

Thuringia Focus.



There is space for up to six production lines in the approximately 500-meter-long building of CATL's battery gigafactory.
Photo: CATL

Modern cargo terminal for the "Erfurter Kreuz" Industrial Park

For the construction of one of the most modern logistics terminals on the site of the former freight station in Arnstadt, Deutsche Bahn will invest a 2-digit million sum. This will ensure modern and climate-friendly logistics in the "Erfurter Kreuz" industrial area, because goods can be transported 100 percent emissions-free by rail starting today. By using this terminal, 2.3 million truck kilometers could be saved, which corresponds to approx. 2,822 tons of CO₂. That also means less traffic, exhaust and noise pollution for local communities. The State of Thuringia, Deutsche Bahn AG, the City of Arnstadt and LEG inked a framework agreement for support activities at the end of October. They include broadening the surrounding streets, building a bike path, upgrading the Arnstadt train station, restoring nearby areas to their natural state and renovating structures in the city center.

Despite pandemic: Thuringia attracts many investments

As the year draws to a close, it is time to take stock: Thuringia proved to be an appealing investment location yet again in 2021, bringing in companies from all corners of the world. Despite the strict COVID-19 lockdowns imposed worldwide, Thuringia kept attracting companies at a steady pace as business stayed about as healthy as in the pre-pandemic years.

A total of 40 companies invested around 460 million euros this year and made commitments to create more than 1,800 jobs. It was encouraging that no significant relocation or expansion projects were scrapped by investors or lost in response to the pandemic. "Thuringia has held its own against international competition, even in an adverse environment," stated Andreas Krey, Chairman of the LEG Board. "Key locational advantages that

often tilted the scales in our favor include Thuringia's unique prime location, the deep technological expertise of local companies and research institutes, and not least the high quality of life, which is becoming increasingly important amid a skilled labor shortage." Companies come to Thuringia from various regions of the world, including the United States, China, Japan, France and Italy. "The projects were situated in innovative industries, including automotive and electromobility, medical devices, semiconductors, optics and sensors," said Dr. Arnulf Wulff, Senior Vice President and Department Head in charge of attracting new business and marketing Thuringia for LEG. "The pandemic did not stop us from maintaining our high service quality and even improving it by expanding our digital services to better serve our customers and reach out personally whenever possible!" (hw)



Photo: Fotolia/pmphoto

Charting the course in Ilmenau

GBS (Gesellschaft für Bild- und Signalverarbeitung mbH) laid the foundation for its add-on building in October. The high-tech company's new building on Robert-Bosch-Ring in Ilmenau will provide additional space for production, measurement laboratories and offices. GBS has been manufacturing high-tech products for 3D surface scanning and evaluation for more than 20 years. The company's products have been a major driver of innovative IoT solutions. LEG has accompanied the firm since its setup in Thuringia and is pleased to now also support the expansion with its full service.

Lantronix opens design center in Ilmenau

Lantronix, a Californian company specializing in innovative and secure solutions for IoT applications, ceremoniously opened a design center in Ilmenau in October. Guests at the ceremony included US Consul General Kenichiro Toko, Lantronix CEO Paul Pickle and other public figures. The center's engineers will be involved in design engineering, system architecture, technical support, quality assurance and testing services. The products and services provided by the Nasdaq-listed multinational are used in the automotive, robotics, wearables, medical and logistics sectors, among others.

Nordhausen-based biotechnology company expanding

AHN Biotechnologie GmbH is adding manufacturing capacity as demand for laboratory equipment has skyrocketed in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The company needs additional production space to make pipette tips and collection containers for biochemical tests. The new 4,000 square meter structure and existing production and storage facilities will make up the future biotech campus. The company is also planning to add petri dishes and cell culture flasks to its product range. The company has been growing for years and is looking for additional employees to add to its workforce, which currently consists of 130 people. It is investing around six million euros in the new building. The building is scheduled to open its doors as early as at the end of 2022.

Thuringian companies benefit from successful trade fair relaunch

Thuringian companies know they can count on LEG to support their trade fair appearances: LEG has been organizing shared booths on behalf of the Thuringian Ministry for Economic Affairs, where companies can exhibit at favorable terms, for quite some time. The pandemic put a stop to most in-person fairs, but exhibitions started to open up again successfully this fall.

Digital presentations may work in exceptional circumstances, but nothing beats personal presentations with the opportunity for face-to-face contact. No wonder so many Thuringian companies attended the fall trade fairs: at least as many as in pre-pandemic times. Around 10 Thuringian exhibitors attended each trade fair and were very satisfied with the productive in-person networking. The IAA Mobility in Munich kicked things off in September and was followed in October by the EXPO REAL trade fair for real estate and invest-

ment in Munich, the Fakuma trade fair for plastics processing in Friedrichshafen and the Frankfurt Book Fair. LEG already has attractive trade fairs booked for spring 2022, including Hannover Messe and Laser World of Photonics in Shanghai. (hw)



The Thuringian joint booth at the real estate fair EXPO REAL in Munich. Photo: LEG Thüringen

New networks boost trade with North America and China

Trade with North America and China played a big role in Thuringian imports and exports in 2020 despite the pandemic. Exports to the United States grew by more than eleven percent, while Thuringia had far more bilateral trade with China than with any other country. These ties are now getting support from two new networks: Transatlantic Circle Thuringia (TACT) and the China Network Thuringia.

"Both networks create a completely new benefit," explains Thuringia's Economics

Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee. "They bring together companies that maintain foreign trade relations with the countries and companies from the U.S., Canada and China that are based here in Thuringia as investors." The TACT was launched in September. A month later, the China Network Thuringia was founded. Regular meetings are planned, two to three times a year, at which the network partners can exchange ideas. The next China Network meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2022; the TACT will also meet again around this time. (hw)



Founding event of the "Transatlantic Circle Thuringia" (TACT) at Ettersburg Castle near Weimar. Photo: LEG Thüringen

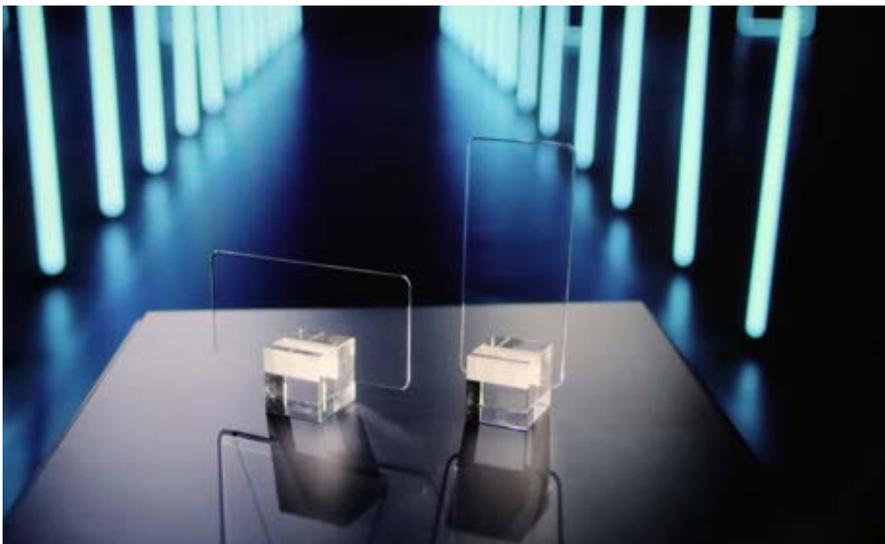
World market leaders in Thuringia

In the next issues of our newsletter, we would like to briefly introduce selected Thuringian companies that are among the world market or technology leaders in their segment. These are both globally active large companies and so-called hidden champions. The glass specialist Schott is also one of the global players in Thuringia and is currently presenting a world first.

Schott in Jena has stood for top-class glass technology for more than a century. On the 137th anniversary of its founding at the beginning of September, Schott inaugurated a new administrative building in Jena. 10 million euros were invested in the modern office building with a floor space of 4,600 m². With 16,500 employees at 56 locations in 34 countries, Schott is a global leader in specialty glass, glass ceramics and other innovative materials.

6,000 scientists and engineers worldwide are constantly researching new applications for special glass, which is also an essential component of the digital world. Schott has already produced the ultra-thin and flexible cover glass for foldable displays.

The development of the latest innovation – the new highly shatterproof smartphone glass – took two years. The result is “striking”: The glass can fall twice as far as the best competing products, says the company. The improved drop resistance is particularly evident on rough surfaces and on impact with rugged or sharp-edged surfaces. The glass is also more scratch-resistant in everyday use. Lithium aluminoborosilicate cover glass is the name of this latest innovation, which will be used primarily in the premium segment. (hw/maa)



A new combination of materials causes the enormous strength against impacts and scratches. Photo: Schott AG

Thuringia contributes to mobile communications of the future

6G is the mobile communications generation of the future – and now bears a Thuringian stamp: Ilmenau University of Technology (TU Ilmenau) is involved in two national research hubs funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

6G is expected to revolutionize communications as early as 2030: The next generation of mobile communications will transmit data more than 100 times faster than the current 5G standard, while at

the same time offering greater energy efficiency, reliability and compliance with radiation protection limits. Researchers at the Thuringian Innovation Center for Mobility - ThIMo in Ilmenau are focusing on the latter. In addition, scientists at TU Ilmenau are working on technologies for integrating the perception of moving objects and their surroundings into the mobile communications network – future applications include road traffic, logistics and industrial automation. (hw/maa)

New agency supports automotive industry

There is a new kid in LEG's town: Transformation Agency Automotive (TTA). It supports companies in times of major change – think of transitioning to e-mobility, autonomous driving and “smartphones on wheels”, or the upheavals caused by trade conflicts and the COVID crisis. TTA identifies opportunities and growth possibilities and actively promotes them in order to protect and add jobs in Thuringia and strengthen the industry's innovativeness and competitiveness. The new team will inform companies about industry trends, advise on state and federal funding opportunities, provide support in organizing training, hold informational and networking events and generally act as a key point of contact for all companies affected by change and transformation processes. (hw)



Photo: iStock/VitaliyPozdeyev

InnoCON addresses current topics

Digital, but just as innovative: InnoCON, the flagship event for the implementation and enhancement of Thuringia's innovation strategy, took place at the end of November and was attended by about 250 people. This year's iteration focused on decarbonization and digital transformation, two megatrends that will fundamentally change our world. The ideas that Thuringian companies, research institutions and industry clusters have for meeting these challenges were the subject of around 26 InnoPitches and project presentations in the InnoMarkt. (gro)

Walking in Goethe's footsteps

Would the history of literature have been different without this love story? Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Charlotte von Stein from Thuringia shared a deep spiritual kinship over the years. Whenever Charlotte stayed at Großkochberg Castle south of Weimar, the poet would often hurry there from Weimar, the home of German classicism. This route is now being developed into an adventure trail.

The 12 stations of the Goethe Experience Trail will be interactive, equipped with explanatory panels and an appropriate

Goethe quote, and are intended to transport visitors back the Weimar Classical Period. About 29 kilometers (walking time approx. 8 hours) is the total length of the Goethe Experience Trail through the charming landscape of the Weimarer Land. As part of the Thuringia 2025 tourist trail concept, the trail has been clearly signposted. The Free State is supporting the construction and marketing of the trail with a total of 474,000 euros. The route is intended to attract both nature and city tourists all year round. (hw/maa)



Numerous hiking trails related to Goethe can be discovered in Thuringia. Photo: Anne-Marie Hartung

Luther's Bible translation shapes tourist theme year

Martin Luther and his artistic contemporaries will be the focus of the 2022 tourist theme year in Thuringia. Exhibitions and events will focus on Luther's stay at Wartburg Castle near Eisenach 500 years ago – along with the Bible translation that he penned at the castle that deeply affected German literature, music and art.

“Translate the world. Read, hear, see language in Thuringia” – this is the title of the theme year advertised by Thüringer Tourismus GmbH (TTG). The theme year is dedicated to the exhibition “Luther translates. 500 Years of the New Testament at Wartburg Castle,” which highlights the translation of the Bible with original sources and media examples. Other events in the theme year focus on Lucas Cranach the Elder, an artist and contemporary of Luther who accompanied the reformer and his writings with portraits and drawings, and Johann Sebastian Bach, who also created countless musical pieces in Thu-

ringia 200 years later with references to Luther's work and the Lutheran faith.

For information on events featuring these two artists and other Luther-related events in the theme year, visit weltkultur.thueringen-entdecken.de. (hw)



Left many traces in Thuringia: The reformer Martin Luther. Photo: Thüringer Tourismus GmbH

Online Offers

New company database LiST

The web-based platform, which was presented at this year's Medica fair in Düsseldorf, clearly presents around 350 Thuringian players from the multifaceted economic and technological sector of life sciences - including companies, research institutions, clinics, networks and associations.

Life sciences encompass diverse fields such as medical technology, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. Via three main access points (selection by products, industries and added value), interested parties will be able to obtain a quick and uncomplicated overview as well as select their contact partners in the future



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