

Thuringia Focus.



The new building of Analytik Jena in Ilmenau with a view of the Thuringian Forest. Photo: © Analytik Jena

Analytik Jena's expansion lays the foundation for further growth

A clear commitment to Thuringia: Analytik Jena GmbH+Co. KG is constructing a new building at its long-established production site in Ilmenau (southern Thuringia) to house the development and production of measuring instruments as well as sample handling for sum parameter and elemental analysis. The expansion represents an investment of more than 30 million euros and creates potential for up to 80 new jobs over the next few years. Analytik Jena develops and produces analytical systems and analytical measurement technology in the field of chemical analysis and life science solutions. The company does business in more than 100 countries. It is based in Jena, Thuringia, where Analytik Jena GmbH+Co. KG was established in 1990, and is now part of the Swiss Endress + Hauser Group.

The investment is being made in the Ehrenberg-Ost industrial district, which LEG Thüringen is successfully developing and marketing. Covering an area the size of a soccer field, the new building will provide space for modern workstations in

development, production, logistics, laboratories and offices. "We are pleased to achieve several important goals with the new building," said Bertram Eichhorn, Site Director at Analytik Jena Ilmenau and head of the new building project. "We are creating space for further growth and the opportunity to bring our two Ilmenau sites under one roof." The company says it has benefited from the conditions at the fast-growing Ehrenberg-Ost site. For example, the site utilizes local district heating powered by biogas, giving it an excellent carbon footprint. The new building also features a sustainable design with a photovoltaic system, a green roof and a green facade. For company employees, the investment will provide more pleasant and productive working conditions. "The new building will provide an innovative and attractive working environment, all within walking distance of the Ilmenau University of Technology," added Grit Petzholdt-Gühne, VP Human Resources and the Executive Board member who is responsible for the project. (hw)

News

Faller Packaging opens new production facility in Thuringia

Faller Packaging, a leading packaging solutions provider based in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, recently purchased a new production facility in Thuringia, Germany. The facility is located on the former All4Labels property in Gebesee, just north of Erfurt. "The acquisition of the Gebesee plant will enable us to rapidly implement our growth strategy," said Dagmar Schmidt, CEO of the Faller Packaging Group. The takeover of the approx. 13,000 m² of office, warehouse and production space opens up new opportunities for the region, as the modern building fabric and infrastructure are retained, new jobs are created and qualified specialists continue to be employed. Faller Packaging is making the investment in response to increased demand for sustainable folding cartons and leaflets in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries. The Thuringia plant offers strategic advantages due to its central location and proximity to major pharmaceutical sites in Germany. Production is expected to begin in the spring of 2025. In addition to its headquarters in Waldkirch (Germany), Faller Packaging has plants in Binzen and Schopfheim (Germany), Hvidovre and Horsens (Denmark), Łódź (Poland) and Debrecen (Hungary). (maa)

Companies from Singapore invest in Thuringia

Good news for CDA GmbH in Suhl, Germany: a high-tech company from Singapore has taken over parts of its production. Following financial difficulties caused by the withdrawal of a major investor and subsequent bankruptcy, selected areas of the micro-optics business have now been acquired by Advanced Micro-optics Technologies GmbH (AMOT), a wholly owned subsidiary of AAC Technologies Holding. AMOT is a leading manufacturer of complex structures for micro-optics based on polymer materials. The AMOT plant in Suhl will develop and manufacture high-precision micro-optics with 42 employees. "We are convinced that joining the AAC Group will significantly benefit our customers, suppliers and employees as well as the growth and development of the region," said AMOT Managing Director André Keller, formerly Managing Director of CDA GmbH. The core business of AAC Optics is researching, developing and producing optical components for smartphones, smart cars, unmanned aerial vehicles, surveillance cameras and medical treatments. (maa)

The smartest square kilometer in Europe

At the end of November, a 20-member delegation from Thuringia traveled to the Netherlands with Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI). The main objective of GTAI's ISW program was to establish contacts for Thuringian companies in the semiconductor, sensor technology and high-performance ceramics sectors and interest Dutch companies in Thuringia as a place to invest. The itinerary was very promising, including a visit to the high-tech Eindhoven campus, the "smartest square kilometer in Europe". This proud title is no coincidence: the site is absolutely packed with 300 innovative companies from various application areas. The delegation also visited ASML, the largest supplier of lithography systems for the semiconductor industry. The tour included Delft and Amsterdam as well. Finally, the delegates attended an investor event with fascinating presentations and a German-Dutch Hightech Forum for networking with players in semiconductor technologies, sensor technology, high-performance ceramics and next-generation semiconductors. (maa)

Gramß GmbH expands capacity in southern Thuringia

Another milestone in the history of Gramß GmbH Kunststoffverarbeitung: The plastics processing company recently kicked off a 21.6-million-euro project. Gramß is building two new buildings for production and warehousing as well as a new office and staff wing at its Spechtsbrunn site (Sonneberg, southern Thuringia). It is also modernizing its machinery. The project is expected to be completed as early as next year.

Gramß GmbH has been in business for 35 years and specializes in the production of professional plastic packaging, particularly caps, jars and lids. Its products are used primarily in the cosmetics and consumer goods industries, but it also

serves many customers in the pharmaceutical and food industries. The company currently still has three production sites: Spechtsbrunn, Kleintettau and Langenau. This latest investment will consolidate the production of plastic caps and jars for the cosmetics, consumer goods, food and pharmaceutical industries at the Spechtsbrunn site, making the company's operations even more efficient and sustainable. "The two planned buildings represent our vision, our values and our commitment to innovation and progress," said Managing Director Peter Gramß at the groundbreaking ceremony. "This investment will not only create a modern workplace, but will also lay the foundation for further growth and success." (hw)



The Thuringian delegation at the German House in Ho Chi Minh City. Photo: © Hanoi IEC

Trip to Vietnam – skilled workers in focus

A Thuringian delegation accomplished a lot during a recent business trip to Vietnam that Thuringia International had organized: developing and expanding contacts, laying the foundation for lucrative transactions and relationships and taking steps to successfully recruit skilled workers and vocational trainees. The 26 participants visited the three stations in Hanoi, Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City from November 16 to 23.

The trip was made following a large delegation that visited the Southeast Asian country last year. This time around, the delegates not only successfully built on previous contacts, but established new relationships as well. In addition to

business meetings and visits to companies, the agenda included a stopover at Vinamac – The International Exhibition on Industrial Machinery, Equipment, Technology and Products in Ho Chi Minh City. The delegation focused heavily on skilled labor. It visited Hanoi IEC, the international LEG representative office that has been a longstanding valuable partner in recruiting skilled workers and trainees for Thuringian industry. The delegates obtained information about appropriate projects and met potential candidates for their companies in person. They also attended meetings at educational institutions such as the German Competency Academy and the Goethe Institute. (hw)

Thuringian Innovation Award: The future starts in Thuringia

Thuringia is a land of innovation, as highlighted by the presentation of the state's most important business prize. The Thuringian Innovation Award has been given out since 1994, and this year's winners were honored in Weimar at the start of December. The award's sponsors are the Thuringian Ministry of Economics, the Thuringian Foundation for Technology, Innovation and Research (STIFT), TÜV Thüringen and the Ernst Abbe Foundation.

The Thuringian Innovation Award is a benchmark for inventions and new developments in Thuringia and recognizes outstanding innovations developed in the state. It is awarded in four main categories: "Tradition and Future" (winner: Fliegl Fahrzeugbau GmbH), "Light and Life" (Synantec GmbH/EICMED GmbH), "Digital and Media" (KupTec GmbH) and "Industry and Materials" (Schulz & Berger Luft- und

Verfahrenstechnik GmbH). The 100,000-euro prizes are provided by the Economics Ministry. Other prizes included the Special Award for Start-Ups, endowed by the Funke Media Group at 10,000 euros (DeepEn GmbH). This year, the Ernst Abbe Award for Innovative Entrepreneurship went to Viktoria Schütz (DEGUMA Schütz GmbH), while REHA aktiv 2000 GmbH claimed the Public Choice Award. The 46 candidates were evaluated based on their innovativeness, entrepreneurial excellence, sustainability, utility and financial success. (hw/maa)



The winners of the Thuringian Innovation Award 2024. Photo: © STIFT / Sowinski

Zeiss and Hyundai develop displays of the future

Innovative heads-up displays are intended to make driving safer and more attractive. With this goal in mind, Jena-based technology group Zeiss has entered into a strategic partnership with South Korean automotive supplier Hyundai Mobis. The two companies will work together at the Yongin research center to develop holographic displays that show driving information such as navigation and speed.

Because the displays are integrated into the windshield instead of the dashboard, drivers can see the information without taking their eyes off the road. At Zeiss, the new technology was pioneered by the Jena-based Microoptics division. The

engineers developed multifunctional smart glass technology. It employs microoptics with ultra-fine structures that make it possible to integrate cameras right into the display glass. They can also be used for projection, illumination or filtering. "Together, we will set a new standard in the automotive industry and revolutionize the way information is displayed in vehicles," said Bernhard Ohnesorge, Managing Director of Carl Zeiss Jena GmbH, commenting on the new partnership. The companies have jointly initiated the first set of steps for product development and plan to start mass production within the next five years. (hw)



The transparent display integrated into the windshield shows the driver relevant information, such as navigation or speed, without having to take their eyes off the road. Photo: © ZEISS

News

Innovations from Thuringia

Lithium-ion batteries play a key role in the energy transition. This storage technology is particularly important because of its use in electric cars. Thuringian researchers are now contributing to the process of recycling the battery components. The ZirKat project – circulating raw materials from lithium iron phosphate cathode material (LFP) – has been running at the Nordhausen University of Applied Sciences since August 2024. Its goal is to recover raw materials from lithium iron phosphate batteries and use them to manufacture new lithium-ion batteries. The university coordinated the project through its Thuringian Innovation Center for Recyclable Materials (ThiWert). It is responsible for mechanical processes such as shredding or sorting battery components. K-UTEC from Sondershausen, for its part, is responsible for the chemical work packages, while Weimar-based IBU-tec is handling the thermal aspects. Analytik Jena monitors the quality of the raw materials, allowing EAS Batteries of Nordhausen, Germany, to verify their ability to be reused in batteries. Other companies and institutions in the region have expressed interest in the project and want to be part of the ThüLi-BaRec (Thuringian Lithium-Ion Battery Recycling) consortium. (maa)

International success for the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena

The World University Ranking is published once a year by Times Higher Education (THE). It is one of the most internationally recognized rankings in the university sector. In the latest survey, the Friedrich Schiller University (FSU) of Jena moved up one place, ending up ranked 21st among German universities. It ranks in the top 20 in Germany and the top 12 percent worldwide for teaching. On research quality, FSU scored 83 points (previously 81.8). This puts it in 18th place among German universities. The university also remained within the 201-250-tier of worldwide overall rankings. "This is a major accomplishment for the university since international university rankings are one of the most important tools for recruiting students and researchers," said University President Prof. Dr. Andreas Marx. The ranking methodology includes 18 indicators that assess factors such as teaching, research and international outlook. Internationally, the University of Oxford leads the rankings, followed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard University. (maa)

Thuringian Forest: Hotel Schieferhof attracts guests with new management

Located in Neuhaus am Rennweg in southern Thuringia, Hotel Schieferhof is representative of many traditional, lovingly run hotels in the tourist country of Thuringia. On November 1, the hotel changed hands, which is good news for everyone who wants to spend a vacation at the state-approved resort on the Rennsteig, Germany's longest hiking trail.

The half-timbered Schieferhof house was built in 1907; today, it combines old-time charm with youthful spirit. Individually and lovingly designed rooms, a small wellness area, modern seminar rooms and exquisite cuisine draw guests to a region that has always been very attractive for recreation and tourism. The Thuringian

Forest, especially the region around Neuhaus am Rennweg, offers plenty of opportunities to be active in nature or simply to relax and unwind. But the area also harbors many things to enjoy in terms of culture and technical history, having given rise to a diverse glass, porcelain and toy industry. For example, the Christmas ball ornaments from nearby Lauscha are world-famous – and inspired the hotel's new name: "Schieferhof - GlasLUST". Hotel Schieferhof has been run by the husband-wife duo of Lutz Michael Horn and Rita Worm-Horn along with their son Robert Worm since the mid-nineties. The new owners and operators are Lutz Lange, Martin Lüders and Stine Michel. (hw)



The Hotel Schieferhof – a traditional half-timbered building with a modern interior. Photo: © Thüringen.info

Nature camp in Frauenwald on the Rennsteig offers sustainable tourism program

Investor Claudia Weidner finally launched her nature camp project in Frauenwald am Lenkgrund last October: After an extensive planning and approval phase, the ground-breaking ceremony took place with Minister Tiefensee in attendance. An attractive new tourist attraction is being created on the site of the former open-air swimming pool in the Allzunah district. It is expected to attract more visitors to the Thuringian Forest and thus benefit the region. This retreat offers relaxation,

adventure and heartfelt nature experiences, reflecting the current trend of mindfulness in connection with nature. It will offer a wide spectrum of programs, ranging from rustic overnight stays in cozy cabins and tents to exciting outdoor activities such as wilderness hikes, campfire evenings and nature workshops. Local organic food, relaxation with outdoor yoga or survival courses that teach people how to live in harmony with nature are also planned. (maa)



Minister Tiefensee, the Weidner family and other participants at the official ground-breaking ceremony. Photo: © Adrian Seeber

Dates

January 27 - 30
Arab Health, Dubai
Booth: Z6.F76

March 19
Thuringian Foreign Trade Day (AWT),
Festhalle Ilmenau

March 31 - April 4
Hannover Messe
Booth: H6 / Robotics, Logistics,
Automation

April 8 - 10
DMEA, Berlin
Booth: 3.2 / E-108

May 7
InnoCON, Festhalle Ilmenau

April 11 - May 4
Thuringian Bach Weeks

Stay up to date:



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