

Forging strong business partnerships together



The first Business and Investors Forum China takes place in Düsseldorf on September 2, 2011. Around 400 guests from industry and politics are expected.

The Business and Investors Forum China 2011 provides leading players in the Chinese and German economies with a platform on which to exchange knowledge, concepts and experiences as well as to initiate new business relations at the investment location North Rhine-Westphalia. The aim of the conference organized by NRW.INVEST and entitled „China – North Rhine-Westphalia: Forging strong business partnerships together!“ is to further intensify cooperation between the two states. The focus is on the future industries for German-Chinese investments: telecommunications/IT, the steel industry and electromobility.

The key note of the event will be given by former German Chancellor Dr. h.c. Gerhard Schröder. Welcoming speeches will be held by Harry K. Voigtsberger, Minister for Economic Affairs, Energy, Construction, Housing and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, and Qiming Li, President of the Investment Association of China. Numerous distinguished company representatives will shed light on the general economic conditions for Chinese investors in Germany.

Today, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia is a leading location for Chinese companies in Germany. Some 700 Chinese firms are at home in North Rhine-Westphalia, while 1,400 North Rhine-Westphalian companies have already invested in China.

Great demand for industrial and logistics spaces



In North Rhine-Westphalia the occupancy rate for industrial and logistics real estate rose in the first half of 2011 by 80 percent to 545,000 square meters.

This significant increase is due in particular to the investments made by the retail companies Amazon (110,000 square meters) and Rossmann (30,000 square meters). This was the result of a market analysis conducted by the realtor consulting company Realogis. The number of rented spaces between 2,500 and 5,000 square meters also rose considerably in the period analyzed. This means that small and medium-sized companies are also looking more and more for real estate.

In a comparison of the regions, the Ruhr Metropolis is at the very front. In the first half of 2011, approx. 275,000 square meters of space were occupied, more than double that of the same period in the prior year. Lettings in the Düsseldorf, Mönchengladbach and Lower Rhine regions rose by nearly 67 percent to 160,000 square meters. The large investments by Amazon in Werne and Rheinberg contributed significantly to the good results. In the Cologne-Bonn-Aachen region, rental turnover was more than 15 percent higher than the prior year's level at around 110,000 square meters.

Recognition of bold and innovative investments



For the seventh time, NRW.INVEST GmbH and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia presented the NRW.INVEST AWARDS for bold and innovative investments in the state.

The awards in the categories „Innovation“, „Expansion Investment“ and „New Investment“ were presented on July 11, 2011 in Düsseldorf. The American company Edgetech Europe won the award in the „Innovation“ category. At its first German plant in Heinsberg the company produces innovative, energy-saving plastic spacer systems for insulation glazing. The award for „Expansion Investment“ went to the Japanese automotive supplier DENSO Automotive Deutschland GmbH, which considerably expanded its research and development center in Wegberg-Oval. Finally, the winner in the „New Investment“ category was the Polish company SECESPOL Deutschland GmbH, a leading provider of high-performance heat exchangers which opened its first German office in Düsseldorf in March 2010. It received the NRW.INVEST AWARD as a representative of the roughly 200 Polish companies in North Rhine-Westphalia.

At the award ceremony, Harry K. Voigtsberger, Minister for Economic Affairs, Energy, Construction, Housing and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, emphasized: „Foreign companies are growing at an above-average rate in North Rhine-Westphalia. They provide innovation and dynamism. We want to honor these achievements with the presentation of the NRW.INVEST AWARDS 2011.“

Two gas and turbine power stations for the energy turnaround



Two state-of-the-art gas and steam turbine power stations are to be built in Hürth-Knapsack and Krefeld.

The Norwegian energy company Statkraft is expanding its power station capacities at Chemiepark Knapsack. At the end of June 2011, Europe's largest

producer of renewable energies received building and operating permission from the Cologne regional authority for a second combined-cycle gas and steam turbine power station. The planned plant is one of the most modern power stations of its kind in the world and has a generation capacity of around 430 megawatts and conversion efficiency of nearly 60 percent. When construction work is completed in 2013 the plant will supply up to 500,000 households with electricity.

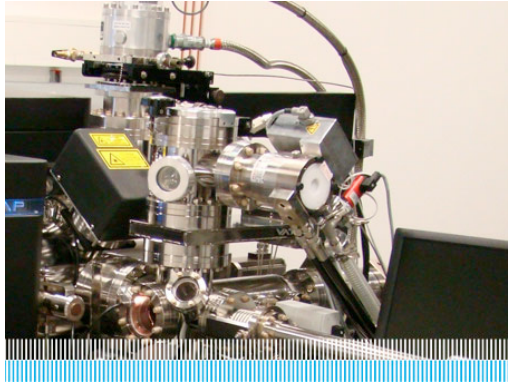
In accordance with the shareholders' resolution of the Trianel public utilities network, a further combined-cycle power station is to be built at Chempark in Krefeld. The new power station with an investment volume of 600 million euros is scheduled for commissioning in 2017 and will supply 1,200 megawatts of electricity.

The two gas and steam turbine power stations are low on emissions and, due to their flexibility, they perfectly compensate for fluctuations occurring during the generation of energy from wind and solar power.

New high-performance steel with potential for the automotive industry

Scientists at the Max Planck Institute for Iron Research in Düsseldorf have developed a high-performance steel which is firm yet malleable, lightweight and economical.

The basis of the high-performance material is ultra-high-strength steel with a low carbon and high nickel content. As nickel is a very expensive alloying component, the scientists reduced the nickel proportion, which considerably decreases costs. In addition to reducing costs, they discovered an effect which makes the material considerably more malleable.



„We have developed a steel which is firm and at the same time malleable and ultra-light. This helps in the manufacture of complicated parts and increases safety in, for example, automotive applications,“ says Dr. Dirk Ponge, Group Head at the Max Planck Institute for Iron Research.

The new material is interesting for automobile manufacturers as the weight reduction goes hand in hand with lower energy consumption and hence lower CO₂ emissions.

New impetus for intercorporate cooperation in the tri-border region



The goal of the newly founded „Top Technology Cluster“ (TTC) is to promote technology-oriented cooperation between companies in the tri-border region.

„Where scientific-technological potential is concerned, the regions of the southern Netherlands, eastern Belgium and western North Rhine-Westphalia can boast excellent results. However, this potential is still not sufficiently exploited in economic terms, and certainly not across national borders,“ says Project Manager Ralf P. Meyer of the economic development agency AGIT. In order to change this situation, 19 company networks, universities and development agencies from the seven Euroregion regions have pooled their resources in the TTC. The cluster wants to bring technology-oriented companies with targeted network events and workshops. With a volume of five million euros it is the largest funded Interreg project in the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion.

It emerged from an advance international benchmarking study that cross-border cooperation in the fields life sciences, information and communication technology, energy and new materials holds great future promise.

Düsseldorf International Airport bucks the trend



The growth trend at Düsseldorf International Airport continues. In the first six months of 2011, around 9.3 million passengers passed through Germany's third-largest airport.

This corresponds to an increase in passenger numbers of approx. 10.8 percent compared to the previous year. Düsseldorf Airport is therefore growing more strongly than the German market and is the only airport in North Rhine-Westphalia to have gained market shares. For the year as a whole the airport expects to surpass the record level of 20 million passengers.

The continuing growth dynamic with regard to passengers is based on the development of the airport into an air traffic hub. With their high growth rates, the two largest German airlines, Lufthansa and Air Berlin, ensure a large traffic volume in Düsseldorf. Overall, the share of transit traffic in Düsseldorf has grown continuously since 2008 to the present level of nearly eleven percent of total traffic.

The route portfolio in Düsseldorf has also been expanded. Air China, for example, has been offering a direct flight to Peking since the end of March.

NTN celebrates half a century in North Rhine-Westphalia



NTN, one of the world's leading manufacturers of roller bearings, has been based in North Rhine-Westphalia for 50 years. The Japanese company has also been producing here for 40 years.

The German activities of the leading Japanese roller bearing manufacturer began in 1961 with the establishment of NTN Wälzlager Europa GmbH. Since the 1970s the company has been based in Erkrath, where NTN produces

roller bearings for industry as well as for the automotive and aerospace sectors. With NTN Kugellagerfabrik (ball bearing factory) established in Mettmann in 1971, the Japanese company is also a pioneer. At the time, NTN was the first Japanese company to have a production plant in Europe. The President of NTN, Yasunobu Suzuki, flew in from Osaka for the anniversary celebration.

North Rhine-Westphalia is one of the most important and successful trade partners for Japan. Around 500 Japanese call it their home, and more than 120 of these have their European headquarters in the economic region. The sectors industrial goods, telecommunications, IT, chemicals, trade and services are particularly well represented.

First graduates in the master's degree course "German and Turkish Business Law"



Eleven German and Turkish students have successfully completed the master's degree course „German and Turkish Business Law“.

During his trip to Turkey in June 2011, Harry K. Voigtsberger, Minister for Economic Affairs, Energy, Construction, Housing and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, congratulated the students on their unique graduation. „With this joint study course Istanbul Bilgi University and the University of Cologne have launched a unique model for success. I am certain there is great demand for lawyers who are home in the business law of both countries. And in view of the flourishing German-Turkish economic relations it will continue to grow further,“ said Voigtsberger at a ceremony held at Istanbul Bilgi University.

The two-semester master's degree course was set up in the 2010/2011 winter semester by the law departments of the University of Cologne and Istanbul Bilgi University.

Innovative wind power technology with support from North Rhine-Westphalia

The Spanish firm Kliux Energies – Geólica Innovations SL has developed a new technology for the utilization of wind energy. The material for the rotors comes from Bayer MaterialScience.



The Kliux wind generators are based on special rotors which are mounted vertically and hence always face into the wind. This means that they can be erected at practically any location in order to generate electricity for local consumption.

An integral foam based on the Baydur polyurethane system from Bayer MaterialScience is used for the rotor blades as it fulfills the high requirements with regard to strength and lightweight design extremely well.

The wind generators already produce electricity at a wind speed of just four meters per second. With a nominal capacity of four kilowatts the plant covers the average electricity consumption of a single-family home. In future there will also be a 50-centimeter-high miniature version of the wind generator for boats, caravans and camping sites, etc.

Amazon tops out in Rheinberg



Only four months after announcing the investment project, the American online retailer Amazon held the topping-out ceremony for its new logistics center in Rheinberg.

Amazon plans to put the 110,000 square meter logistics center in operation on the Lower Rhine in November 2011. Completely in keeping with this ambitious schedule, the building permit procedures were put in motion immediately following the location decision in the spring. The final building permit was obtained at the end of May. The short processing time was due in particular to the committed cooperation between the municipal planning and all other approving authorities.

During its search for a location the company received intensive support from NRW. INVEST. Rheinberg scored points due to its favorable traffic location with links to the A57 and A42 freeways, the existing employee potential in the surrounding region and the good cooperation with the town authorities.