, many have taken the bold step of translating new business ideas into corporate success. They have conquered countless markets from Thuringia and are successful and sought after worldwide. We show how we and Thuringia support these enterprises on our new website:

www.invest-in-thuringia.de/en/news/born-in-thuringia/



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