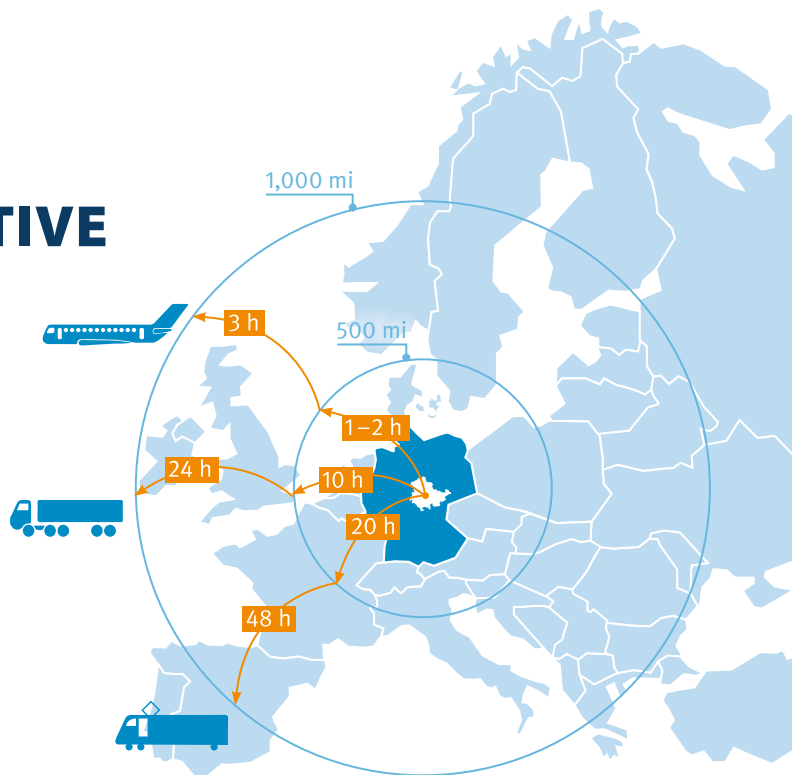


THURINGIA – A EUROPEAN AUTOMOTIVE POWER CENTRE

Driving eastwards from Frankfurt on the A4 motorway into the German State of Thuringia, travellers easily spot Wartburg Castle where Martin Luther hid out 500 years ago to translate the New Testament into German. Just at its feet you can make out the former manufacturing plant that BMW used to manufacture its first car, the Dixi, in the late 1920s. Today around 580 automotive manufacturers and suppliers continue to drive the Thuringian and German economy. They employ 62,000 people and generate over € 8.9 billion in revenue. “Automotive is our Number One”, proudly states Dr. Arnulf Wulff, Senior Vice President of the State Development Corporation of Thuringia (LEG), thus commenting on the importance of this industry in a small state with only 2.2m inhabitants. Five of the world’s best selling automotive suppliers (Bosch, Magna, Continental, ZF and Lear) produce in Thuringia. International companies like PSA Group (Opel), Nidec GPM, IHI Charging Systems (both from Japan), Gestamp Griwe, Gonvauto (both from Spain), GKN Sinter Metals (UK), BorgWarner Transmission Systems (US) run successful operations in Thuringia, to mention only a few.

Due to Thuringia’s central location, automotive suppliers can reach all German OEM locations within 5 hours by lorry. With 80% of all the cars in Europe being produced in an 800km radius from Thuringia, the state is at the epicentre of the European automotive scene, both in terms of making vehicles and selling them. However, since the automotive sector is undergoing a global transformation, location is not the only factor that matters. Automotive companies may well have to adapt to a future where a car has 250 pieces instead of the 4,000 in a traditional powertrain vehicle. Asked why Thuringia is the state



Thuringia is at the epicenter of the European automotive scene, both in terms of making vehicles and selling them. Source: LEG Thüringen

of their choice, company leaders often stress that people are more important than lower rates. Indeed it is a highly motivated workforce with strong technical skills, as well as a deep-rooted ability to understand materials and processes that enables suppliers to quickly respond to customer demands. Daimler is a good case in point: The German automotive giant produces about 50% of all engines that go into its Mercedes cars in Thuringia, employing more than 2,000 people today.

Ten universities and 30 research institutes provide an excellent pool of highly skilled labour and research expertise. The automotive “community” is very happy to have the Ilmenau University of Technology just around the corner. “The technical complexity of cars is increasing dramatically”, says Prof. Matthias Hein who is head of the RF & Microwave Research Laboratory and director of the Thuringian Innovation Center for Mobility (ThiMO) at the Ilmenau University of Technology. That’s where ThiMO’s high-complexity test beds come into play, focused on drivetrain and braking systems; combustion engines and hot gas systems such as turbochargers; and the wireless environment of cars. In the last five years, ThiMO has handled more than 200 projects of different companies.

The State Development Corporation of Thuringia (LEG) is a competent partner that can provide a full-service package to support your expansion or relocation to Thuringia. Visit www.invest-in-thuringia.de/en for contacts and details – we look forward to hearing from you!



The Opel Adam is produced in Eisenach/Thuringia. Source: ©GM Company.