Welcome!

Saxony has many pictures which tell many tales and create lots of history: The digital heart of the microelectronics / ICT industry beats in Dresden. Geared towards the future, researchers and young entrepreneurs between Leipzig and Dresden are working hand in hand in the sectors life sciences and environmental technology.

The traditional heart of Saxony’s economy is found in the Chemnitz-Zwickau region. Whether it be mechanical engineering or more than 100 years of »Autoland Saxony« – strong and highly efficient industries have evolved from smart ideas and intelligent solutions.

The commercial center Leipzig is a vibrant and bustling trade fair and media city; its airport is Europe’s most modern air cargo hub providing 24/7 services.

And Saxony enchants. Germany’s number one travel destination for culture enthralles residents and tourists alike – with a superb blend of a remarkable historical heritage, a wide range of cultural attractions, and great natural beauty.

To make a long story short: Saxony is a top location for such globally active enterprises as, for example, Volkswagen, BMW, and Porsche, GLOBALFOUNDRIES and Infineon, DHL, NILES-SIMMONS-HEGENSCHEIDT, and many more.

Curious to learn more? Then read on!

Free Tickets

Do you prefer watching instead of reading? - Then just swipe your smartphone* (with activated NFC) across the tickets. Or use the printed QR code. Now you’re set to go! It’s time to raise the curtain for »SAXONY!«

* For current Android and Windows Phone devices. Using NFC for the first time might require downloading a free app.
SAXONY!

MOBILE
Infrastructure & Location
Due to its advantageous geographic location, Saxony is the ideal logistics location for distributing goods throughout Europe, regardless of the direction. The region around Leipzig is one of Germany’s most dynamic logistics locations.

Its central location has proven to be a real geographical advantage for Saxony. Which is why the logistics giant DHL decided to relocate its European air cargo hub from Brussels to Leipzig. At Leipzig / Halle Airport, cargo liners can be handled 24 hours per day and 365 days per year; the best possible prerequisite for mastering the constantly increasing airfreight volume. In addition to Cincinnati (USA) and Hong Kong (China), Leipzig is DHL’s third global hub.

Saxony’s road network is one of the best developed systems in all of Germany. Near Dresden, Europe’s most important routes intersect – the E 40 (France – Kazakhstan) and the E 55 (Sweden – Greece).
Rail transportation is one of Saxony's strong points. Germany's first long-distance train traveled from Dresden to Leipzig already back in 1839. Today, the region possesses one of Europe's densest rail networks. Three highly efficient Elbe River inland ports have been expanded into transportation interfaces of water, road, and rail. These ports connect Saxony with the North German seaports and, thus, with international maritime trade.

Saxony is connected via the Elbe River, a federal waterway, to the North German seaports and, thus, international trade. Together with the Rhine River, the Elbe River is the busiest waterway in Germany. Three high-performance Elbe River ports in Saxony have been expanded into modern interfaces of water, road, and rail. They offer complete logistics solutions in container and general cargo transportation as well as in handling oversized and heavy cargo shipments.

As the interface between different modes of transport, Saxony's tri-modal Cargo Distribution Centers (GVZ) in the industrial hubs around Chemnitz, Dresden, and Leipzig offer customized logistics solutions around the clock.
SAXONY!

DYNAMIC
Economy & Industry Sectors
Already in the 18th century, the Industrial Age began in Saxony with the founding of the first machine construction companies. The region, thus, headed the field on the European mainland. The first locomotive to be designed and engineered in Germany, the first six-cylinder engine, the centrally positioned gearshift lever in automobiles – all of these pioneering innovations come from Saxony.

In the mid-19th century, the industrial cities Chemnitz, Zwickau, and their suburbs were the region with Europe’s highest per-capita income.

And the success story continues: Since 1990, about 6,000 companies have set up or purchased business premises in Saxony. Saxony’s economy has increased by more than 20 percent since 2000; thus, exhibiting the second highest GDP growth rate of all German federal states.

»Autoland Saxony«

With five sites operated by Volkswagen, BMW, and Porsche, »Autoland Saxony« is one of Germany’s top automobile locations. This strong commitment is no coincidence. The experience dates back more than one hundred years to the time when the legendary August Horch founded the brands »HORCH« and, later, also »Audi« in Saxony.

»Autoland Saxony« – that’s not just the renowned manufacturers. Approximately 750 supply companies with more than 81,000 employees form the backbone of Saxony’s automobile construction.

The automobile industry contributes more than one fourth to the total turnover and over one third to the foreign sales of Saxony’s industry.

Picture below left
A true historic eyewitness: The halls with the prominent round arch facade were built as a machine tool factory around 1900. Here, the Saxon Museum of Industry Chemnitz has been showcasing numerous treasures from 200 years of Saxony’s industrial history on 4,500 sqm of exhibition space since 2003.

Picture below center
Specializing in »rapid prototyping« for castings, the Freiberg-based ACTech GmbH produces prototypes for more than 1,000 customers in 36 countries. With its innovative procedure, the company achieves time and cost savings of up to 80 percent (see picture: steel casting of a mold).

Picture below right
The striking building of the Customer Center of the Porsche Leipzig Plant can be seen from afar. Porsche’s bestsellers are manufactured in the adjacent production halls – the compact SUV model Macan, the sports sedan Panamera, and the SUV Cayenne. The number of employees has grown from 259 when the plant opened in 2002 to 4,000 today.
The Cradle of German Mechanical Engineering

Saxony can justifiably call itself the cradle of German mechanical engineering. The ingenious Chemnitz entrepreneur Carl Friedrich Bernhard returned to Saxony from a »business trip« to England with the spinning master and machine builder Evan Evans. With the help of Evans, Bernhard transformed the spinning mill of his family in Harthau into the world’s largest mechanical spinning mill as of 1798. This marks the beginning of the triumphant start of industrialization and the virtually unparalleled success story of this industry sector in Saxony.

Still today, machines produced in Chemnitz enjoy an excellent reputation throughout the world. For example, such corporate groups as NILES-SIMMONS-HEGENSCHEIDT and Starrag are active in Chemnitz and on the global market. Germany’s oldest still existing toolmaking factory – the UNION Werkzeugmaschinen GmbH in Chemnitz – is a leading manufacturer of boring mills and machining centers.

Prof. Dr. Hans J. Naumann «We selected Chemnitz as our corporate headquarters and, thus, also the headquarters of the NILES-SIMMONS-HEGENSCHEIDT holding company because we wanted to send a clear signal that the NILES-SIMMONS-HEGENSCHEIDT Group has its decision-making center in Saxony. With the large pool of competent and highly skilled professionals as well as the superb research landscape available here, we’re continuing the tradition of manufacturing world-class, innovative machine tools made in Saxony and marketing them internationally.»

(Managing Partner, NILES-SIMMONS-HEGENSCHEIDT Group)
Every second chip produced in Europe bears the imprint «Made in Saxony». GLOBALFOUNDRIES and Infineon Technologies have expanded and continue to expand their Dresden Fabs into the world’s most modern semiconductor production sites. Saxony’s companies and research institutions are the global leaders primarily in such innovative fields as MEMS/sensors, Tactile Internet/5G, organic & flexible electronics, and automation technology.

To make a long story short: »Silicon Saxony« is Europe’s largest microelectronics cluster; and the fifth largest worldwide. Approximately 2,200 companies with about 58,000 employees develop, manufacture, and promote integrated circuits, serve the chip industry as materials and equipment suppliers, produce and distribute electronic products and systems based on integrated circuits, or develop and promote software.

»Silicon Saxony«

The Novaled GmbH is a global leader when it comes to those technologies which are required for the production of particularly efficient and durable organic light-emitting diodes (OLEDs). Since 2013, Novaled has been a part of the Samsung Group. The technologies made in Dresden are found today around the globe in most smartphones and tablets with OLED screens.

Infineon Technologies Dresden GmbH is one of the largest production sites of the Infineon Group. The company manufactures premium quality chips for innovative automotive and safety applications. About 80 percent of the current staff of approximately 2,000 employees come from the region.

The Dresden-based Heliatek GmbH is the technological leader for flexible, organic solar foils. Currently, the company holds the world record in organic solar cell efficiency with 13.2 percent.
Environmental Technology and Life Sciences

Saxony’s long tradition as a mining region has imparted regional companies and research institutes superb expert knowledge in the rehabilitation of post-mining damages and in the disposal of hazardous waste. In particular, the Freiberg region is considered to be the leading European center for research and development on the topic resource and energy efficiency. In addition, Saxony’s entrepreneurs and researchers also focus on renewable energies and energy storage.

Looking back on a 120 year success story in the pharmaceutical industry, Saxony is one of Germany’s most dynamic life science regions today. Approximately 250 biotechnology, medical technology, and pharmaceutical companies – including GlaxoSmithKline with the flu vaccine center in Dresden – cooperate successfully with more than 30 research institutions focusing on the sectors regenerative medicine/therapies/diagnostics, molecular bioengineering, bioinformatics, nano biotechnology as well as pharmacogenetics.

Dr. Paul Rheinländer »In Eickhoff’s 150 years of company history, Klipphausen was the first new business setup outside Bochum – and it has proven to be an excellent choice. Saxony’s public authorities assisted us right from the start. That’s why we were able to launch mass production only 18 months after the cornerstone ceremony. The well educated and highly skilled employees we found here are also an important aspect for us.«

(CEO, Eickhoff Group)
Saxony has the brightest minds. 96 percent of the Saxons have earned at least a university entrance diploma or have completed vocational training. – For example, the OECD average amounts to »only« 76 percent.

No wonder. Since Saxony has the most efficient educational system of all German federal states. This is the result – already for the eleventh time in a row now – of the Education Monitor, a comparative study conducted by the Cologne Institute for Economic Research (IW). According to this study, Saxony’s specific strong points primarily include its support infrastructure, overall school quality, research orientation, avoiding educational deprivation, and the so-called MINT qualifications, i.e. mathematics, informatics, natural sciences, and technology.

And on top of all that: The excellent education and training of the people in Saxony comes along with exceptional motivation and commitment. Every year, Saxons work 57 hours longer than the German average – voluntarily and solution-oriented. Innovative companies from all around the world appreciate that.
More than Standard

Saxony’s universities provide more than just the usual standard: A globally unique master’s degree course – »Organic and Molecular Electronics« – is taught at Dresden University of Technology. In an entirely new, practically oriented instructional approach, the disciplines physics, chemistry, electrical engineering, and materials sciences are closely tied to one another.

The Freiberg University of Mining and Technology applies its 250 years of materials competence to instruction. For example, those who graduate from the program of studies »Electronic and Sensor Materials«, which is unique in all of Germany, are in high demand among semiconductor companies. In addition, the interdisciplinary Diplom-degree course »Nanotechnology« is available in Freiberg.

Together with the Chemnitz Chamber of Crafts, the Zwickau University of Applied Sciences (WHZ) has developed an attractive educational model for electrical engineering as well as for supply and environmental engineering. It permits the skilled professionals of the future to get their apprenticeship and master’s certificates parallel to their Diplom-degree within a period of only five (instead of the usual eight) years. These studies are completed with vocational training in a company while studying at the university.

The private Dresden International University provides the truly »global« master’s degree course »Clinical Research.« Its special feature: The classroom is virtual. With the help of ultramodern live videoconference technology, elite universities from around the globe impart the fundamentals of clinical research at the highest level. The course »Principles and Practice of Clinical Research,« for example, is created by the Harvard Medical School. Dresden’s University Hospital »Carl Gustav Carus« supports the students with financial subsidies.

Hands-on Vocational Training

Companies rely on skilled employees from Saxony – and they train and educate them here as well: As a subsidiary of the Volkswagen Sachsen
17GmbH, the Volkswagen Bildungsinstitut GmbH educational institution with locations in Zwickau and Chemnitz has been providing vocational training, continued education, and human resource development services to the VW parent company, other corporate units as well as to suppliers and other companies in Saxony since 1990.

The University of Applied Sciences for Telecommunications Leipzig (HfTL) with the Deutsche Telekom AG as its trustee is the only German university with a specific focus on information and communication technologies. Currently, about 1,200 students are being educated in direct, dual, or specific work and study programs as ICT specialists.

In close cooperation with industry partners, the dresden chip academy (dca) provides education and training in the sectors microtechnology, microsystems technology, mechatronics, electronics, automation and semiconductor technology, and solar technology. There are also cooperative degree courses in microtechnology, mechatronics, and production technology. Applications of qualified school graduates at the dca lead to cooperative apprenticeship contracts with such companies as, for example GLOBALFOUNDRIES or Infineon Technologies Dresden.
A great plus for Saxony is its extraordinary innovative power. This has been repeatedly confirmed by the EU’s »Regional Innovation Scoreboard«. Saxony is a European »innovation leader.« The region scores points, for example, with the educational level of its employees, the amount of investments made in R&D, the number of patents, the close cooperation between the research and business communities, and the high proportion of employees working in R&D.

Students at Saxony’s universities are actively supported in the implementation of innovative business ideas. The highest subsidy rate per student, the largest number of competitions for business founders as well as the highest approval rate when it comes to applications for subsidies all assure that Saxony has a particularly high number of successful spin-offs. And a top position in a nationwide comparison of conditions for business founders.

Saxony not only has a high concentration of outstanding universities, but also a strong presence of non-university research institutions and industrial research facilities.

Science – Facts and Figures

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Excellent University Research

Physicians and biotechnologists at Dresden University of Technology’s Research Center for Regenerative Therapies Dresden (CRTD) learn from the «axolotl», a Mexican salamander, how organs and limbs can be regrown and regenerated. Just one of the many spectacular projects which make Saxony a leading global research venue for high tech industries.

The CRTD is not the only «Cluster of Excellence» – a research center subsidized by the German Federal Government – in Saxony. The 60 scientists at the globally unique «Center for Advancing Electronics Dresden (cfaed)» literally see themselves as «pathfinders». A number of parallel and interdisciplinary «research paths» (for example, material or system oriented) at the Universities of Technology of Dresden and Chemnitz as well as at nine participating non-university research institutes are all designed to reach a common goal – the development of innovative information technologies that meet the requirements of the future.

The Helmholtz Center Dresden-Rossendorf e. V. (HZDR) coordinates together with the Fraunhofer Society the establishment of Europe’s largest resource network on behalf of the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT). Until 2022, a total of 410 million euros will be available for »EIT RawMaterials« with the objective of developing new procedures and products for the sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, and recycling of raw materials. The network will unite 116 universities, research centers, and companies from 22 countries. An important partner is also the Freiberg University of Mining and Technology. The »EIT RawMaterials – Regional Center Freiberg« has been established here since September 2015.
Within the scope of the cluster of excellence »cfaed«, research is also conducted on the real-time interaction of robots and humans. The »test object« is a gesture-controlled NAO robot (shown in the picture) which could help, for example, with the housework in the future.

The technologies developed within the scope of the »MERGE« cluster are to be incorporated into a system demonstrator – the »Chemnitz Car Concepts« – by 2017. Part of the new seat structure is a light and comfortable headrest which was produced in a multi-material lightweight design out of plastics and textile reinforcement structures.

The microchip »Tomahawk 2« developed by the Vodafone Chair at Dresden's University works twenty times faster than comparable chips while consuming only one fiftieth of the energy. It is intended for the development of the »Tactile Internet« which will permit the real-time control of robots and will also ring in the age of driverless driving.

And the Chemnitz University of Technology is »excellent« as well – with its cluster »Merge Technologies for Multifunctional Lightweight Structures (MERGE)«. Throughout Germany, MERGE is the only interdisciplinary cluster for the future key technology lightweight construction.

Focusing on the Future

Saxony’s researchers and entrepreneurs play a decisive role in developing intelligent solutions for everyday use in the future – always with an eye towards a practical application: The electric car of the future will be light, efficient, and affordable. Scientists from Dresden University of Technology’s Institute of Lightweight Engineering and Polymer Technology (ILK) have been working together with experts from the Leichtbau-Zentrum Sachsen GmbH and the ThyssenKrupp AG on an ultralight electric car suitable for everyday use that can be mass-produced. The project vehicle »InEco®« weighs less than 900 kilograms and is to interest primarily short-distance drivers in densely populated urban areas. Particularly innovative is the unique blend of crash compatible steel and lightweight, carbon fiber-reinforced plastics in the car body and chassis.
Researchers at Chemnitz University of Technology’s Institute for Print and Media Technology (IPM) print transistors and batteries, loudspeakers and solar cells on flexible plastic foils or even paper – cost-efficient, color-printable, and freely shapeable. The future fields of application are multifaceted – ranging from the »singing« living room wallpaper to the time-saving »one-beep-registration« of merchandise at the supermarket checkout via RFID labels all the way to »smart textiles« which monitor the health status of the person wearing them.

The global technology leader in the organic photovoltaics (OPV) sector, the Dresden-based Heliatek GmbH, is able to turn glass facades and panoramic car roofs into energy collectors. With 6 percent, the company holds the world record in efficiency for flexible cells with a translucence of 50 percent. Initial pilot projects – for example, in China and Singapore – permitted Heliatek to successfully test the use of the HeliaFilm® solar foil on building facades and roofs made of glass, concrete, and PVC membranes. HeliaFilm® is produced with a globally unique roll-to-roll process in Dresden.

The Vodafone Chair of Mobile Communications Systems at Dresden University of Technology is the leading research institute for the mobile communication of the next generation (5G). Together with Vodafone, the Chair developed already the LTE successor; namely, »LTE Advanced.« The first transmitters were activated in 2013. In cooperation with Vodafone, it was possible to set a new world record (10.2 Gbit/s) in mobile data transmission outside the lab in 2015. Further industrial partners of the research team include such global players as, for example, Deutsche Telekom, National Instruments, Nokia, and Huawei. In order to develop 5G even further, the endowed chair founded the »5G Lab Germany« in which more than 500 scientists conduct research together.

Energy and resource efficiency is a decisive competitive factor in each and every industrial production. The first »E³ Research Factory« where research is conducted on solutions for the »Resource-efficient Production« of tomorrow was officially inaugurated at the Chemnitz-based Fraunhofer Institute for Machine Tools and Forming Technology IWU in 2014. On more than 1,600 sqm of floor space, the Fraunhofer Society works in close cooperation with such industrial enterprises as, for example, the Volkswagen Group, in the competence areas »Powertrain«, »Car Body Construction« and »Energy Management 2.0.«
Saxons master their lives with cleverness and commitment, but also with pleasure and joy. How about some tips to immerse yourself into the way of life in Saxony? – Please continue reading!

For Drifters & Discoverers

Those who have just taken a stroll through the baroque »Florence on the Elbe River« while also admiring Dresden’s Frauenkirche Church will be able to experience modern electromobility »hands-on« almost next door – at Volkswagen’s »Transparent Factory«. Visitors to the »City of Trade Fairs and Media«, Leipzig, can go on an exciting journey through time spanning the history of the earth at Leipzig Zoo’s »Gondwanaland« or they can experience a thrilling cross-country drive with the »Macan« at the customer center of the Porsche factory. Chemnitz, the »City of Modernity«, provides a program full of contrast, ranging from industrial history to modern art.
And Saxony’s smaller cities are also well worth discovering: Meißen, which looks back on a thousand years of history; Torgau, the cradle of the Reformation; Annaberg-Buchholz in the Erzgebirge Mountains with its long and rich mining tradition; or Bautzen, the medieval »City of Towers.«

Saxony also enchants with such magnificent landscapes as Saxon Switzerland and its bizarre rock formations, the rolling hills of the wine growing region along the Elbe River surrounding Dresden and Meißen, the Erzgebirge Mountains which are particularly spectacular in the Christmas season, or the dreamy heaths and ponds region of Upper Lusatia.
Joie de Vivre

Saxon joie de vivre is expressed by the many celebrations and festivals ranging between classic and cult, high culture and regional atmosphere. Such theater and music productions as the Dresden Music Festival, the Festival of Contemporary European Theater »euro-scene,« or the International Dixieland Festival all typify the multifaceted cultural life.

And when it comes to the other senses, Saxony can also provide a broad range of programs. Come taste and savor fine and exquisite wines at one of the wine festivals in the Elbe River valley. Be tempted by the seductive scents on the Christmas markets in the Erzgebirge Mountains. Enjoy the panoramic views of Dresden’s old town while watching thrilling movie highlights at the »Movie Nights along the Elbe River,« Germany’s largest open air movie festival.
Come and Have a Look!

More than 1,000 palaces, castles, and gardens lure visitors to the knightly Middle Ages, to the opulent Baroque, or to the enlightened Renaissance. Follow the footsteps of Elector August »the Strong« to Pillnitz Palace and Park. Or those of his unfortunate mistress Countess Cosel to her prison at Stolpen Castle. Experience knightly romance at Gnandstein Castle, and smile at the »graffiti« left behind by medieval rascals in the rooms of Rochlitz Palace.

A host of adventures can also be found at the 400 museums in Saxony. Do you want to discover fabulous, sparkling treasures? Then you should visit the »Green Vault« or the »Turkish Chamber« in Dresden. Or do you love technical history? Then a visit to the »August Horch Museum« in Zwickau or to the Saxon Museum of Industry Chemnitz will be perfect for you.

And last but not least, another tip: Experiencing wood crafts from the Erzgebirge Mountains in a totally different way – this will come true in the »Manufacture of Dreams« in Annaberg-Buchholz.
Passion, energy, and a whole lot of soul – these are the ingredients of arts and crafts made in Saxony. Fine porcelain from Meißen, watches made in Glashütte, or Plauen Lace enjoy renown and repute around the globe. They represent exciting chapters of Saxony’s economic history and bear witness of passionate entrepreneurship.

The Dresden master watchmaker Ferdinand Adolph Lange, for example, came to Glashütte in 1845 with a loan that had been granted by Saxony’s government under the condition that he was to create new jobs in the poorest hamlet of the state. Today, Glashütte/Sa. is not only the name of a town – it is also a quality seal for masterpieces of maximum precision which are still manufactured with a lot of manual work and premium craftsmanship by ten renowned watch manufacturers.

In the late 19th century, the Vogtland region, whose business community specialized in lace embroidery, was on the brink of losing out to its Swiss competitors. The production of lace was too expensive and, thus, became inaccessible to a larger circle of customers. In 1881, the Plauen entrepreneur Theodor Bickel succeeded in making a decisive breakthrough. He developed an automated technology which permitted the quicker and cheaper production of tulle lace and introduced it under the name Plauen Lace to the global market.

In 1708, alchemist Johann Friedrich Böttger tried to find a recipe for making gold in a dark lab located in the fortress vaults of Dresden – and accidentally (re)invented European white porcelain. This caused his employer, Saxony’s Elector August the Strong, to found the first porcelain manufacture in Meißen in 1710. He desperately needed money to hold his baroque court, and porcelain – which had to be imported from Asia till then – was totally en vogue at the European royal courts. 300 years later, noble MEISSEN® Porcelain is still treasured and cherished around the globe, even in China.

These are all success stories which continue even today: Plauen Lace is presented on the catwalks at the Fashion Week in Berlin and graces the ladies at the Vienna Opera Ball. MEISSEN® Porcelain not only decorates coffee tables, but also fashion creations of Karl Lagerfeld. Watches made in Glashütte are regular winners at international branch contests and hold leading positions among the Top 10 of Germany’s luxury brands.

Genuine luxury is simply (Hand)Made in Saxony!