

# Thuringia Focus.



The Thuringian battery cluster continues to grow with LION Smart Production GmbH. Photo: LION Smart

## 50,000 batteries per year – Investor LION Smart gets off to a flying start in Thuringia

**Thuringia continues to entrench its position as a leading battery location in Germany: At the end of June, LION Smart Production GmbH opened its factory for the series production of battery packs in Hildburghausen. It will be manufacturing 50,000 packs per year in an almost fully automated assembly process. The batteries will be used for electromobility and stationary applications. The company, which relocated its production operations from Bavaria to Thuringia, invested around 14 million euros in the new site. It will employ around 15 employees at the start and plans to scale up to 60 employees.**

“The relocation of battery specialist LION Smart represents another important contribution to the expansion of Thuringia’s production and research capacity in battery technology,” said Wolfgang Tiefensee, Thuringia’s Minister for Economics. Major industry players already have operations in Thuringia – Chinese global market leader Contemporary Amperex Technology Ltd (CATL), Kedali Germany

GmbH (KDL) and the Marquardt Group, a mechatronics specialist. Fraunhofer IKTS is researching digitally supported battery production for sodium batteries and lithium-ion batteries at the Battery Innovation and Technology Center (BITC). The new investor in Hildburghausen belongs to LION E-Mobility AG, a Swiss holding company. In his opening speech, Alessio Basteri, Chairman of the holding company’s Board of Directors, explicitly thanked the state of Thuringia. “We are grateful for Thuringia’s tremendous support and access to financial backing. We are thrilled to be here and will continue to invest in Hildburghausen in the future.” In addition to the Ministry for Economics and the Thuringian Development Bank, Alessio Basteri also specifically named LEG as a supporter. “We supported LION Smart throughout the entire relocation process with our full-service approach,” Dr. Arnulf Wulff, Senior Vice President and Department Head at LEG reported. “The investment project fills a gap in the value chain for battery projects in Thuringia.” (hw)

### News

#### Packaging specialist Papacks expands in Arnstadt

Packaging specialist Papacks Sales GmbH is setting a breathtaking pace in Arnstadt, Thuringia: In 2020, the company put its first gigafactory into operation at the site; at the end of June, it ceremoniously opened its second building – and Managing Directors Tahsin Dag and Werner Sempell are already hard at work planning the third gigafactory, which will feature a research institute. Thuringia is proving to be an ideal location for Papacks to expand dynamically, and the investor’s innovative, sustainable products are poised for success: biodegradable, plastic-free packaging. The company invested around 14 million euros in the second gigafactory and plans to start up the world’s first fiber cast bottle production machine at the site. “Papacks is synonymous with ultra-innovative manufacturing technology and forward-looking products,” said Andreas Krey, Managing Director of LEG, which has supported the company in Thuringia from the start. “Thuringia’s investment and technology landscape has been clearly enriched by the company’s remarkable commitment.” (hw)



Tahsin Dag, Managing Director of Papacks Sales GmbH. Photo: Papacks

### QSIL is investing heavily in the future

The company, recently named a „Hidden Champion“, has achieved considerable growth in recent years. Following investments in the acquisition of divisions of the H.C. Starck Group, QSIL, which specializes among other things in high-performance materials for the semiconductor industry, is expanding its headquarters in Ilmenau. In July, the foundation stone was laid for the „Quarzschmelze 3“ production building. In the new building, the so-called billets – hollow cylindrical products made of quartz glass – are produced in billet melters of the latest generation. It will also house machinery for further processing, logistics for technical components and raw materials, and offices. Due to its combination of special characteristics, QSIL's high-purity quartz glass is widely used in the semiconductor industry, mechanical engineering, analytics, and fiber optics applications. The expansion investment includes 20 million euros for the building and machinery. The number of employees had already increased continuously in recent years, so that currently around 250 people are employed in Ilmenau. (maa)

### New business park creates space for investment

Southwest Thuringia is a sought-after location for investors from a wide range of industries; its industrial and business parks have high occupancy rates. This fact set the scene this past June for the official groundbreaking ceremony for the new „An der B19“ site near Schmalkalden, a site designed to welcome new players from industry and commerce. The event was kicked off by Thuringia's Minister for Economics Wolfgang Tiefensee, State Secretary for Economics Carsten Feller and Schmalkalden's Mayor Thomas Kaminiski. The Ministry for Economics is providing 24 million euros in funding; the total cost of the project is 27 million euros. The funds come from the Joint Scheme for Improving the Regional Economic Structure. When completed, the site will cover around 35 hectares and thus offer sufficient space for ten to twelve large companies to build new plants. Companies have already started to signal their interest in locating here; the city is holding talks with prospective occupants. (hw)

## A good breeding ground for business success

**Thuringia is a great location for stable, sustainable corporate growth – just consider these two companies: South African dump truck manufacturer Bell Equipment celebrated its 20th anniversary in Eisenach-Kindel in western Thuringia. Cookie producer Griesson – de Beukelaer celebrated its 30th birthday in Thuringia – by opening a new production building in Kahla in eastern Thuringia in the presence of Thuringian Minister-President Bodo Ramelow.**

Cookies made in Kahla are known far beyond the state's borders – and the confectionery and pastries are now manufactured at one of the largest and most modern sites in Europe. Shortly after reunification, the group decided to build its production site in Thuringia, establishing a success story in Germany's heartland. It then in-

vested 140 million euros in the new building at the end of June at the same time as its anniversary. The famous „Prinzenrolle“ chocolate sandwich cookies come from Kahla, as do soft cakes, cookies and pastry mixes. Every year, 600 employees produce more than 80,000 metric tons of confections for customers worldwide.

Bell Equipment employs more than 270 people in western Thuringia. The international group set up its first production facility outside South Africa 20 years ago; continuous growth followed at the Thuringia site. It recently added space in 2019 and 2022/23 and expanded its production range. The Thuringian plant currently manufactures around 500 heavy transport vehicles mining and earthmoving each year for customers in Europe, North America and Asia. (hw)

## An eventful autumn at the Thuringia International team!



Impressive city images in Japan, taken on the occasion of the visit to the OPIE – Optics & Photonics Intern. Exhibition in Yokohama. Photo: LEG Thüringen

**The Thuringia International team has been incredibly busy in 2023 – it has carried out projects such as delegation and company trips and organized network meetings and trade fair visits for countries on five continents, making lots of new contacts in the process.**

Looking back at the first half of the year, the events that stand out the most are the first-time attendance of the Optics and Photonics International Exhibition (OPIE) in Japan, the market exploration trip to the Western Balkans or B2B matchmaking in Italy. In the second half of the year, the trade show season begins with joint booths at the CIOE – the China International Optoelectronic Ex-

position in Shenzhen for the first time, the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona and the Precision Fair in the Netherlands. New markets will be explored by traveling to Georgia and Armenia in September, and to Texas and Mexico in October. This year's last delegation trip will be headed by Minister-President Bodo Ramelow and take the delegation to Vietnam to deepen relations between Thuringia and Vietnam in recruiting skilled workers and economic and scientific cooperation. LEG's foreign trade team will offer informational events on topics such as procurement channels, the influence of geopolitics on foreign trade and new markets this autumn. (maa)

# Global market leader in Thuringia: Nissha – Schuster Kunststofftechnik



**Nissha – Schuster Kunststofftechnik recently had several reasons to celebrate in Waltershausen in western Thuringia: After only 15 months of construction, the specialized manufacturer of sophisticated plastic parts inaugurated a new factory complex that will allow the company to expand into innovative paper injection molding. The company was also formally presented with a certificate as one of Thuringia’s “Hidden Champions” by Thuringian Minister for Economics Wolfgang Tiefensee and LEG Senior Vice President and Department Head Dr. Arnulf Wulff.**

The ministry and LEG’s Hidden Champions campaign honors companies that are global market or technology leaders in their field. The Waltershausen-based company, a member of the Nissha Group in Kyoto, Japan, meets all the criteria to be included in this distinguished group. Not only has it been extremely successful in the market for innovative plastic parts (mainly for the interiors of high-end automotive brands), but it will also be producing fully recyclable trays (workpiece carriers) in the future as part of its expansion – and doing it

very sustainably with paper, a renewable raw material. The company has invested 3 million euros in the new building and facilities in Thuringia. The guests were given a tour of the production site at the opening ceremony and the presentation of the certificate. (hw)



The inauguration guests were bringing the award as Hidden Champion: Thuringia’s Minister for Economics Wolfgang Tiefensee (l.) and Dr. Arnulf Wulff, LEG Thüringen (r.) with Ralf Urban (center l.) and Roland Beil (center r.), Managing Directors of Nissha – Schuster Kunststofftechnik. Photo: Nissha - Schuster Kunststofftechnik

## News

### Thuringian innovations excel in competition

Innovative start-ups from Thuringia won first and second place in the latest cluster innovation competition: The gold and silver medals went to Healyan GmbH from Barchfeld-Immelnborn and mi2-factory GmbH from Jena as part of the IQ Innovation Award Central Germany. Healyan GmbH developed LED glasses that provide relaxation and entertainment using stroboscopic technology and light pulses. App-controlled light programs can be combined with meditation or classical music, providing stress reduction, relief of mental tension, entertainment and fun. mi2-factory GmbH, on the other hand, is successfully working on processes to shrink microchips by a factor of five and manufacture them more cost-effectively. The technology, which is currently being optimized in a pilot plant, can help bring cost-effective wind and photovoltaic power to the area and thus lend additional impetus to the energy transition. (hw)



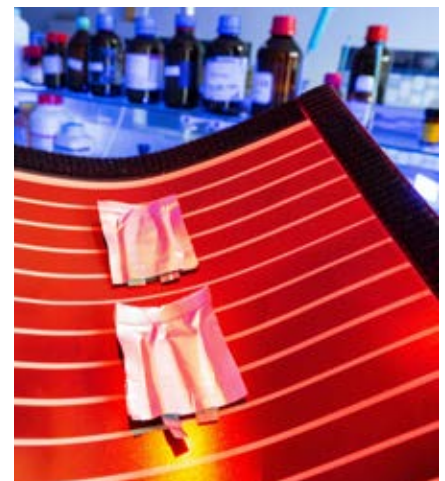
Award winner: Philipp Caspari, Laurin Martins, both Healyan GmbH (center) with the award sponsors GISA GmbH, Jürgen Klaus (l.) and enviaTEL GmbH, Dirk Schüppel (r.). Photo: Guido Werner

## New Helmholtz Institute strengthens Thuringia as a research location

**Thuringia already holds considerable potential in battery research and production – now another innovative “building block” is being added: The new “Helmholtz Institute for Polymers in Energy Applications” (HIPOLE) is being established at the science powerhouse of Jena. In the future, this research facility will identify ways to produce stationary storage units without using rare earths or hazardous substances. HIPOLE will make valuable contributions to the energy transition by developing materials and storage technologies.**

The decision by the Senate of the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centers (HGF) to establish the new institute will expand the Helmholtz Association’s

footprint as the largest German scientific organization in Thuringia. Starting in 2028, HIPOLE will receive up to 5.5 million euros annually from the federal government (90 percent) and Thuringia (10 percent). Thuringia will also provide up to 14 million euros to cover the costs of the institute’s buildings and equipment in the start-up phase. The state has been laying the foundations for this success story since 2014, when it established the Center for Energy and Environmental Chemistry (CEEC) and thus developed deep expertise in energy storage in Jena. Researchers at HIPOLE will be combining research methods and findings in polymer chemistry, materials science and artificial intelligence (AI) with state-of-the-art analytical methods. (hw)



Polymer-based batteries and flexible solar cells as developed at the new institute. Photo: Jens Meyer (University of Jena)

# A trip around the world in Thuringia

**It's travel season! Let's go to France, Italy, Norway, Malaysia or Peru! Sounds like a busy itinerary and a faraway destination? It doesn't have to be – Thuringia, an intercultural state and inspiring tourist locale, offers nearby sites that look deceptively like tourist hotspots around the world.**

Looking down on Europe's largest contiguous reservoir from above the Saale River, it's easy to imagine yourself in Norway: Like a Scandinavian fjord landscape, the wide expanses of water framed by deep forests in southeastern Thuringia will warm the heart of every nature lover. The castles of Dornburg amidst vineyards are also picturesque;



The impressive meander of the Saale river in southeastern Thuringia. Photo: Thüringer Tourismus GmbH, Photographer: Florian Trykowski

no wonder famous poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe visited them often – they make you feel transported to France. You can even enjoy Italian flair as you stroll through Erfurt's historic district with its small alleys and bustling squares or even walk by the Krämerbrücke, which is reminiscent of the Ponte Vecchio in Florence. Going even farther afield, the Dragon Gorge in Eisenach reminds visitors of Peru, the "Baumkronenpfad" treetop path in the Hainich Natural Park of Malaysia – there are countless examples of sites where tourists can embark on their very own "world tour" right in the heart of Germany. (TTG/hw) [www.thueringen-entdecken.de/summer](http://www.thueringen-entdecken.de/summer)

## Experience Chagall at the Kunsthaus Apolda art gallery

**"The art gallery is always worth a trip to Apolda" – that is the closing sentence on the website of the Kunsthaus Apolda Avantgarde art gallery. Indeed, thousands of visitors come to this central Thuringian town every year to experience nationally renowned exhibitions. This autumn, starting on September 17, the gallery will show 80 prints from Marc Chagall in an exhibition entitled "From Vitebsk to Paris."**

Apolda is located between Weimar and Jena, two cities that are home to world-class cultural heritages such as the Bauhaus and the Weimar classic movement with Goethe and Schiller as well as the Jena Romantics with Schelling and Novalis. This inspiring neighborhood was the driving force behind "Kunstverein Apolda Avangarde e. V.," an active association created in 1994 that, together with the local city and county governments, established the Kunsthaus Apolda Avangarde art gallery in 1995. The gallery has hosted sensational exhibitions and welcomed

600,000 visitors. The association's projects have been dedicated to artists such as Francisco de Goya, Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró and Andy Warhol. The current Chagall show features exhibits borrowed from the Museum Pablo Picasso in Münster – including a large number of unique pieces as well as rare condition and proof prints by the monumental artist. (hw) [www.kunsthausepolda.de](http://www.kunsthausepolda.de)



Advertising poster for the upcoming Chagall exhibition. Image: Kunsthaus Apolda Avangarde

### Dates

#### September 06 – 08

CIOE – China International Opto-electronic Exposition, Shenzhen

#### September 27/28

Battery Days, Weimar

#### October 17 – 21

FAKUMA, Friedrichshafen

#### October 18 – 22

Frankfurter Buchmesse

#### November 07 – 09

Smart City Expo World Congress, Barcelona

#### November 13 – 16

MEDICA, Düsseldorf

#### November 14 – 17

SEMICON Europe/productronica, Munich

#### November 15/16

Precision Fair, 's-Hertogenbosch

#### December 07 – 09

Vietnam Medipharm EXPO, Hanoi



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