



PRESS-INFORMATION

Special medicine: Cannabis from Leuna

The InfraLeuna Chemical Park, one of Saxony-Anhalt's twelve Centers of Excellence, is home to not one but two companies that are cultivating and exploiting medicinal cannabis: Aurora Deutschland GmbH and Echo Pharmaceuticals Deutschland GmbH. Here, they can rely on a suitable infrastructure, optimum security, and highly qualified workers for their production.

Medicinal cannabis was legalized for use in Germany in 2017 and is indicated for many conditions, such as chronic pain, and mental illness. The cultivation of this herb has also been legal in Germany since 2019, but only three companies are licensed to do so. One of these is Aurora Deutschland GmbH, one of Germany's largest licensed anaesthetic trading companies and a GMP-approved and certified importer of medicinal cannabis products. The firm set up its German production facility in the InfraLeuna Biochemical Park.

Plants for pain management

Company spokesperson Anke Illigen confirms that production will eventually reach one tonne of buds a year. "We will exclusively produce and supply dried cannabis buds here in Leuna. We only grow Type 1, the THC-dominant strain. The limits for our spec are between 17.1 and 20.9 percent THC and less than 1 percent CBD. This ratio is especially in demand for treating pain." Aurora employs 20 workers for its production in Leuna. The team manages several rooms of plants in the GMP-certified factory.

The Leuna site was a real stroke of luck for the company, explains president of Aurora Europe, Dr. Axel Gille: "We were looking for a suitable site in Germany for a long time and realized it wasn't going to be easy. Leuna offered us the necessary infrastructure, security, options for disposing of production residues, and highly qualified workers." He continues: "The production of medicinal cannabis demands great care and expertise and meticulous quality standards. Collaboration with the supervisory authorities in Saxony-Anhalt also runs very smoothly and is always focused on maximum quality and safety for patients."

Production concentrates on cannabinoid extraction

Jan P. Weidner, managing director of Echo Pharmaceuticals Deutschland GmbH, also emphasizes the excellent conditions in Saxony-Anhalt: "We viewed a lot of potential sites, but Leuna quickly became our favourite. The Chemical Park and the state of Saxony-Anhalt immediately gave us highly professional support, and qualified workers were also available to recruit very quickly."

The pharmaceutical company is based in the Netherlands and is a recent newcomer to the Leuna Chemical Park. Its production focuses on extracting,

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cleaning and formulating lipophilic active substances, in particular cannabinoids. “We are now in the final phase of construction; the laboratory is already up and running and production is due to start at the beginning of November,” says Weidner. The company buys cannabis buds from various firms and extracts the active ingredient Dronabinol – better known as THC – from them. This resinous liquid is delivered in vials to pharmacies, which then use it to produce drops or capsules. The product is suitable for cancer treatments and pain disorders, Weidner explains.

Product range is to be expanded

Plans are to achieve an annual total production of 60 kilogrammes. In addition, THC will be mixed with other products to expand the product range. Eight workers are currently employed at the Leuna site. This will increase to 13, plus additional sales employees. Weidner stresses the fact that constant, uniform quality of the THC – not just production volumes – is the company’s biggest challenge: “Stability is vital, because patient safety is everything.”

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PRESS-INFORMATION

Business and science come together in a new cooperative venture for biotech and life sciences

The Biotech/Life Sciences Cooperative Network at the Weinberg Campus Technology Park in Halle (Saale) opens up another interface through which relevant institutes, startups and businesses from both research and industry in Saxony-Anhalt can network and share information.

The Weinberg Campus Technology Park in Halle (Saale) is the largest science and technology park in central Germany and among the top five in Germany as a whole. It also bears the quality seal from Saxony-Anhalt's Minister for Economic Affairs as one of the state's twelve Centers of Excellence, where science and business join forces. This unique Campus is home to more than 100 companies in the life sciences and material sciences industry, internationally acclaimed research institutions, and the science faculties of Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, with a total of 6,000 employees. "Among this select group, time and again we realized there was a great need for individual players to be heard – on subjects such as skilled workers and mutual impact between various regions. So we had the idea of setting up the Saxony-Anhalt Biotech/Life Sciences Cooperative Network," says Anne-Karen Beck, project leader at the Campus.

Symbiosis of startups and small, medium-sized and large companies

The idea for a network of this kind immediately met with wide acclaim from research, industry and startups. It has already welcomed 20 partners, including renowned institutes and companies such as the Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology, the Anhalt University of Applied Sciences, Wacker Biotech GmbH, Serumwerk Bernburg AG, Merz Pharma GmbH, and IDT Biologica GmbH. Anne-Karen explains the network's role as an interface: "Everyone involved benefits from this information sharing, and it gives SMEs the opportunity to forge links with large firms. The result is a symbiosis."

However, before the network can begin its work, an association needs to be formed comprising representatives from as many sectors of the industry as possible. This should first convene on November 16. Only then can the application for funding be submitted to the state of Saxony-Anhalt, which has already promised its support.

Ready to welcome further partners from Saxony-Anhalt and the industry

Although the Technology and Start-Up Center (TGZ) in Halle launched the network, it should be able to manage itself within a very short time. Anne-Karen is expecting further partners to join: "The only requirements for membership are involvement in the industry and a site in Saxony-Anhalt."



The launch of the network is planned for the end of 2022, or early 2023, at the latest.

The Biotech/Life Sciences Cluster project provides the Weinberg Campus Technology Park innovation hub with yet another means of making sure support is also available to startups. Tech startups already enjoy the benefits of the Weinberg Campus Accelerator, which makes the Park's expertise and technical infrastructure available to them. The Accelerator will also be part of the new Cooperative Network.

The Weinberg Campus success story began in 1993, with a building for a Technology and Start-up Center. The goal then was the same as now: to foster links between science and business. And that's why the Technology Park is also one of Saxony-Anhalt's twelve Centers of Excellence. These are intended to demonstrate how innovations grow wings in Saxony-Anhalt, and how much potential can be exploited when research, science, services and production are closely intertwined. These centers excel in the very good conditions they offer for innovative growth. Now, more than 100 companies have taken up residence on the Campus. Over one billion euros have been invested in a historic university campus and former barracks. In the nearly 30 years since its inception, over 300 startups have cultivated their scientific research and business ideas here in the TGZ and Biocenter in Halle, where they have flourished.

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PRESS-INFORMATION

“We are in the champions league of pharmaceutical logistics”

Saxony-Anhalt is an attractive business location for pharmaceutical firms, and not just because of its pool of qualified workers. Logistics is one of this central German state’s core industries. What’s more, the highly efficient, ultra-modern airport at Leipzig/Halle has specialized in the handling of sensitive pharmaceutical goods. This is what convinced logistics service provider FIEGE to establish a state-of-the-art logistics center for healthcare products here, near Magdeburg. Octapharma Dessau GmbH is also expanding its site in the region.

An ultra-modern logistics center for healthcare products is currently taking shape in an area covering 90,000 square meters in Barleben to the north of the state capital, Magdeburg. Logistics service provider FIEGE is responsible for the build, and completion is planned for the end of 2022. Site Manager Tobias Barth talks about the need to satisfy the very highest safety standards, so that anesthetics can also be handled in Barleben in future. “With our new logistics center, we will be in the champions league of pharmaceutical logistics,” says Barth. He mentions four state-of-the-art bays with a total logistics surface area of 42,000 square meters and two cold warehouses, so that FIEGE has different temperature zones at its disposal and can also handle sensitive medicinal products.

FIEGE offers workers stable, long-term employment

The family-owned business FIEGE, headquartered in Greven in Westphalia, will turn 150 in the year 2023. Now, in the 21st century, it is one of Europe’s most innovative logistics providers and has a workforce of over 23,000 at 133 sites in 16 countries. Sustainability is a key issue in its corporate strategy. “We are using sustainable construction materials for our new build in Barleben, for example, and the building will have solar panels and green façades.” Barth continues: “We are also ensuring the right conditions for an ideal charging infrastructure for electric vehicles at the Barleben site.”

FIEGE’s new logistics center in Barleben will create approximately 60 new jobs. Its employees will want for nothing, Barth assures us: “We intend the comfort and convenience of our modern buildings to positively impact our colleagues’ health and satisfaction.” The site manager stresses that FIEGE is living up to the “WELL Building Standard” in Barleben. This is an internationally certified rating system by the German Green Building Association that ensures sustainability in the construction and real estate industries.

One of the checked boxes when selecting the site in Saxony-Anhalt were Barleben’s good connections to the A2 highway to Berlin and the A14 to Leipzig and Halle (Saale).

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Octapharma expands its production capacity and logistics

Back in the early 1990s, Dessau-Roßlau's central location in the middle of Germany was one good reason for plasma fractionator Octapharma to establish a plant here for finishing its products. The family-run company from Lachen in Switzerland is one of the world's leading manufacturers of human protein products. It manufactures drugs from blood plasma and recombinant proteins, which are then used to treat bleeding disorders, to boost the body's immune system, and for use in intensive care. Semi-finished pharmaceuticals from production plants in Vienna, Lingolsheim, Stockholm and Springe are sent to the centrally located packaging and logistics center in Dessau-Roßlau.

"Our medicinal products are administered by syringe or drip and must satisfy all the good manufacturing practice (GMP) guidelines at all times," explains Thoralf Petzold, CEO of Octapharma Dessau GmbH. The firm was founded in 2013 and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Octapharma AG. Approximately 60 percent of all Octapharma products come to Dessau. There, not only do they go through a visual inspection, but they are also packaged as appropriate for each different country, i.e. provided with patient information leaflets, packed in collapsible cardboard boxes, and also supplied with alcohol swabs, if the client so wishes.

Octapharma Dessau delivers its products by truck and by plane from the nearby Leipzig/Halle Airport. Thanks to the excellent logistical connections to the A2, A14 and A9 highways, the Dessau company also runs its own logistics center. This currently coordinates incoming deliveries and outgoing shipments to 118 countries. "Octapharma AG is going to double its production capacity. Therefore, Octapharma Dessau is also investing in additional construction for finishing, warehousing, and shipment, and in new machines and technologies," says CEO Petzold. Construction is planned to start in 2023.

The current workforce of 245 is also set to grow. "As we grow, we also always bear in mind our social responsibility as an employer. In this region, the willingness to change and transform is in people's DNA. Most of them have already experienced a great deal of social change. This adaptability among our employees is a major factor in our choice of location in a rapidly changing world of work," Petzold asserts.

Certified processing at Leipzig/Halle Airport

With the ultra-modern and highly efficient Leipzig/Halle Airport, the "Airea" airport region of central Germany offers an international distribution network specifically geared to vaccine and medicine production in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Its key accounts include global pharmaceutical carriers such as Kühne+Nagel from Leipzig and Octapharma from Dessau-Roßlau. This is all made possible because PortGround, a sister company to the airport that specializes in aircraft and cargo handling, has obtained CEIV Pharma certification. CEIV is an international classification that stands for Center of



Excellence for Independent Validators in Pharmaceutical Logistics. It guarantees that sensitive, temperature-critical pharmaceutical products are handled in conformity with international standards.

“This quality seal states that we guarantee certified processing every step of the way at the airport – from the arrival of the pharmaceuticals to storage right through to loading for shipment,” says Mario Patyk, head of Cargo/Logistics Business Development at Mitteldeutsche Flughafen AG.

The proportion of freight from the pharmaceutical industry is constantly growing

Good connections to the trans-European highway and rail network are also important for the airport. After all, pharmaceutical shipments within Europe are loaded onto trucks here and transported to their destinations or to rail depots. “Our criteria are safety, stability, care and attention to detail 24/7,” says Patyk, in relation not just to transport, but also to the varying lengths of time pharmaceutical goods remain at Leipzig/Halle Airport. “We keep some products in storage here for a long time. We have a suitable infrastructure for this as well,” says Patyk. He also tells us that the proportion of freight from the pharmaceuticals industry turned around at Leipzig/Halle Airport is growing continuously.

The FlyPharma Conference Europe recently took place in Leipzig. This was the ninth since its inception in 2015 and the seventh to be held in Europe. FlyPharma Europe aims to bring pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical and biotech companies together with air freight and logistics services. Those attending the conference visited Leipzig/Halle Airport and discovered for themselves the outstanding conditions the location has to offer as a biotech and life sciences hub.

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PRESS-INFORMATION

Pharmaceuticals from scratch: “home-grown” Grit Müller leads Salutas Pharma GmbH in Barleben into the future

For Grit Müller, staying authentic at all levels is the greatest challenge. The 42-year-old has been CEO of Salutas Pharma GmbH, based in Barleben and Osterweddingen, since November 2021. As the boss of 1,300 employees and part of an international pharmaceutical corporation, she needs good communication skills to keep everyone pulling in the same direction. To continue to thrive in the future, close, trust-based cooperation between all levels is vital. Her career is a real success story “made in Saxony-Anhalt”!

From student job to management

A passion for the pharmaceuticals industry has been part of Müller’s life since childhood, and this continues today. Her mother worked at Dr. Fahlberg’s plant in Magdeburg, a predecessor to Salutas Pharma GmbH, and then became a sales representative for Hexal AG after German reunification. So, from an early age, product launches and packs of medicine were part of Müller’s everyday life. Although she originally wanted to become a journalist and therefore chose to study linguistics, her parents insisted that she take a degree in economics as additional insurance. And this combination is paying off today: while economics gives her a good head for business, linguistics has endowed her with invaluable “people skills”.

In fact, Müller only wanted a student job at Salutas Pharma GmbH in Barleben back in 2006. 15 years later, she became the company’s CEO. “I have taken root here and this continuous thread runs right through my career,” laughs Müller. Foreign placements during her studies took her to the UK, Russia and Switzerland. Here, she gained international experience and is now even more appreciative of the advantages of her Saxony-Anhalt homeland. She began an apprenticeship in management accounting in 2006, took on various posts at the company over the years, and has worked in nearly all business units. “It’s both a blessing and a curse,” she jokes. “But you can’t pull the wool over my eyes!” She sees processes clearly and is familiar with the challenges different members of staff face. What matters most to her is proximity, “because we’re a great team with a very high level of knowledge and expertise, and an attitude of sticking together. We have each other’s backs.”

Future primary provider of generics

Roughly 215 million packs of various medicines are produced every year in Barleben, and around 10 billion tablets in Osterweddingen. But from here, creams and ointments also find their way to the pharmacy. In Germany alone, one in ten patients gets their product from Salutas Pharma GmbH. Every pack branded Hexal, 1A or Sandoz destined for sale in Germany goes through the warehouse in Barleben. Exports go out to 85-plus countries. The company’s vision is to improve health care everywhere through affordable medicine. When, after 10 to 20 years, patent protection of a medicine is

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lifted, Salutas Pharma GmbH obtains the recipe and its own Drug Formulation department then optimizes it. Of course, the pharmaceutical industry is subject to extremely stringent standards, which are much higher than in the food industry, for example. Therefore, the company's buildings in Barleben also include stability chambers. Here, 7,400 batches a year are tested to confirm their stability under a variety of environmental influences. After all, "human lives could depend on the quality of our medicines, so we make no compromises." For Müller, the company, within the group, is one of the world's most complex and important future primary providers of generics.

International competition, skilled worker shortage, energy crisis

As a member of the global pharmaceutical group Novartis, Salutas Pharma GmbH in Saxony-Anhalt does of course also face competition from within Germany. While partners around the world share innovations and optimizations on the one hand, on the other hand cost efficiency and productivity are regularly put to the test. The pressure on prices and costs is palpable. "I have made a conscious decision to stay in my homeland," explains Müller. "Therefore, I'd like to make sure our location has a lasting future. We're one of the region's biggest employers and provide a lot of families with financial and social benefits." For this, she can rely on a stable and committed team. Staff turnover is low, and trust and cohesion have flourished over many years. At the same time, young talent provides a breath of fresh air: as many as 60 apprentices are currently learning their trade and are a vital element in overcoming the shortage of skilled workers.

Nevertheless, demographic change is having an impact. For many young people a three-shift schedule is no longer an attractive option. This is also why Salutas is turning to automation and digitalization. It has invested over 25 million euros at the Barleben and Osterweddingen sites in the past few years. This ensures better quality assurance, takes the strain off employees, and improves efficiency in the company.

Salutas has had an active interest in the subject of energy autonomy for some time, not just since the start of the ongoing energy crisis. Even back in 2010, the company invested around 20 million euros in its energy supply, to future-proof production. These days, energy costs are also a major factor in terms of competitiveness. Nearly 20 GWh of energy can now be generated using heat pumps, combined heat and power plants, steam boilers, solar panels, and numerous other new methods. Today, the company already produces over 40 percent of the electricity it needs itself. Further investments are planned to achieve even greater independence.

The company also needs to keep talking to politicians. This business location needs bolstering for the long term if it is to stand up to price pressure on the German generic drug market. Unlike many other industries, pharmaceutical production cannot pass on the rising costs of energy and materials. As CEO, in recent months Müller has stepped up the dialog between politicians and business. Members of the German parliament, state secretaries, and even the German Foreign Minister have all found their way to Barleben, to jointly discuss a secure supply of medicines "made in Saxony-Anhalt".



Müller believes her company is in a good position: “We are and will continue to be a reliable supplier of medicines.”

Author: Miriam Fuchs

Salutas Pharma GmbH Barleben - Facts & Figures

1886 Dr. Fahlberg brings the first saccharin factory into operation in Magdeburg

1992 The company is taken over by Hexal AG

1993 The production facility in Barleben is built

2005 Hexal AG is taken over by Novartis

The Barleben and Osterweddingen sites employ roughly 1,300 workers

Approx. 190 samples tested, 134 active ingredients and 369 formulations per day

3128 different finished pharmaceutical products

Production and packaging of 215 million packs or 10 million tablets and 18 million tubes per year

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PRESS-INFORMATION

Startups push the medtech industry

Saxony-Anhalt is a prime location for the chemical and pharmaceutical industry; specialist expertise has been thriving here for decades. The inspiring environment of innovative companies and business-oriented research institutes is a veritable incubator for ground-breaking startup ideas in the medtech sector.

Its name, “Change Work & World”, says it all, and CWW GmbH is the name of the startup from Dessau-Roßlau, which wants to create new ways of working in otherwise strictly regulated sectors. The founders come from the worlds of pharmaceuticals and chemistry and are familiar with these industries’ needs. Their stringent regulations concerning safety, approval and controls contrast sharply with dynamic changes in the economy due, for example, to the shortage of skilled workers, uncertain availability of materials, and changing supply chains. CWW is currently helping Merz Pharma Dessau, among other companies, to achieve modern working conditions. Rooms are being created for its employees, in which they can find solutions to the challenges faced. Virtual reality (VR) and mixed reality (MR) are among the resources used. CWW was founded in September 2020 and has since developed a digital platform for the life sciences and pharmaceuticals industry. On [CROWDBAG](#), specialist expertise can be sought and offered, with the aim of sharing knowledge, resolving problems, and generating innovations. When you log into CROWDBAG, you set up your own specialist profile. The algorithms work a bit like those on dating sites: questions asked are matched to the right expertise. A large part of this specialist knowledge comes from freelancers, who are paid by companies to solve their problems. The knowledge produced in this way isn’t lost but saved in the companies’ knowledge databases.

Easier and more accurately planned medical procedures

The Magdeburg-based startup InLine-Med develops assistive devices for minimally invasive procedures, in particular for diagnosing and treating cancer and for pain management. Until now, image-guided procedures have been hard work for the physicians carrying them out: with one arm they maneuver inside the patient’s tube, their head facing the monitor where they can view 2D images of the inside of the body. If the needle is incorrectly positioned, they could damage vessels or organs. Tools developed by InLine-Med provide clever assistance during this highly demanding task, simplify the work considerably, and therefore make procedures safer for patients and less taxing for treating physicians. Using the company’s in-house developed software, procedures can be accurately planned, and the optimum needle position calculated precisely in advance – safely past healthy tissue and vulnerable parts of the body. The physician homes in with the help of the marking grid developed and patented by InLine-Med. The right needle guide ensures high precision for the “shot”.

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Following constant further development, [InLine-Med](#)'s products are now suitable for all image-guided procedures in MRT and CT tubes. The market launch is planned for 2023.

“Assisted surfing” – Digitalization for seniors

The digitalization of our lives continues apace – but how can older members of the population keep up? The digital SenAssist was an inspirational idea by the [SenCircle](#) (senior circle) startup in Halle. SenAssist is an app, a kind of assistant, which helps elderly people to communicate safely via digital channels – with friends and relatives, their doctor, their bank, and online stores. SenCircle's package includes an email address and a tablet that is ready to go. Based on a survey of existing knowledge among users aged 65 and over, it has been tailored to their needs. The senior assistant guides you towards digital competence step by step, so that you can communicate via email, shop online, make online reservations, and use an electronic calendar, for example. For all these things, SenCircle offers you a safe digital space. Moreover, friends and relatives can be linked via an App if the user so wishes. The startup, which was founded in 2021, focuses on housing cooperatives, managed housing, and private landlords with a lot of older tenants – plus associations, banks, health insurance companies and interested communities as its target groups.

Fun activities with a touchscreen

A startup in Dessau-Roßlau has developed a digital interactive table, to prevent elderly people in care facilities from feeling shut out from the digital age. They call it the [CareTable](#). The initial idea arose during a master's thesis at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. Work carried out for the thesis showed that seniors are pleasantly open-minded when it comes to using touchscreens.

The interactive table has electric height and tilt adjustment and can be moved around on sturdy casters. The clearly designed, user-friendly touch display is 43 inches large. The apps were specially developed for senior care, providing cognitive-motor exercises and games and enabling the use of local media. Photos, videos and audio recordings from residents' own life experiences, in particular, help care staff to get conversations going.

The first CareTable arrived on the market in 2020 and the firm now works with more than 300 care facilities all over Germany.

Author: Kathrain Graubaum



BACKGROUND

20 years of Merz Pharma – a success story from the BioPharmaPark Dessau-Roßlau

Pharmaceutical specialist Merz is expanding its production capacity in Saxony-Anhalt and remains on track for growth

“Live better. Feel better. Look better”. This is the slogan with which international aesthetics and pharmaceutical company Merz Pharma GmbH & Co. KGaA advertises itself and its products. The company’s three business units are divided into Merz Aesthetics, Merz Therapeutics and Merz Consumer Care. Among other things, the Merz Group develops and manufactures products in aesthetic medicine, therapeutics for patients suffering from neurological movement disorders, and prescription drugs. The family-run firm has its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and has several production sites in Germany and elsewhere. The company also has a production facility at the BioPharmaPark Dessau-Roßlau. Here, the Merz Group also produces high-quality, special aesthetic and neurological products. And it has been doing this since back in 2002.

“Because of the specialist expertise available in this location and also the attractive options for expansion, setting ourselves up in the BioPharmaPark Dessau-Roßlau was a good decision,” says facility manager Björn Niemczak. At the park, pharmaceutical companies benefit from a well-functioning infrastructure and an excellent service network. They are supplied with the necessary electricity, water and other utilities by the Technik-Energie-Wasser Servicegesellschaft mbH (TEW) company as required for their production needs. TEW enables companies to focus on their core business and exploit the synergies arising from their partners at the site.

The park is one of 12 centres of excellence in Saxony-Anhalt. Situated in the middle of Europe and at the heart of Germany, the BioPharmaPark is a globally active centre for pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. The ultra-modern site, which is less than 100 kilometres from the busy cities of Berlin and Leipzig and covers an area of 136 hectares, is designed specifically to meet the industry’s needs, with tailor-made services and relocation opportunities. Moreover, the site is an ideal space for close collaboration between business and science, for innovative ideas and investments.

Merz also benefits from its proximity to the cities of Leipzig and Halle, Magdeburg and Berlin, which are centres of science, facility manager Niemczak explains. From these catchment areas, they welcome engineers, chemists, biologists, pharmacists and lab technicians. Starting with just two employees back in 2002, now Merz in Dessau-Roßlau has 200 employees with an average age of 37, who are responsible for nearly 50 percent of the corporation’s overall turnover. “The combination of experience, dynamism, passion and identification with the product and also our location has turned the development of Merz Dessau-Roßlau into a real success story. I am delighted with the pragmatic and goal-oriented approach to work here at the site, and I am highly motivated to continually further developing our site together with the team,” says Björn Niemczak.



Therefore, the anniversary celebrations at the beginning of September will mark not just the firm's 20 years of existence at the BioPharmaPark Dessau-Roßlau but also the fantastic successes that the company has achieved here. Over the past 20 years, the site has undergone steady development and expansion, with more than 70 million euros invested to date. Another 40 million euros are being invested right now to further expand production capacity and respond to the increased demand for Merz products. The result will be a state-of-the-art bottling plant with barrier isolator technology, which will create particle- and germ-free ambient conditions for the manufacture of sterile products.

The investment will also give rise to a multifunctional building that will house a warehouse and ancillary production processes, while also being a key element for downstream processes and the necessary support processes. With this expansion, Merz is underlining the company's strategic focus on its top-selling products Xeomin, used among other things for muscle cramps, and Bocouture, a special aesthetic product **for treating upper facial lines**. At the same time, 50 new jobs will be created.

To secure the future success of the plant at the BioPharmaPark, the company has set itself three goals that are to be pursued over the next ten years:

- Sustainable growth
- Environmental responsibility
- Social commitment.

What's more, Merz Dessau-Roßlau is currently launching a joint project with CWW (Change the Work & World) GmbH in Dessau-Roßlau and with the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation (IFF) in Magdeburg on the topic of "Smart Work", and is actively involved in recruiting skilled workers. The project aims to develop a concept of work that boosts **employees' productivity, flexibility and independence** through the **use of modern technology**. This way of working is intended to reduce the workload, foster free thinking and self-determination among employees and, as a consequence, increase worker satisfaction.

The company is also a "busy bee" when it comes to sustainability: Merz has recently established four bee colonies on some adjacent leased land. The grand "Bee Opening" was announced on social media on 29 April. The honey produced is to be made available to employees free of charge. In addition, every employee receives an Eco Foodbox, enabling the workforce to obtain healthy food from the BioPharmaPark's food truck and also avoid unnecessary packaging. The company is also investing in a local forest sponsorship scheme, e-mobility at its own site, and renewable energy projects.

At the anniversary celebration of Merz Pharma Dessau-Roßlau at the BioPharmaPark Dessau-Roßlau in early September, Stefanie Pöttsch, State Secretary at the Ministry of Economics, Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry, will also attend and say some words of welcome. Stefanie Pöttsch had this to say in the run-up to the celebration: "Saxony-Anhalt is a modern and aspirational place for the national and international



SACHSEN-ANHALT

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pharmaceutical industry. The BioPharmaPark Dessau-Roßlau – one of our state's 12 centres of excellence – offers optimum conditions for the company's further growth." Roughly 5,300 people are employed by the pharmaceutical industry. The spectrum of companies ranges from subsidiaries of global players to pharmaceutical plants with decades of tradition, all the way to modern biotech firms. Overall turnover reached nearly 1.8 billion euros in 2021. The industry is a key growth engine for the economy of Saxony-Anhalt.

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FlyPharma: „airea – The Airport Region in Central Germany“ presents itself as an attractive location for the international pharmaceutical industry

„airea - The Airport Region in Central Germany" is one of the top national and global addresses for the pharmaceutical and biotech industry. With efficient manufacturers, bio-logistics specialists and a broad-based and highly innovative research landscape, there are ideal development conditions and connecting factors for companies and investors in the industry. They will be presented by the three partners of "airea", Mitteldeutsche Flughafen AG (MFAG), Wirtschaftsförderung Sachsen GmbH (WFS) and Investitions- und Marketinggesellschaft Sachsen-Anhalt mbH (IMG) at the FlyPharma industry event.

“The region scores with efficient production and supplier structures and a structure of professional and technical expertise that has grown over many years. This is essential for the industry due to the complexity of the products and processes, which underlines its attractiveness for companies and investors. We want to present this to a wider audience at FlyPharma,” explains WFS Managing Director Thomas Horn.

As a region, "airea" covers the entire value chain: from research and development via production and marketing to logistics and service. The highly modern and efficient Leipzig/Halle airport location also has a CEIV pharmaceutical certification and is able to handle temperature- and time-critical pharmaceutical shipments such as vaccines around the clock. It is thus part of the pharmaceutical trade routes that meet uniform global standards. The airport offers an international distribution network specifically geared towards the production of vaccines and medicines in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. In total, more than 70 cargo airlines fly to the airport and serve a route network that includes more than 270 destinations worldwide.

Götz Ahmelmann, CEO of MFAG: "Handling temperature- and time-critical cargo is already an everyday business for us, which we want to expand further. From FlyPharma we are hoping for a stronger international perception

of "airea". We want to become even more visible to investors and thus generate positive impulses for the marketing of our space."

In addition to excellent connections to the trans-European rail and motorway network, the region is characterised by a qualified workforce and a high level of space and investment potential. In the Leipzig/Halle airport area, attractive spaces are available for a variety of businesses - for example directly at the airport or near Halle (Saale), Bernburg, Sandersdorf-Brehna and Wermsdorf. Especially for the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors and related service providers, settling in the airport region is attractive.

Mathias Obieglo, IMG project management coordinator: "Newly settled companies in the pharmaceutical and logistics industry will find the best location conditions for investment and growth here and can optimally bring time-critical freight from the heart of Germany to its destination. Whether they are international corporations, innovative medium-sized companies or young start-ups - the companies particularly appreciate the potential of interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral cooperation."

More information at: www.airea-central-germany.de

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