

Germany invests €40bn to transform coal regions

As part of its coal phase-out, the German government is pumping billions into future technologies

Berlin (GTAI) - The German cabinet is putting forward legislation allocating 40 billion euros to help coal-producing regions transition to sustainable economies. The money is earmarked for regions in the states of Brandenburg, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and North Rhine-Westphalia, and the law is expected to pass the German parliament by the end of this year. The money is intended for a wide range of purposes including improving broadband and other infrastructure and underwriting innovation and research. 600 million euros are already planned for eleven projects and initiatives, for instance, the establishment of a Center for Advanced System Understanding, a Fraunhofer Center for Digital Energy and an Innovation Campus for Electronics and Microsensors.

"The aim of the federal government together with the states of Brandenburg, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and North Rhine-Westphalia is to develop coal-producing parts of Germany into regions of innovation," says Flérida Regueira Cortizo, energy and environmental technology expert at Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI). "This requires structural change, in which environmental and construction technologies will play a central role."

Earlier this year, the German government decided to phase out the use of coal by 2038. A special commission was convened to draw up plans for how to reconfigure the economies of Germany's traditional coal-producing regions. The proposed legislation is a direct result of that body's recommendations.

"Government economic programs of the 40 billion euros scope don't come along every day," says GTAI CEO Jürgen Friedrich. "This is a massive project aiming at transforming the economies and societies of significant parts of the country. So the opportunities for foreign and domestic companies to get involved will be many and varied."



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CONTACT US

Jefferson Chase

☎ +49 30 200 099 170

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