

Thuringia Focus.



Colette Boos-John (Thuringian Minister for Economics), Mario Voigt (Thuringian Minister President, 4th from left), Andreas Pecher (CEO of the ZEISS Group, 3rd from left) and other representatives from business and administration on the roof of the high-tech campus. Photo: © ZEISS

Major ZEISS investment in Jena reaches milestone

A milestone has been reached in a project with a total investment volume of half a billion euros: The ZEISS Group recently celebrated the topping-out ceremony for the new headquarters at its founding site in Jena. Approximately 200 guests, including Mario Voigt, the Ministerpresident of Thuringia, celebrated the completion of this important construction phase in and around the finished shell.

It is one of the Group's largest investment projects worldwide: A new, ultra-modern high-tech Zeiss campus has been taking shape at a site covering roughly eight hectares in Jena's center since 2019. Currently, around 80 different trades with 500 to 600 employees are working on the gigantic construction site. The next step will be the interior finishing and installation of building equipment in the building complex. Designed by Nething, a Neu-Ulm-based architectural firm, the complex is scheduled for completion at the end of 2026 and will have approximately 118,000 square meters of usable space. All of ZEISS's development units in Jena and most local production and administration departments

will then be consolidated at Jena's West Train Station site, which was previously used by the high-tech group Schott. The Group anticipates that department consolidation will unlock greater synergies in its operating processes and make it easier to communicate with suppliers and partners. In two years' time, around 2,000 of the 3,500 ZEISS employees who work in Jena will be conducting research and developing new products at the new company headquarters. Most of them are relocating from old sites that are also located in Jena; these vacated sites will be developed and marketed by LEG, the State Development Corporation of Thuringia in its capacity as an economic development agency.

Jena is the second largest ZEISS location in the world; the company got its start in this eastern Thuringian city. This was where mechanic Carl Zeiss founded the company in the 19th century. The new ZEISS high-tech campus will further strengthen Jena's reputation and importance as a storied yet forward-looking center for investment and high-tech industries.

News

Erfurt microelectronics site welcomes new member from Japan

Kyocera Fineceramics Europe GmbH – a subsidiary of Japan's Kyocera Group – is moving into a new technology and production site in Erfurt, Germany. The new facility expands the company's technological capabilities in multi-wire sawing with modern systems for high-precision cutting of hard, brittle materials. This move will expand application expertise in target markets such as semiconductor manufacturing and testing and enable the development and production of advanced ceramic products. Erfurt will also be the new home of Kyocera's environmental technology division, which is currently based in Mannheim. The new facility in Erfurt-Südost provides employees with more space for efficient development, assembly and testing while ensuring faster delivery of products to customers. In the future, the company will also provide contract machining of customer materials. Armin Kayser, Managing Director of Kyocera Fineceramics Europe GmbH: "We are confident that the new site will not only enhance our service portfolio but also help us to continue expanding our market presence, particularly in semiconductor applications, and offer our customers even better solutions." The decision to locate the facility in Erfurt was made due to the well-equipped new production areas, which offer additional potential for expansion.

Thuringia showcases itself at the Hannover Messe trade show

Thuringia once again had a presence at one of the world's largest industrial trade shows with a joint stand organized by LEG Thüringen. However, this was the first time that Thuringia showcased itself as a center of industry and commerce through presentations given at several events during the trade show, whether before Japanese or Chinese companies or before opinion leaders generally interested in the state. The first exhibition definitely marked a successful start to the trade show year 2025 in Germany. The joint stand at the DMEA (Europe's leading event for digital health) in Berlin later in April also gave interested Thuringian companies a hassle-free platform for contacting customers. Internationally renowned trade shows with different industry focuses also offer the opportunity to benefit from joint trade show appearances, such as: Arab Health in Dubai, OPIE in Yokohama, Kazakhstan Machinery Fair in Astana. There are still a few places available at some of the joint stands:



Thuringia promotes innovation and partnership in the USA

From May 18 to 24, 2025, Minister President Mario Voigt and Minister of Economic Affairs Colette Boos-John traveled to the US East Coast with a delegation from business and science. Stops included Washington, New York and Boston - centers for smart manufacturing, biotechnology and digital technologies. The aim was to present Thuringia as a strong innovation partner, establish new collaborations, facilitate access to the US market and also attract investors. In view of growing uncertainties due to US tariffs, the state government also wanted to strengthen the transatlantic dialog. The USA is Thuringia's most important export market with a trade volume of around 2.8 billion euros. Over 300 Thuringian companies maintain business relations with the USA. This first trip under the leadership of Minister President Voigt and Economics Minister Boos-John was intended to send a signal for international markets and joint future technologies.

Topping-out ceremony at N3: Milestone for growth and innovation

N3 Engine Overhaul Services in Arnstadt sends out a strong signal for Thuringia as a business location with the topping-out ceremony for the extension building. The joint venture between Lufthansa Technik and Rolls-Royce is investing 150 million euros in expanding its capacity for overhauling Rolls-Royce engines from the Trent series.

This involves engines from more than 50 international airlines. The new factory building and a modern cleaning facility for engine parts are scheduled to go into operation by the end of 2025 - with ongoing operations and growing demand. A new logistics center with a high-bay warehouse and an expanded office and canteen concept will be built at the same time. A total

of 40 new machines will be installed and existing systems relocated. The aim is to increase the number of overhauled engines by a further 20% to 250 engines per year compared to the record year of 2024. N3 currently employs around 1,100 people and is committed to continuous growth - including through a successful lateral hiring program. Up to 200 new positions are to be filled in 2025. Managing Director Stefan Landes emphasizes: "This project is only possible thanks to the extraordinary commitment of our entire team." N3 was the first company that LEG established on its newly developed "Erfurter Kreuz" industrial estate in 2004. Since then, a large number of globally operating companies have located there.



Thuringian Economics Minister Colette Boos-John (3rd from right) on a tour with the Chairman and CEO of the Japanese Nissha Group, Junya Suzuki, the CEO of Nissha Advanced Technologies Europe Ralf Urban and other representatives from business and politics. Photo: © Nissha

Nissha doubles production area in Waltershausen

With its grand opening in April of this year, Nissha Advanced Technologies Europe GmbH sent out a strong signal for the future of Thuringia as an automotive business site: The new facility at the Waltershausen location doubles the company's production area. The Nissha Group is investing more than 20 million euros in the expansion, supported by around 1.8 million euros in funding from the Joint Scheme for Improving the Regional Economic Structure. The new production facility will be used to manufacture highly functional films for electric vehicle exteriors. These innovative components integrate electrical wiring, heating elements, sensors, and connections - making vehicles not only smarter, but also more efficient. "This investment is

a ray of hope for the entire auto parts industry in Thuringia," said Colette Boos-John, Minister for Economic Affairs, at the opening ceremony. Waltershausen's mayor Leon Graupner and representatives of the Erfurt Chamber of Industry and Commerce and LEG Thüringen also praised the company's commitment. Nissha Advanced Technologies Europe GmbH, which started out as Schuster Kunststofftechnik GmbH, now employs more than 230 people. It develops and manufactures plastic parts using multi-component injection molding and IML technology, partly under clean room conditions. The new facility not only strengthens Nissha's market position but also secures Thuringia's position as an excellent place to do business.

Decarbonization with electricity – a flagship project from Thuringia

Heinz Glas GmbH has taken a bold step towards making industrial production climate-neutral: The last gas-fired glass melting furnace at the storied Piesau site (Thuringia) was shut down in 2024 – and replaced by an all-electric system powered by green electricity.

This enables the company to reduce its CO₂ emissions at the site by up to 6,250 tons per year. The new melting furnace is the centerpiece of a major transformation project funded by around 15 million euros from the former German Federal Ministry

for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. Not only is it fully electric, but it can also be controlled flexibly – a first in the glass industry. This makes it possible to better match production to demand and vary the proportion of recycled shards depending on the color of the glass. CEO Carletta Heinz spoke of a “historic milestone”: “We are combining our 400-year tradition of glassmaking with a sustainable future.” The Group is investing around 60 million euros in decarbonization – expressing a clear commitment to Thuringia and its responsibility for future generations.



This is what it looks like from above, the new electric glass melting tank at the glass production plant in Piesau. Photo: © M. Bauer, HEINZ-GLAS

Sensors from Jena on their way to the moon

A success for Thuringian research: High-precision sensors from the Jena-based Leibniz Institute for Photonic Technologies (Leibniz IPHT) are part of the current IM-2 lunar mission, which was launched at the end of February 2025 to reach the south pole of the moon.

The sensors are installed in the Lunar RA-Diometer (LRAD), which measures extreme temperatures on the lunar surface in search of water ice, a potential resource for future space missions. The mission is being carried out by Intuitive Machines on behalf of NASA as part of the Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) program.

One of the highlights: The μ Nova Hopper mini lander will jump into a crater that never sees the sun, where the Jena sensors will deliver high-precision temperature data under extreme conditions. The sensors utilize high-efficiency compound semiconductors based on the thermoelectric effect. They are resistant to temperature fluctuations, mechanical stress and radiation – and have already proven themselves on missions such as ROSETTA, Curiosity, and InSight. Leibniz IPHT's mission underscores its role as an internationally sought-after technology partner and innovation driver in Thuringia.

News

Leibniz Founders' Prize for 2025 goes to DeepEn: revolution made in Jena

Jena-based start-up DeepEn GmbH won the 2025 Leibniz Founders' Prize with the world's thinnest microscope. The company, which was spun off from the Leibniz Institute of Photonic Technology (Leibniz IPHT), impressed the jury with a micro-holographic endoscope that sets new standards in neuroscientific imaging. The device, NeuroDeep®, uses glass fibers with the diameter of a human hair to deliver high-resolution images from deep within the body – all minimally invasively and with unprecedented precision. The technology is based on leading international research in holographic light control and was developed in cooperation with top European institutes. DeepEn intends to use the 50,000 euro prize to prepare for the market launch of NeuroDeep® at the end of 2025. Plans include trade show appearances in Europe, Asia and the United States as well as a targeted marketing campaign. The company offers disposable endoscopy probes and related training in addition to the laboratory system. DeepEn is a prime example of the successful transfer of research into practice in Thuringia – with the potential to bring about lasting changes in medical diagnostics and therapy.

Milestone for Green Hydrogen: SOEC Pilot Plant Opens in Arnstadt

On May 27, 2025, Fraunhofer IKTS and thyssenkrupp nucera inaugurated Germany's first pilot production facility for SOEC (Solid Oxide Electrolysis Cell) stacks in Arnstadt. This high-temperature electrolysis technology enables highly efficient green hydrogen production—crucial for decarbonizing energy-intensive industries. With an annual capacity of 8 MW, the plant marks a key step from research to industrial-scale application. The opening ceremony welcomed prominent figures from politics, science, and industry, including Thuringia's Ministerpräsident Mario Voigt. This strategic partnership strengthens Germany's hydrogen technology ecosystem and highlights Thuringia's role as a hub for future-oriented innovation.

Klassik Stiftung Weimar opens “Faust” theme year

Thuringia is celebrating a special anniversary this year: 250 years since the arrival of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in Weimar. To mark the occasion, “Faust”, Goethe’s magnum opus, will be the focus of attention.

This masterpiece of German literature not only revolutionized the literary world but also had a profound influence on culture and thought in Europe and beyond.

Weimar, the city where Goethe spent much of his life and created many of his most important works, is the focus of the celebrations. The city is planning a series of events, including plays, readings and exhibitions, to celebrate Goethe’s life and work and the timeless relevance of “Faust.” This is a wonderful opportunity to explore the cultural landscape of Weimar and beyond.



Goethe-Schiller monument on Theaterplatz in front of the German National Theater in Weimar. Photo: © TTG

Festivals in Thuringia in 2025: A year full of cultural highlights

Thuringia is a true paradise for festival lovers in 2025. From classical music to rock, from jazz to EDM – the Free State offers an impressive variety of events.

The HeideWitzka Festival in Bad Sulza from July 3 to 5 is a must for fans of electronic music. The Rudolstadt Festival from July 3 to 6 is Germany’s largest festival for folk, roots and world music and attracts music lovers from all over Europe. One of the highlights is the Kulturarena music festival, which takes place in Jena from July 2 to August 17. It attracts some 70,000 visitors a year with concerts, the-

ater and films. For fans of heavier sounds, the Party.San Metal Open Air near Mühlhausen from August 7 to 9 offers the perfect opportunity to rock out. Last but not least, a special cultural highlight is the Cathedral Steps Theater (Domstufen-Festspiele) in Erfurt, which runs from August 8 to 31. Operas and plays are performed here against the impressive backdrop of Erfurt Cathedral. La Bohème is on the program this year. The variety of events means there is a festival for everyone, whether music, theater or art – it will be a musical summer.



The “Weimar Summer” program also sounds promising. The Roman House in the park on the Ilm is a popular event location. Photo: © TTG

Dates

September 09 – 14
IAA Mobility, Munich
Booth: A2 / B31

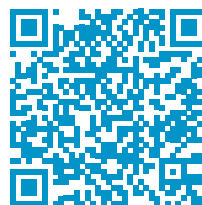
September 24/25
W3+ Fair, Jena
Booth: F3a

October 15 – 19
Frankfurter Buchmesse

August 08 – 31
Domstufen-Festspiele, Erfurt



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