

## Despite challenges, HÜBNER continues to be a reliable partner for the mobility turnaround

**Kassel, Germany (20 February 2023). Growing pressure in global competition and rising energy costs were the focus of a visit to the HÜBNER Group by Hesse's Economics and Transport Minister Tarek Al-Wazir and Green Party Federal Chairman Omid Nouripour. Together with Karin Müller, Vice President of the Hessian State Parliament and other Alliance 90/The Greens officials, they gathered information about the current situation as well as about HÜBNER innovations such as its steering system for high-capacity buses to support the mobility turnaround.**

HÜBNER is facing particular challenges as a result of sharply rising energy costs. At the company's Kassel location, electricity costs alone have tripled in comparison to the previous year. In response to energy market uncertainties, the HÜBNER Group has initiated measures to ensure the greatest possible production continuity, and on this basis to guarantee a reliable supply of products to customers.

### Measures initiated for continuity of production

**Hesse's Minister of Economics and Transport Tarek Al-Wazir** supports the steps HÜBNER is taking to expand its use of renewable energy sources. He commented: *"The increase in energy prices is being caused by the fossil fuels natural gas and oil. This is one more reason why we must make ourselves independent of these fuels as quickly as possible – through the systematic expansion of energy production from renewable sources and the utilization of all efficiency potentials."*

Several years ago, HÜBNER already equipped the 6,100 square meter roof area of the production and warehouse facility in Plant 2 of its Kassel location with a photovoltaic system. With a total of 1,400 photovoltaic modules, this system produces 338 megawatt hours of electricity annually, which is mainly used for the power requirements of the plant itself. The expansion of photovoltaic systems at other plants in Kassel is currently in progress or in planning. In addition, concrete plans are being made for HÜBNER locations outside of Kassel to develop redundant infrastructure for the use of alternative fuels.

### HÜBNER is taking an active role in shaping the mobility turnaround

*"As a globally active and highly reliable supplier as well as an experienced system provider, the HÜBNER Group is actively shaping the future of transport*

*through future-oriented mobility concepts,” emphasized **Uwe Bittroff and Claus Schäfer, members of the HÜBNER Group Management Board** in the talks with their political guests. “A prerequisite for this is to have reliable business conditions for Germany as an industrial location which support us in facing the growing pressure coming from global competition.”*

*“German industry is a decisive factor in leading the country to a climate-neutral, secure and innovative future on a strongly competitive basis. We are aware that the current situation is difficult for many companies,” said **Omid Nouripour**, Federal Chairman of Alliance 90/The Greens. “In the ‘traffic-light’ coalition, we want to strengthen Germany as an industrial location and make it crisis-proof for the future. That’s why we have launched measures like a price-brake for electricity and economic aid in recent months, which should provide help to companies in the short term. But in addition to that, we also want to create the right general conditions to help position Germany as an industrial location for the future.”*

### **Competitive pressure has increased significantly for HÜBNER**

With its production sites in Kassel and elsewhere in Germany, the HÜBNER Group makes an active contribution to regional value creation. Approximately 1,100 employees of its total worldwide workforce are employed in Kassel, with another 600 employees at other locations in Germany. With this presence HÜBNER is also a reliable on-site partner for municipal transport companies. *“HÜBNER wants to strengthen and expand its locations in Kassel and in Germany – to ensure innovations and productive activity in Germany and on this basis to realize the mobility turnaround,”* underlined **Claus Schäfer**.

He pointed out that it has not been possible to offset the latest price jumps in energy costs in Europe through increases in productivity. *“In comparison with the global competition, we have to produce with significantly higher costs,”* explained Claus Schäfer. *“We are concerned by an increasing imbalance in global competition, which is also a result of the fact that in the European Union there are no requirements regarding regional value creation – in contrast to the USA or India, for example. This can have the result that we lose orders and projects in our home markets because global competitors from outside of Europe can produce more cheaply.”*

### **High-capacity steering system: Innovation for mobility turnaround**

**Uwe Bittroff** showed how the HÜBNER Group is helping to strengthen and develop public transport through innovative products with the example of its new steering system for high-capacity buses: *“To improve local public transport and make it more efficient, we see great potential in the establishment of high-capacity buses, which are not dependent on having their own rail infrastructure like classic tram systems. They provide the flexibility and versatility of buses. And in addition, high-capacity buses – in direct comparison to rail-based transport – are more cost-efficient and can be deployed more quickly. They can be incorporated into a city’s existing street and road system.”*

This technology sparked great interest in the guests from Alliance 90/The Greens. *“Innovations such as high-capacity buses will help us to make our transport more environmentally friendly. They can be an interesting extension of the vehicle fleets used for local public transport and thus play an important role in developing modern mobility solutions,”* commented **Dr. Sven Schoeller**, transport policy spokesperson for the Green Party in Kassel’s city council. *“With a view to the various development projects in Kassel, local applications for this new technology may also be found.”*

### **New technology provides a unique selling point**

High-capacity buses consist of three vehicle segments with a total of six axles and two gangways, with a total length of over 30 meters. Current vehicle transport capacity is approximately 300 passengers. On this basis, the new vehicles combine the advantages of buses and trams. *“Our steering technology has been designed so that in the event of a malfunction there is no danger for passengers or the surrounding area. On this basis, we have a worldwide unique selling point. Until now, there is no other system for road vehicles that can control more than two axles to this degree and provide safe steering operation,”* added **Uwe Bittroff**.

Through the use of pre-developed system components, individual vehicle concepts can also be flexibly integrated into the infrastructure of growing cities. In addition, the HÜBNER steering system can be used in bi-directional operation – and also has an interface for autonomous driving. This makes the HÜBNER steering system ready for future requirements in public mobility solutions.

## **The HÜBNER Group**

**Mobility. Materials. Photonics. | united by passion.**

With its business units Mobility Rail, Mobility Road, Material Solutions and Photonics, the HÜBNER Group is a global system supplier for the mobility sector, for manufacturing, and for life sciences and research applications. HÜBNER is the worldwide leader in gangway systems for rail vehicles and buses as well as a supplier of chassis technology, cockpit display solutions and door sealing and safety profiles. The company is also an internationally recognized supplier of sophisticated solutions involving elastomers, insulation and composite materials. HÜBNER’s business unit for laser technology is developing successfully, featuring applications for cancer diagnostics and spectroscopy, for example.

In 2022, the HÜBNER Group generated sales of approximately €440 million, with approximately 3,500 employees worldwide. In addition to its headquarters in Kassel, Germany, HÜBNER is present with more than 30 locations around the world.

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