

ESSEN AFFAIRS

THE MAGAZINE FROM MESSE ESSEN

MESSE
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01
26



EUROPE AS A LEARNING AREA

A new platform for civil-
military cooperation

IPM NETWORK

How the green sector
weathers the headwinds

MUSIC DREAMSCAPES

A conversation with the Artistic
Director of the Philharmonie
Essen

Success is teamwork – we listen, take action
and find solutions together.

Team MESSE ESSEN



SUCCESS MADE IN ESSEN

Meet the organisers [➤](#)



#MadeinEssen

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Photo: Michael Lübke

Dear readers,

The world is in the midst of a profound reordering. The outcome remains uncertain. Peace, security and stability are unlikely to be taken for granted for quite some time. Especially for the countries of Europe, the words of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney in his speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos now apply: "We no longer rely solely on the strength of our values, but also on the value of our strength."

This strength is not only military in nature, but also extends to civil protection and public safety, with fluid boundaries between these areas. What is needed, above all, is cooperation across sectors and borders. We'd like to contribute to this, so we are strengthening our security portfolio with the EURO DEFENCE EXPO. It is affiliated with security essen. Together with the EUDEX Conference by CPM and the annual conference of the NATO Joint Air Power Competence Centre, we are creating a platform that is unique across Europe (page 8).

Yes, these are serious times. All the more reason why we need experiences such as those offered by the Philharmonie Essen. In the words of its Artistic Director Marie Babette Nierenz in the interview starting on page 34: "You leave the world outside, immerse yourself in another world and come out happier than when you entered." Feel free to try that out on your next visit to us.

I hope you have successful and pleasant days with us in Essen.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Oliver P. Kuhrt". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Oliver P. Kuhrt, CEO, MESSE ESSEN GmbH



A successful premiere: RETRO CLASSICS ESSEN® impressed both experts and the public alike at its debut.

CONTENTS

FOCUS

EUROPE AS A LEARNING AREA 8

Hybrid threats, political uncertainties, lack of autonomy: Europe must do more for its security. Messe Essen is providing a unique platform for civil-military cooperation

TRADE FAIR

SMARTLY PACKED 16

The megatrends digitalisation and decarbonisation are shaping METPACK

THE MAINSTAY 18

In joining technology, there's no getting past Prof. Emil Schubert, CEO of the ABICOR GROUP

THE GREEN NETWORK WORKS 20

Horticulture weathers the headwinds. IPM ESSEN is even seeing an increase in exhibitors

OUR FIRST TIME 23

A quick review of trade fair premieres

PRESENT FIVE TIMES 24

Messe Essen's foreign events

»WE SCORE WITH SHORT DISTANCES« 26

Portrait: Messe Essen's Corporate Development department

THE (ALMOST) SECRET TRADE FAIR 28

Christoph Korb, Head of Technical Exhibition Planning, provides exclusive insights behind the scenes

STAGE BUILDERS WITHOUT LIMITS 30

proud to print GmbH provides solutions in large-format printing and display construction to Messe Essen and its exhibitors

A VOICE FOR EQUALITY 32

Deutscher LandFrauentag is being held in Essen

JAZZ AT ITS FINEST 33

The Grugahalle is hosting two Ruhr Piano Festival concerts

ESSEN

»THE MORE DIVERSE, THE MORE SUCCESSFUL« 34

In conversation: Marie Babette Nierenz, Artistic Director of the Philharmonie Essen

ESSEN IN 24 HOURS 38

One day in the Ruhr metropolis

STANDARDS

EDITORIAL 3

NEWS & SERVICE 6

IMPRINT 38

CALENDAR 39



»THE QUALITY OF THE VISITORS WAS VERY HIGH, WHICH IS ALSO REFLECTED IN THE SALES RESULTS.«

Nick Aldering, Gallery Aldering, on RETRO CLASSICS ESSEN®



From 8 to 12 April 2026, the new trade fair for automotive culture celebrated its premiere.

RETRO CLASSICS ESSEN® RELEVANT RIGHT FROM THE START

At its premiere from 8 to 12 April 2026, RETRO CLASSICS ESSEN® impressively demonstrated that the concept works in Essen. Already in its first edition, the trade fair for automotive culture has positioned itself as a platform for discerning collectors, dealers and enthusiasts of classic vehicles.

“The set interim targets were achieved. Particularly in terms of market proximity and relevance within the scene, an excellent foundation has been laid for further development,” the organising RETRO Messen GmbH stated. Drawing 16% of its visitors from abroad and welcoming guests from 51 countries, the trade fair underscored its global relevance. Overall, 65,500 visitors attended the first RETRO CLASSICS ESSEN®.

www.retro-classics-essen.de

Photos: Pierre-Johne, Alte-Waschfabrik/E-world energy & water GmbH

E-WORLD ENERGY & WATER FULL OF ENERGY

For its 25th anniversary, E-world energy & water presented itself at Messe Essen stronger than ever before. In all key categories, Europe's leading trade fair for the energy industry set new records from 10 to 12 February 2026: 1,136 exhibitors – an increase of 16% – presented their energy supply solutions to more than 37,000 trade visitors. For the first time, over 30% of the companies came from abroad. Among attendees, the international share also rose to around 30%. The number of nations represented (126 – up 50%) also marked a record. And another new benchmark has already been confirmed: At the next edition from 16 to 18 February 2027, E-world energy & water will occupy eight exhibition halls for the first time.

www.e-world-essen.com



More than 37,000 trade visitors attended the three-day leading trade fair for the energy industry.



North Rhine-Westphalia's Minister for Economic Affairs, Mona Neubaur (third from left), also gained information about innovations in the HVAC industry.



SHK+E ESSEN MEETING POINT FOR PRACTITIONERS

SHK+E ESSEN 2026 once again confirmed its importance as a central industry platform from 17 to 20 March 2026 at Messe Essen. The industry meeting recorded a total of more than 30,000 trade visitors and 350 exhibitors. For four days, the trade fair focused on technical solutions in sanitation, heating, air conditioning and electrics – offering a comprehensive overview of current developments and future topics. “SHK+E ESSEN has once again shown how important

personal exchange is for the further development of the industry. As a platform for innovation, knowledge transfer and networking, it brings together relevant market players and provides important impulses for the future,” said Oliver P. Kuhrt, CEO of Messe Essen.

www.shke-essen.de

81,200 SQUARE METRES

of exhibition space will be occupied by SPIEL in October 2026. This already confirms that the world's largest public fair for board games will celebrate its fourth consecutive record in terms of space.

www.spiel-essen.de



Find all the information about ITSC 2027 here.

ITSC 2027 ESSEN GOES ROTTERDAM

Messe Essen, together with DVS Media GmbH, is taking over the organisation of the expo ITSC – International Thermal Spray Conference and Exposition. The world's leading event for thermal coating technology will be held from 12 to 14 May 2027 in Rotterdam, returning to Europe after three years as per the rotation schedule. Hosting and technical responsibility remain with DVS – the German Welding Society, and the Thermal Spray Society of the American Society of Materials – TSS ASM.


EUROPE AS A LEARNING AREA

Hybrid threats, political uncertainties, lack of autonomy: it is high time for Europe to take a determined and comprehensive approach to its defence. One thing is clear: greater civil-military and international cooperation is essential. Messe Essen is providing a unique platform to support this.

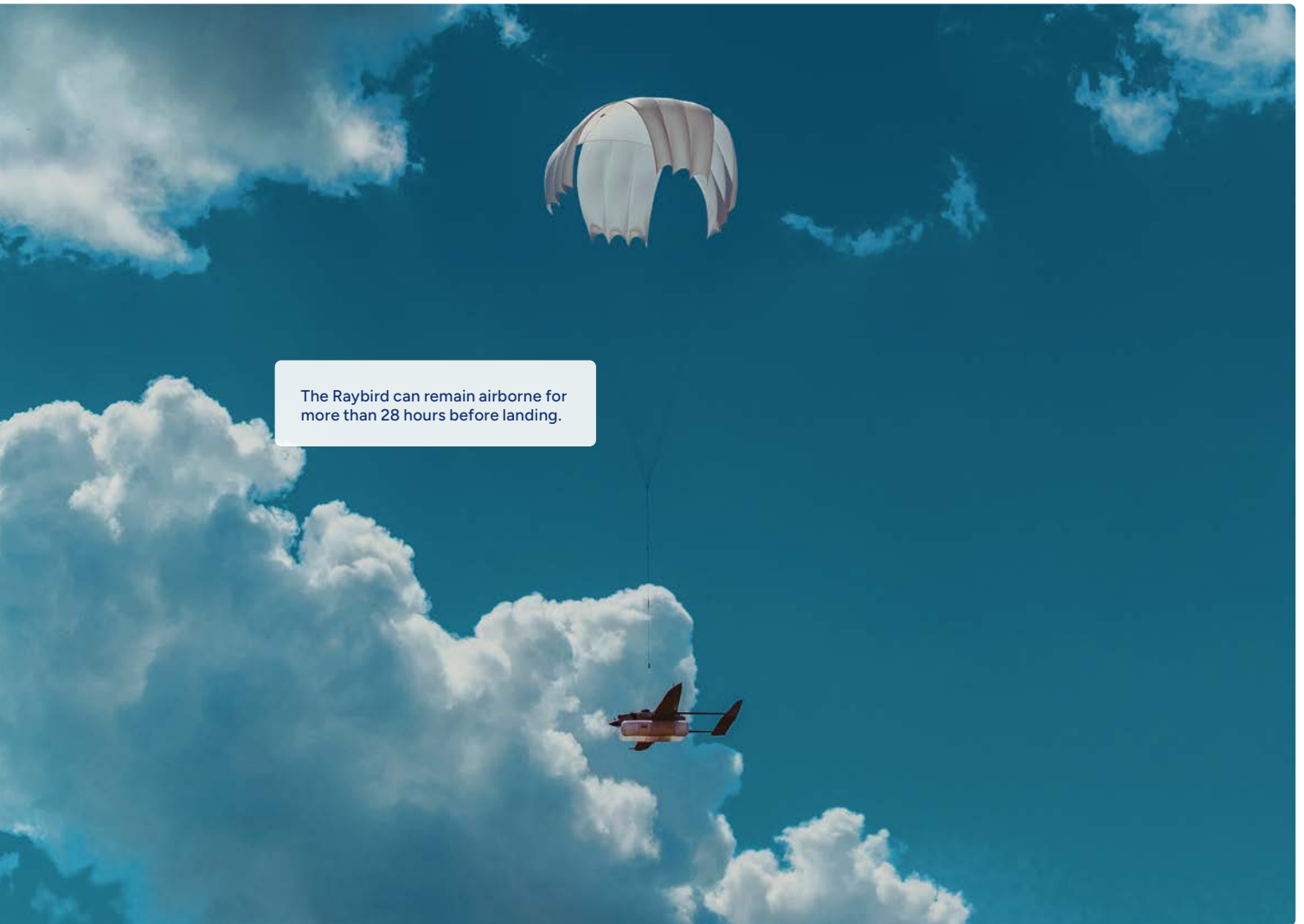


■ Times were better for the country when the Raybird flew over burning forests. Back then, the drone developed by the Ukrainian start-up Skyeton collected data for the nation's fire services. But ever since the full-scale Russian invasion, Skyeton has com-

pletely shifted its production to military use – with considerable success. Its flagship product, the Raybird 3, with a flight endurance of 28 hours or more, ranks among the leading systems for long-range reconnaissance and surveillance missions. →

A Raybird reconnaissance drone is shown on a launch rail in a field. The drone is white with a propeller and is mounted on a blue launch rail. The background is a blue sky with white clouds and a field of green and yellow grass.

Drones have become a key technology in the war in Ukraine. Shown here is the launch of a Raybird reconnaissance drone by Skyeton.



The Raybird can remain airborne for more than 28 hours before landing.

Photo: Skyeton

Thanks to innovations like these, Ukraine has become a “drone superpower” (Bloomberg). Annual production is estimated at four million units, and Skyeton is among the pioneers now looking beyond national borders. “Our expansion goal is to build a scalable international structure around Raybird and its wider ecosystem,” explains International CEO Pavlo Shevchuk. In 2024, the company opened its own facility in Slovakia, and more recently, a development office has begun operations in Germany.

Skyeton will showcase its latest market-ready products from 22 to 25 September 2026 at the EURO DEFENCE EXPO (EUDEX). The international trade fair for the defence industry is affiliated with security essen. Together with the EUDEX Conference by CPM (see page 14 for more) and the annual conference of the NATO Joint Air Power Competence Centre (JAPCC), this creates a platform that is unique across Europe.

Between war and peace

It comes at exactly the right time. Europe must invest significantly more in its resilience. In addition, the threat landscape is hybrid, situated between a state of “not yet at war” and “no longer truly at peace”, and no longer confined to a single sector. In light of recent incidents such as drone flights over European airports, cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns and the sabotage of railway lines, one thing is clear for Julia Jacob, Project Manager of EUDEX and security essen: “In many areas, effective civil-military cooperation is now indispensable.”

There are already strong examples in Europe of what a “total defence” approach can look like in practice. Finland, due to its exposed geopolitical position, has long offered defence training courses for the public, demand for which continues to grow. Its military also maintains strategic partnerships

There are already best practices in place for cooperation.

with the civilian sector, while the government stockpiles food supplies for the population. The same applies to Sweden, where the Ministry for Civil Defence, established in 2025, has concluded a cybersecurity agreement with Ukraine. In addition, a nationwide cell broadcast warning system is set to roll out this summer to alert citizens via mobile phones in the event of disasters or war. Poland, following a significant expansion of its military capabilities, has now also passed civil protection legislation. In Estonia, new building regulations will take effect on 1 July, partly aimed at significantly increasing the number of shelters – an area in which their Scandinavian neighbours are already well equipped. →



Churches and swimming pools that can also be used as shelters: Finland is leading the way with creative approaches to implementing a “total defence” strategy.



In Germany, the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance and the German Armed Forces have agreed on close cooperation in CBRN protection.

Photos: Bundeswehr/Bernd Lammei, Bundeswehr/Susanne Hähnel

A classic field of cooperation

CBRN protection is a traditional field of civil-military cooperation. The acronym stands for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, and is the modern successor to what was once known as NBC protection. Around 30 companies in Essen will present the full spectrum of solutions: from measurement technology and protective equipment

to decontamination systems and medical countermeasures. The special exhibition is located at the eastern edge of Hall 4, precisely at the interface between EUDEX and security essen.

Hans Baum is founder of the consulting firm Baum Consulting, which is organising the special show. He has dedicated nearly his entire professional life to countering such threats. During the Cold War, he



A soldier from the German Armed Forces' CBRN Defence Unit taking samples at a civilian site, before documenting and packaging them.



»We need to manage the transition from small-scale manufacturing to mass production.«

Hans Baum, CEO Baum Consulting

was seconded as an officer in the NBC defence unit to the Concept Evaluation Program (CEP) of the U.S. Armed Forces and, as a result, played a key role in the sale of the German Fuchs reconnaissance vehicle to the United States. Later, he prepared the Fuchs reconnaissance units of the allied forces for their deployment in the Second Iraq War. In the wake of disarmament in the 1990s, many companies positioned themselves as “single-technology providers in small niches”, with correspondingly low production volumes.

The German Armed Forces have reorganised the existing battalions into three NBC defence regiments with a target strength of 5,000 personnel, more than doubling current numbers. This represents a “major growth market”, as demand spans everything from deployment vehicles to pumps and water heaters. Modernisation of the civilian CBRN fleet has also been underway for some time. A total of 518 new vehicles will be deployed nationwide, along with around 100 new specialised command vehicles. For Baum, this is only the beginning. He sees “enormous demand”, particularly in “communicative digitalisation”, i.e. the widespread deployment of autonomous sensor systems. However, achieving this will require a fundamental shift in business thinking. “We need to manage the transition from small-scale manufacturing to mass production.” Standardisation, diversification and a European division of labour are now the order of the day.

Linking into a booming sector

Not least, this will also be about building new relationships between companies in the defence sector and industries that have so far been purely civilian in focus. With hundreds of billions of euros in pledged investments (Germany’s defence budget alone is set to grow to 152 billion euros by 2029), many small and medium-sized enterprises in par-

ticular see the booming defence sector as a new pillar of business. However, access is far from straightforward. For this reason, Messe Essen is leveraging its location in the key industrial region of North Rhine-Westphalia, along with its network, to help forge connections. For example, some exhibitors from the world’s leading trade fair SCHWEISSEN & SCHNEIDEN are presenting their expertise in joining technology at EUDEX. Prof. Emil Schubert, CEO of the German ABICOR GROUP, sees the expansion of production capacities for military vehicles as a potential growth area. “Especially in automated welding, we can offer direct support with our solutions for cobots and industrial robots.” He adds that processes and equipment for working with specialised steels have already been developed in other industries.



»The civilian potential of drones is enormous.«

Pavlo Shevchuk, International CEO Skyeton

At Skyeton, meanwhile, there is hope that their drone systems might one day make a reverse journey, back to the civilian applications on which the company was originally founded. “We believe the civilian potential is enormous, and in many ways still underappreciated,” says Pavlo Shevchuk. There would be no shortage of applications: for border surveillance, environmental and disaster protection, the inspection of industrial facilities and in agriculture, as well as for logistics and high-precision mapping. But for that to happen, the war must first come to an end.

www.security-essen.de

www.eurodefenceexpo.de

»WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO TIME«

Tobias Ehlke, organiser of the EUDEX Conference, on the EU's potential as a security policy heavyweight, new faces in the defence sector – and why there won't be any corks popping in Essen.



Tobias Ehlke is the owner and CEO of CPM Verlag GmbH. In addition to the publishing business and various news platforms, CPM organises, among other events, the biennial RÜ.NET decision-makers conference. The first EUDEX Conference on 23 and 24 September will focus on deterrence through long-range, precision weapons ("deep precision strikes").

ESSEN AFFAIRS: Mr Ehlke, Europe's political objective has been defined since March last year under the ReArm Europe/Readiness 2030 strategy. It aims to significantly strengthen the EU's defence capabilities and autonomy. Do you consider the EU to be on course?

Tobias Ehlke: Not yet – at least not in the way I imagine it. That's why I have to speak hypothetically: the European Union could be a security heavyweight if it were able to consolidate its commitment – and for various reasons, it cannot do that yet. The main acceleration factor, by contrast, is the US, which is urging Europe to establish its own security architecture. This view isn't likely to change quickly, regardless of who wins the 2028 presidential election.

Financing shouldn't be the stumbling block.

The EU has announced it will provide a total of 800 billion euros by 2030, and EU NATO countries have committed to raising their defence spending – including for infrastructure and cybersecurity – to at least 5% of the GDP by 2035.

Previously, the community said: "We have little money but plenty of time." Now, we have no time, and money is no longer the issue – at least in Germany. With regard to Europe's major partner nations, however, problems do exist. The further east you go – say, to Poland – perceptions of the threat landscape diverge more sharply, leading to different budget priorities. But as I said, we have absolutely no time, and even if, for example, the German Armed Forces are currently announcing many contract awards, at the end of the day, delivery still matters.

The European flagship projects for various weapon systems hardly serve as morale boosters. The Future Combat Air System (FCAS) is just the most prominent example of how national wrangling blocks pragmatic solutions. Do you have any ideas?

With NATO's Framework Nations Concept, there is a logically sound basis that assigns a leading role to the country already taking the lead. According to this, Europe's core industry for all land forces would be in Germany; France would lead on aviation; and

the United Kingdom on the maritime side. Smaller nations could then align with these framework countries. What's more, Europe already has multinational players – take Airbus, for example – that generate value across more than one country.

The potential is enormous. It's also clear that the industry itself must pursue new paths, moving toward more mass production and standardisation, and towards a greater European division of labour. Has this already been understood?

A lot is already happening. I was recently able to visit the production facilities of a major European OEM in southern Germany. Unlike ten years ago, the focus now is clearly on large-scale output and speed. However, this must also be supported by human capital – running a single-shift operation simply isn't enough at the moment. Unfortunately, what plays into the hands of the security and defence industry is the weakness of the automotive sector. Even at our events, we are seeing more newcomers from this sector than ever before. That said, the transition isn't exactly easy. Specific expertise is definitely required in the defence sector.

After the EUDEX Conference, there are just over a thousand days left until 2030. What makes you confident that Europe's objectives might actually be achievable?

What gives me the most hope is the shift in societal attitudes. I served as a soldier in Afghanistan – that was the most formative experience of my life. Today, when I discuss topics like conscription with my more left-liberal circle of friends, there is far deeper understanding than there was back then about the need for armies to defend our way of life. I notice the same dynamic at our conferences, when engineers from the civilian and military sectors talk and discover that we share the same values and a common desire to serve our country. That is why EUDEX is a matter close to my heart. Now is not the time for champagne corks. That's why, in Essen, we don't want to bring on board opportunists, but rather people and companies who approach the situation with humility and understand that we must step up and take action.



METPACK, the global trade fair for the metal packaging industry, is on a growth path.

SMARTLY PACKED

The megatrends of digitalisation and decarbonisation are shaping METPACK – even beyond 2026.

■ A plastics manufacturer at a metal packaging trade fair – did someone get lost? “We’re not lost; we’re coming to METPACK very deliberately,” clarifies Isabell Theisinger, International Sales Manager at Röchling Industrial Ruppertsweiler GmbH. The industrial division of the Röchling Group produces what are known as autoclaves – gas-tight, sealable pressure vessels. These play a central role in the sterilisation of metal packaging.

The venerable company from Rhineland-Palatinate is one of the newcomers at METPACK, which is being held around this time at Messe Essen. With around 350 exhibitors and a 15% increase in exhibition space compared to 2023, the global trade fair underlines its reputation as the most important meeting point for the metal packaging industry. In terms of quality, METPACK is also setting new accents. The new forum “Talk in a Can”, located in the heart of the exhibition hall, combines talks, industry insights, panel discussions, product presentations and networking opportunities.

“Above all, we expect our debut at the trade fair to achieve high visibility with exactly the right target audience,” explains Isabell Theisinger. “At the same



The first female keynote speaker at the METPACK Conference: Clarissa Odewald, CEO of thyssenkrupp Rasselstein.

On the way to the “second coal phase-out”

The megatrends driving the industry have been on the agenda for some time and will remain relevant in the coming years. One of these trends is digital printing combined with metal decoration. For METPACK, ISOMAT has developed an innovative hybrid machine concept offering a wide range of options for aluminium finishing. A second ongoing challenge lies in the green transformation, as the steel industry remains one of the largest CO₂ emitters. How climate goals and competitiveness – especially in times of geopolitical uncertainty and volatile energy and raw material markets – can be reconciled will be addressed in the keynote by Clarissa Odewald, CEO of thyssenkrupp Rasselstein, as part of the METPACK Conference.

time, we'd like to showcase our products and demonstrate the added value our stable, food-safe interlayers provide during the sterilisation process.”

Odewald is very familiar with the topic. Before being appointed CEO of Germany's only tinplate manufacturer, she spent 14 years at the parent company, thyssenkrupp Steel Europe AG in Duisburg. And it is precisely there, more specifically at the Walsum plant harbour of thyssenkrupp Steel, that work on the new direct reduction plant is in full swing. Starting next year, the new “steel city”, about 40 football fields in



»We expect to achieve high visibility with exactly the right target audience.«

Isabell Theisinger, International Sales Manager,
Röchling Industrial Ruppertsweiler GmbH

Strategic exchange is also important for Röchling: “We want to understand where the industry is heading, which demands will grow in the future and how we can develop new solutions together with partners.”

size, is expected to produce 2.5 million tonnes of pig iron per year in a climate-friendly way – a milestone for the “second coal phase-out in the Ruhr” (VDI Nachrichten).



Prof. Emil Schubert is
CEO of the ABICOR GROUP.

Foto: Abicor Group



In over 220 YouTube videos, Emil Schubert has shared his expertise as WELDPROF®.

THE MAINSTAY

CEO of a global market leader, former president of the European Welding Association, – and YouTube star – in the world of joining technology, there's no getting past Prof. Emil Schubert.

■ A look at the map leaves no doubt. The municipality of Buseck is in Germany, roughly in its geographic centre. Yet in an era when the country's metal-processing industry is struggling through one crisis after another, it's worth a second look when you read that a mid-sized company is investing 20 million euros in its headquarters. So what sets the ABICOR GROUP apart?

“Nothing”, comes the dry reply from Prof. Emil Schubert, the group's CEO. The new logistics centre, scheduled to be completed by 2029 at the company's headquarters in northern Hesse, is simply the expression of a long-term strategy. And the

location – virtually at the heart of Europe – is “a real advantage” for “serving international markets directly while reducing our ecological footprint, because we can consolidate transports and shorten routes. Plus we simply need more space. All of this can be achieved with our new logistics centre – and we want to be ready when the market situation improves.”

At ABICOR BINZEL since 1999

Emil Schubert himself is deeply embedded in the world of joining technology: as a manager, teacher, association leader – and social media star. But let's

go in order. Born in Franconia, he completed his PhD in 1991 on laser technology and earned his postdoctoral lecture qualification in production engineering from the University of Bremen in 2004. In the meantime, Schubert had built a career in the industry. In 1999, he joined ABICOR BINZEL as Director of Development. In 2004, he additionally took over management of the Welding Technology division of the IBG Group, an industrial holding company to which ABICOR BINZEL has belonged since the 1970s, consisting of medium-sized companies across the German-speaking region. In 2008, at the age of 45, Schubert became CEO of the venerable company, which had gained worldwide fame for its welding and cutting torches. Today, the ABICOR BINZEL name also stands for robotic welding systems.

For nearly two years, Emil Schubert has also been CEO of the ABICOR GROUP. The group serves as the umbrella brand for all IBG subsidiaries in the cutting and welding technology sector, including, alongside ABICOR BINZEL, Thermacut. Overall, the group employs 2,200 people at twelve production sites worldwide. One strategic goal is to engage customers in a more targeted, coordinated way. “In the past, on a Monday, a Thermacut colleague would visit a shipyard to discuss plasma and laser cutting – and two days later, a BINZEL colleague would visit the exact same contact person to discuss welding applications.”

That sounds like a full day’s workload. Yet Emil Schubert has always had energy for more. From 2021 to 2025, he served as President of the European Welding Association (EWA). He still refuses to join the general chorus of complaints about Europe. “Europe is strong wherever quality, standardisation and health protection matter.” But: “We need to catch up in terms of scale and speed of implementation: robotics integration, AI-supported monitoring and data-driven services must be rolled out faster.” Particularly in the area of AI – especially optical seam tracking and sensor technology – Schubert predicts many innovations in the coming years “which, starting from automated cutting and joining, will increasingly also be applied in manual processes”.

A clear commitment to SCHWEISSEN & SCHNEIDEN

What the ABICOR GROUP has to offer in this regard will again be on display in 2029 at SCHWEISSEN & SCHNEIDEN. The trade fair participation is planned just as far ahead as investments, which is why the company confirmed its involvement early. “For us, SCHWEISSEN & SCHNEIDEN is the most important trade fair in the world,” emphasises Schubert. “When it became clear that participating in 2025 made no strategic sense for us, the step toward 2029 was virtually automatic. The four-year cycle gives us the necessary space for genuine technological development and a substantial presence at the fair.” In a few months, the ABICOR GROUP will also make its mark at the premiere of the defence trade fair EUDEX (page 14).

Beyond his corporate role, Emil Schubert is also a passionate educator. He continues to teach at the University of Bremen and has shared his knowledge and insights in more than 220 YouTube videos. His company has even registered WELDPROF® as a trademark. There is no end in sight, as the 63-year-old is not constrained by rigid age limits. “I firmly believe in lifelong learning. Curiosity and exchange have always been part of my life, whether in the lecture hall, the lab, with colleagues or in professional associations. Those who explain think more clearly; those who listen learn faster.”

Another source of rejuvenation for Emil Schubert is family life with three children and a grandchild who is just under a year old. “It keeps my mind active.” He also recharges his batteries by hiking. And when he truly needs a change of scenery, he takes his MG convertible – just as old as he is – for a drive through the countryside.

www.schweissen-schneiden.com

THE GREEN NETWORK WORKS

Horticulture weathers the headwinds. IPM ESSEN even recorded an increase in exhibitors – thanks in part to industry heavyweights committing to the fair.



Landgard presented a Mediterranean display.

■ When a sector is booming, trade fairs ideally act as positive amplifiers. Their role is even more demanding in challenging times. They must prove their value as catalysts, present ideas for the future and withstand the headwinds. Currently, the green sector faces such adversary winds. Sales figures are down slightly, and buyers are more cautious. Yet this year, IPM ESSEN still recorded an increase in exhibitors: 1,476 companies participated from 27 to 30 January 2026, including several prominent returnees.

Hagen Kalläne, European Sales Manager at Florensis, called the family-owned company's comeback "very positive". With over 2,500 employees and a portfolio of more than 4,000 plant varieties, Florensis is a major player in the international ornamental plant industry. The hiatus since the Covid pandemic was used to rethink the trade fair concept. Instead of showcasing individual products, Florensis presented more than half a dozen comprehensive retail concepts on its return to Essen.

Lifestyle and added value

Florensis was not alone with its retail-ready approach. A noticeable trend was to present plants not as standalone products but as part of a lifestyle. Added value instead of pure volume growth? For the major exhibitors, it's not a question of either-or, but rather a both-and approach. Germany's largest growers' cooperative, Landgard, showcased around 4,000 plants under the theme "Tutto Italiano" in a Mediterranean atmosphere. For the second time, Landgard integrated its spring order days into IPM ESSEN. In Hall 1A, a team of up to 80 people



pricing and enhanced technology – all were very well received, as the many positive responses showed.”

Sustainability as a strategy

Innovation is the key to shaping transformation: this was the unanimous message during the four-day fair. A palpable drive for change and future development was fuelled by one of the most extensive supporting programmes in IPM history. Highlights for the nearly 40,000 trade visitors included the Gardeners Forum and the Innovation Center Horticultural Technology. The new Woodland Arena showcased best practices and presentations on how climate adaptation through urban greening can succeed. Overall, IPM ESSEN made it clear: Sustainability is not an optional extra or a “nice to have” in the green sector – it is a strategic necessity, whether through climate-resilient plants, alternative materials and packaging, or circular economy solutions.



»The fair is still the networking event of the year.«

Hagen Kalläne, European Sales Manager, Florensis B. V.

operated across more than 6,000 square metres. Stefan Grett-Winkel, Head of Retail at Landgard Blumen & Pflanzen, explained how the company used feedback from last year to further develop its presence: “Improved product presentation, clearer

Hagen Kalläne of Florensis also “saw some very, very good things”. Yet what mattered most to him was something else: “The fair is still the networking event of the year.” Nowhere else is the concentration of key industry figures as high. The numbers back this up: 68% of this year's visitors consider themselves decision makers. →



At the “Round Table” for the first time

This year, the network increasingly included political decision makers. The first Round Table at IPM ESSEN launched discussions on phasing out peat use and potential alternatives. Political attention was further visible at a high-level meeting of green associations, where Silvia Breher, Parliamentary State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity, answered questions from participants.

“Very important,” according to Hagen Kalläne, “is to use the industry showcase to articulate horticulture’s interests to policymakers – especially at a



Green smoothie: As the key visual shows, IPM ESSEN 2027 aims to offer a well-coordinated thematic mix.

time when the sector feels over-regulated.” Kalläne remains optimistic: “If political frameworks and economic data improve, and the sentiment is a bit more positive, we will return to our former strength.” Perhaps as early as 2027, when Florensis will “definitely be back”. “We have a home again.”

www.ipm-essen.de

OUR FIRST TIME

What exhibitors experience in Essen: a first-time trade fair presence in brief.



The company eQ-3 AG

The trade fair SHK+E ESSEN

We participated because... our smart home system Homematic IP excites both electrical tradespeople and HVAC professionals. Like us, the skilled trades believe that intelligent building automation, especially room climate control, is one of the most effective levers for reducing energy consumption and costs.

What we presented More than 20 new features for Homematic IP, including our underfloor heating controller and our expanded Homematic IP alarm solution.

Our conclusion Fantastic! The enormous interest practically overwhelmed us. Our four-day stock of catalogues was already gone midway through. We immediately reordered, of course...

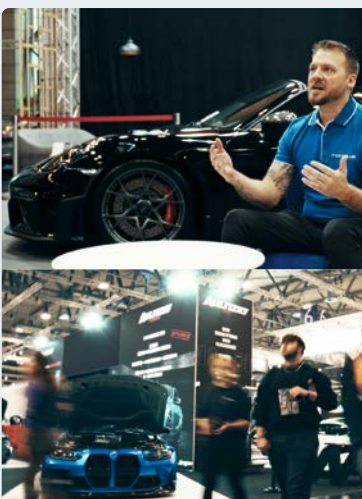
The company Huawei FusionSolar Germany

The trade fair SHK+E ESSEN

We participated because... the topic of sector coupling is becoming increasingly important, especially in residential housing. More and more households want to think of their energy supply holistically, from photovoltaic systems and battery storage to heat pumps and e-mobility.

What we presented Residential and C&I solutions for photovoltaic and battery storage from the Huawei FusionSolar portfolio. Particularly important was the demonstration of integrated energy management – a key factor, as installers and planners increasingly demand system-overarching solutions.

Our conclusion We were able to hold high-quality discussions and gain valuable insights into current market requirements. The demand for integrated, easy-to-install and economically attractive energy systems is high.



The company Wrapping World

The trade fair Essen Motor Show

We participated because... after two attempts at establishing Wrapping World as a standalone event, we found it more attractive to cooperate with Essen Motor Show – not least due to the administrative effort involved. This also created a new thematic focus for the fair, namely vehicle wrapping and paint protection films.

What we presented Ten manufacturers of films and tools were featured at the premiere, creating a unique meeting point for car wrappers and end customers across Europe.

Our conclusion The concept was a huge success! All exhibitors have already confirmed their participation for Essen Motor Show 2026, and more will follow. We will more than double the exhibition space, to 2,400 square metres.

PRESENT FIVE TIMES

At a glance: Messe Essen's foreign events.

STEELFAB

12.–15.01.2026, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

At its 21st edition since 2004, SteelFab continued its growth trajectory. More than 350 exhibitors from 35 countries presented their products and services at the Middle East's leading event for steel fabrication and metal-working. As in previous years, Messe Essen organised the German joint pavilion with twelve companies. In addition, trade fair representatives discussed prospects for even closer cooperation between the event in the United Arab Emirates and SCHWEISSEN & SCHNEIDEN. The next SteelFab will be held from 11 to 14 January 2027.

www.steelfabme.com

GT SHOW

27.–29.03.2026, Suzhou, People's Republic of China

From 27 to 29 March 2026, the German Pavilion organised by Messe Essen once again took part in the GT Show at the Suzhou International Expo Centre, showcasing German tuning and performance expertise in a key Asian growth market. The scale of the event was striking: the GT Show occupied ten halls with more than 120,000 square metres of exhibition space. Also notable was that around 40% of some 185,000 visitors stated that they held purchasing authority within their companies.

www.gtshow.cn



Definitely worth
a look: the GT
Show Instagram
channel.

HORTIFLOREXPO IPM CHINA

10.–12.04.2026, Beijing, People's Republic of China

Around 700 exhibitors gathered at Hortiflorexpo IPM Beijing 2026, China's leading trade fair for horticulture, held from 10 to 12 April. The event brought together 20 nations at the China International Exhibition Centre (Shunyi) in Beijing, including Finland, India, Sri Lanka, Latvia, the Netherlands and Germany. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Messe Essen organised the German joint pavilion and was on-site with a team from IPM ESSEN to expand the global network of the world's leading trade fair for horticulture.

<https://en.hortiflorexpo.com/>

FEIMEC

05.–09.05.2026, São Paulo, Brazil

Within just ten years, FEIMEC has established itself as one of the largest events for machine tools and equipment in all of Latin America. For the first time, nearly a dozen German exhibitors are participating as part of a joint pavilion organised by Messe Essen. The event will be held at the São Paulo Expo Exhibition & Convention Centre in São Paulo.

www.feimec.com.br/en/home.html

BEIJING ESSEN WELDING & CUTTING

29.06.–02.07.2026, Shenzhen, People's Republic of China

Messe Essen is not only the organiser of the globally leading trade fair SCHWEISSEN & SCHNEIDEN, but also co-organiser of its fast-growing Asian counterpart, BEIJING ESSEN WELDING & CUTTING (BEW). For the 29th time, BEW will be held at the end of June, this year in the metropolis of Shenzhen in south-eastern China, as per the rotation schedule. The previous edition of the fair attracted 822 exhibitors and 45,285 trade visitors.

www.beijing-essen-welding.com



»WE SCORE WITH SHORT DISTANCES«

Torben Wegner (right) with his colleagues Martin Usdrowski, Marion Janssen and Daniela Rauch (from left).

Torben Wegner, Senior Vice President Corporate Development, IT & Digitalisation, talks about new trade fairs and faster processes.

ESSEN AFFAIRS: What is the role of the Corporate Development department with regard to Messe Essen's portfolio?

Torben Wegner: First of all, our Corporate Development team monitors the national and international events market and conducts negotiations through to contract signing. Based on market, competitive and

macro-environmental analyses, we also generate strategic recommendations to further develop and enhance our trade fairs and exhibitions.

Are the requirements individually specific, or are there general trends?

What we observe across all formats is steadily rising demands in terms of efficiency. We are expected to further optimise matchmaking – through suitable supporting programs and appropriate formats, for example. Overall, our events today are much more content-driven. In addition, we need to respond

quickly to changes across all trade fairs, whether by picking up current political topics at short notice or by integrating trends and creating new exhibition areas. SHK+E ESSEN is a good example of this. On the one hand, we address current topics in various forums at the fair; on the other, we have integrated the electrical sector as a result of long-term developments in the HVAC industry.

A clear trend across the entire trade fair market is the shift away from 360-degree events toward special-interest formats.

Yes, although that has always been a strength of Messe Essen. METPACK, for example, targets a very specific audience – there are virtually no scatter losses here. Guest events such as SCREEN PRINT INNOVATIONS, EUROPEAN BRIDAL WEEK and TANKSTELLE & MITTELSTAND are also true flagship events within their respective industry segments.

The German trade fair market, with over 300 events per year, is still the trade fair market par excellence. Are there even any untapped areas left for new formats?

The rapid pace I mentioned means that today we no longer have as much time to build new trade fair brands. This makes it all the more important for us to understand the supply and process chains in an industry. And when we launch a new project in our department, we ensure that we have the key industry players on board. However, even that does not guarantee 100% success. That's why acquisition is a very important success factor for us.

How do you convince guest organisers to choose Essen as a location?

In addition to the central location, there are four factors: we offer a modern venue, an extremely strong catchment area for many industries, a service consistently rated as excellent by our customers and we are an exhibition centre of short distances.

Every trade fair claims to have short distances...

Yes, everyone says that (*laughs*). But in Essen, it's actually true. And you can confirm this yourself, not only in the many options of how to get here or the size and layout of the venue itself. It also applies to decision-making processes. We may not

be as fast as a start-up, but in industry comparison that is definitely an asset. We are also supported by the centralised process management we implemented at Messe Essen, which strongly follows a bottom-up approach. In workshops, we consistently witness this method enhancing our efficiency and agility in practice.

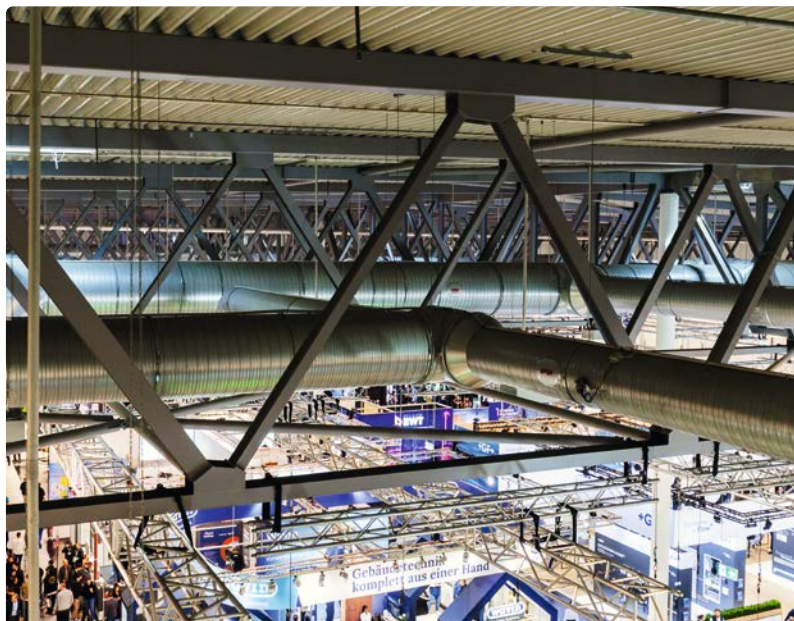


Where do you see growth potential in the coming years?

Not least due to its location, three strong growth clusters have emerged. Essen is, after all, Europe's energy capital, and it is no coincidence that E-world energy & water has developed so successfully here. The second area, security, has been covered by security essen for decades. In recent years, we have gradually expanded the field of civil protection. As civil and military security increasingly converge, it is a logical step that, with the parallel EURO DEFENCE EXPO, we will bring together the entire world of security and defence in Essen. The third major growth field is the healthcare sector, which is reflected in our strong convention program. We are also very pleased that care:xpo (editor's note: formerly ALTENPFLEGE) – the leading national trade fair for a future-oriented market – has chosen Essen. Of course, we remain open to new topics as well. Recently, together with our Marketing department, we developed a short-list of promising new themes. Of course, I can't reveal what those are just yet.



Christoph Korb on his tour through Messe Essen (clockwise): The media corridors beneath the halls are the lifelines of the trade fair; the new high-bay warehouse provides storage space across three floors for the eastern exhibition grounds; only the “riggers” have a view of the roof structure of Hall 6 from their office; the fire water flows automatically – isolation valves are only needed for locking it in place.



THE (ALMOST) SECRET TRADE FAIR

On the Messe Essen exhibition grounds, there are places that even many insiders are unaware of. Christoph Korb, Head of Technical Exhibition Planning, provides exclusive insights.

Water on!

“Fortunately, I haven’t experienced a major fire in nearly 30 years working at Messe Essen,” says Christoph Korb. But of course, one has to be prepared for emergencies. For example, the fire water tank beneath Messehaus Ost holds 210,000 litres of water. Through a sprinkler system, it not only supplies the exhibition building itself, but also the underground car park and the Parkrestaurant. Hundreds of sprinkler heads are distributed across this area. In the event of a fire, the glass bulbs in the sprinkler heads would heat up until they burst, releasing the water – an almost fully automatic process. It would continue until either the inflow is manually shut off via large isolation valves in the fire water tank room, or the tank runs empty. The tank would then be refilled until a float valve shuts off the water supply once a sufficient level is reached.

Storage space across three floors

When one event ends on a Sunday and the set-up for the next begins early Monday morning, logistics require two things: short distances and compact storage solutions. Messe Essen found a practical solution for its own equipment during modernisation. At that time, in addition to existing storage areas, a high-bay warehouse was built in the extension of the glass foyer for the eastern exhibition grounds. Across three levels, a total of 750 square metres of storage space was created. “Here we store everything that is portable and needs to be available at short notice,” explains Christoph Korb. This includes cash register systems, turnstiles, chairs and brochures.

Connection to the lifelines

The media corridors are the lifelines of every trade fair. “This is where we bundle everything needed to operate an exhibition stand,” says Christoph Korb. Electricity, water, heating and compressed air, for example. Such a corridor runs beneath each of the eight exhibition halls. The one under Hall 6 alone contains over 8,500 metres of electrical cables across a length of 125 metres. During set-up and dismantling phases, Korb and his colleagues regularly work here to “connect” the power supplies ordered by exhibitors – meaning they link them to the supply lines in the media corridor.

Under the roof

Known as “riggers”, they have a unique view of the exhibition activities. These are the specialists who install trusses for overhead rigging under the hall ceilings. At Messe Essen, the team from Ueberkopf handles this task. Customer requests in this area have become increasingly imaginative over the decades, Korb notes: “It’s astonishing what is now hung from the ceiling.” LED technology, in the form of large-format screens or 360-degree animated banners, is now almost a standard feature of large stands. At Essen Motor Show, even sports cars have been suspended above the visitors’ heads. At the recent E-world energy & water event, with its elaborate stand construction, 7.5 kilometres of trusses were installed across six halls, each truss section secured with at least two suspension points. There’s no general answer to how much load each rigging point can safely carry. “It always depends on the loads in the surrounding area and is structurally assessed by us in each individual case.”

STAGE BUILDERS WITHOUT LIMITS

For many years, proud to print GmbH has provided Messe Essen and its exhibitors with tailored solutions in large-format printing and display construction. Absolute reliability and an intimate knowledge of the exhibition grounds are among the most important prerequisites.

■ Some service providers are destined to remain behind the scenes. But that's not the case for proud to print. After all, the company's job is to create visibility through customised large-format printing and display solutions. "We build the stage for the brand," explains CEO Robert Fries. The stage – the Messe Essen exhibition grounds themselves – is particularly diverse and quite large.

The largest fixed installation spaces on the Essen exhibition grounds measure 10 by 10 metres or 14 by 5 metres, and facade banners of 25 by 40 metres have also been produced. "There are really no limits", assures Fries. The scale is impressive, especially since proud to print is not only active on the exhibition grounds themselves, but also manages nearly 160 displays across the city, as well as Messe Essen's advertising at Düsseldorf Airport.

Deadlines are merciless

It's not just the size that makes the trade fair business a "very special market environment," as Fries explains. "Many factors come into play here," highly individual requirements – from hanging banners to floor stickers, logistical complexity, and not least, time pressure. Project peaks are the norm in the trade fair business – and the deadlines are merciless. Once visitors arrive on the grounds, everything must be ready. "Not infrequently," says Fries, Operational Assembly Manager, Daniel Gebert receives the first call from Messe Essen's Head of Advertising Andreas John early in the morning while in the shower, because an advertising display is damaged or an installation hasn't been rolled out. "These are sometimes very complex challenges, but Messe Essen is a very reliable partner for us."

The appreciation proud to print enjoys at Messe Essen is evident. After eight years of collaboration in outdoor advertising, the company now acts as a system partner. This means that from the moment print data is submitted, they manage the entire project, including production. All the trade fair materials are printed at the company headquarters in Ratingen, just under 20 minutes by car from Messe Essen. Large-format printing is handled on standard machine widths of up to 3.2 by 5 metres. Anything larger – is either welded or – like the glass windows in the Galeria – applied with adhesives..

Everything in-house – even the assembly team

Preparations for major trade fairs are well rehearsed: two to three people handle administration, and production is scheduled in blocks, even on weekends, to ensure late additions can still be delivered on time. On-site at the exhibition grounds, Daniel Gebert works with four to five staff members for five to seven days, often late into the evening, sometimes up to an hour before the fair opens. "This is only possible with specialists," explains Fries. All installers are permanently employed, and each has at least one backup who knows the grounds inside and out. "Otherwise," Fries says, "you'd literally get lost out there."

Specialists in visual brand selling: Operational Assembly Manager Daniel Gebert (right) and installer Oliver Schönemann.

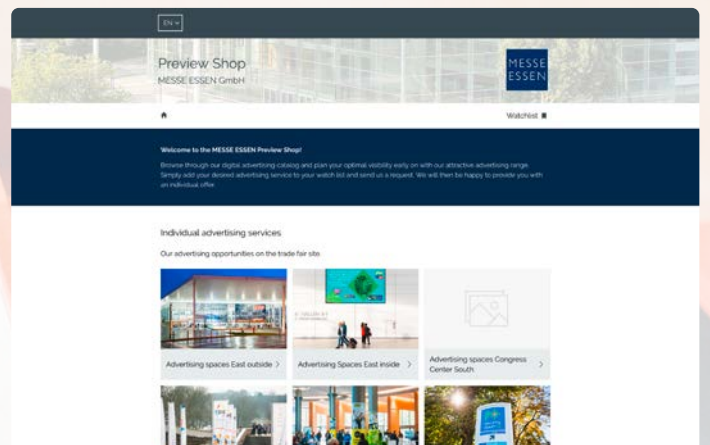


YOUR MESSAGE AT MESSE ESSEN



Are you an exhibitor or host organisation interested in advertising at Messe Essen? Why not explore our digital catalogue now and get

inspired? From large vinyl prints on the glass facades of Messehaus Ost and giant posters on the outer railing of Messehaus West, to escalator branding and the outfitting of mega-light boards – we have many ways to get your message noticed.



A VOICE FOR EQUALITY

Women are still disadvantaged – especially in rural areas. Deutscher LandFrauentag (German Rural Women’s Day) at the Grugahalle aims to give them a platform.

■ When thinking of the major interest groups in the country, political parties probably come to mind first. But they are by no means the only, and certainly not the largest, groups. Deutscher Land-Frauenverband e.V. (dlv – German Rural Women’s Association) is a good example. The association has over 12,000 local chapters and nearly 450,000 members – more than any party. Around 5,000 of them are expected at the Grugahalle on 30 June.

dlv’s importance is recognised in Berlin and Düsseldorf, as evidenced by the line-up of political figures attending: German Federal Minister for Women Karin Prien and Federal Minister of Agriculture Alois Rainer will be present, as well as North Rhine-Westphalia’s Minister-President Hendrik Wüst. dlv President Petra Bentkämper leaves no doubt that the event will also address political issues: “Our spectrum is very broad, but currently the economic equality of women in rural areas and the topic of parity are top priorities. Just consider the debates around so-called lifestyle

part-time work or the relaxation of the eight-hour day – these are issues we track closely and address with clarity.”

It goes beyond agriculture

This also makes one thing clear. Even though dlv has its historical roots in rural housewives’ associations founded at the end of the 19th century, its target group is much broader, as Petra Bentkämper emphasises: “It is very important to us to give all women in rural areas a voice. It is rural life itself that unites us.” The association is currently focused on issues such as the increasing number of anti-feminist attacks and women’s health.

Petra Bentkämper, who herself ran a full-time dairy farm near Bielefeld for many years with her husband, emphasises that the situation of women in



»It is rural life itself that unites us.«

Petra Bentkämper, President of the German Rural Women’s Association

agriculture continues to be closely monitored. “Women are the backbone of agriculture – on farms in Germany as well as worldwide. They manage operations, make decisions, secure income, organise work and oversee family and volunteer commitments.” Accordingly, at least one of the two awardees receiving the “Entrepreneur of the Year” title in Essen will come from the agricultural sector.

www.landfrauen.info

Political prominence: German Federal Minister of Agriculture Alois Rainer, Federal Minister for Women Karin Prien and NRW Minister-President Hendrik Wüst will be guests at the Grugahalle on 30 June (from left).



JAZZ AT ITS FINEST

Diana Krall and Helge Schneider will appear at the Grugahalle as part of the Ruhr Piano Festival.

www.klavierfestival.de

12.05.2026 ELBOWS OFF THE TABLE!

Anyone who visited 1980s-era jazz clubs in the Ruhr area will remember a certain quirky character who sometimes played standards with a trio, other times improvised freely – mostly on the piano, but occasionally on drums, saxophone, trumpet or double bass. Even after Helge Schneider became one of Germany's top comedians, the "tinkling clown" retained his passion for music. For Schneider himself, "my comedy is also jazz". On 12 May at the Grugahalle, the Mülheim-born artist will enjoy a home-field advantage. He will be accompanied by guitarist Sandro Giampietro and bassist Leo Richartz.



Photo: Helge Schneider

04.07.2026 DIANA KRALL WITH BAND

How do you define a jazz superstar? For Diana Krall, the answer is simple: she is the only singer whose eight albums all debuted at number one on the Billboard Jazz Albums Chart. With a voice described by the New York Times as "at once cool and seductive, applied with rhythmic sophistication", she has won countless awards, contributed to film soundtracks, collaborated with artists such as Paul McCartney, Barbra Streisand and Tony Bennett – and, of course, regularly fills venues worldwide. Her latest album, "This Dream of You", has been celebrated by both fans and critics. On 4 July, Diana Krall will perform in Essen with her band.



Photo: All Things Live

Marie Babette Nierenz

studied piano, as well as music and communication studies and business administration in Leipzig. She has been part of the Philharmonie Essen team since its founding in 2003 and has served as its Artistic Director since 2023.



»THE MORE DIVERSE, THE MORE SUCCESSFUL«

A conversation with Marie Babette Nierenz, Artistic Director of the Philharmonie Essen, about world-class artists, kindergartens and the joy of music in the living room.

ESSEN AFFAIRS: Ms Nierenz, you have been Artistic Director of the Philharmonie Essen for nearly three years, but you have been familiar with the institution since 2003. Was stepping into the top role a natural progression or a major turning point?

Marie Babette Nierenz: Actually, both. It developed very organically. Since the Philharmonie's founding, I gradually took on more responsibility – first organisational, then personnel, and finally artistic. When the directorship became vacant in 2021, it eventually felt like “now you can take it all the way”. After a short period of reflection, I consciously chose to do so because the role offers enormous creative possibilities. With that freedom comes great responsibility, of course. You ask yourself: Will I be able to implement my ideas? Will the artists I want to invite come? Will we find partners and sponsors? Will people come to the concerts? That makes it all the more rewarding to see our concept succeed.

What do you see as the key factors for a successful philharmonic, especially in a city like Essen?

I like to speak of three pillars. First: artistic excellence. We achieve this with top international orchestras and soloists. Second: diversity. Essen is home to people from 140 countries, and our programming must reflect that. Third: cultural participation. We want to reach people who might not otherwise have access to classical music.

How does that participation work in practice?

We actively go into the city, with projects in schools, kindergartens, neighbourhoods, hospitals, even correctional facilities. With “Philharmonie vor Ort” (“Philharmonie in the Community”), we spend an entire week performing concerts in social spaces. People can experience our musicians there and are then invited to visit the Philharmonie itself – accessible and open to all.

What role do partnerships and sponsors play?

A very large one. Around a quarter of our budget comes from third-party funds. Without foundations, sponsors and corporate partners, many projects would not be possible. At the same time, companies can benefit. They promote cultural engagement, welcome employees and social groups and integrate into a broader social ecosystem.

A recent example of programming diversity is the TIKWAH Festival of Jewish Music.

How did this project come about?

After 7 October 2023, I asked myself what we really know about Jewish music. Together with partners, including Dr Diana Matut, Director of the Old Synagogue, in Essen, we decided to bring this topic into focus – with concerts, films, discussions and educational programmes. It was never about provocation, but about dialogue, democracy and discovery. The response shows that in a city like Essen, openness works, and nuanced engagement is possible. →

ESSEN AFFAIRS: Speaking of politics: convincing a global star like Anna Netrebko to join a multi-year collaboration is a coup – but could it also provoke protests?

Marie Babette Nierenz: We have a very clear stance: we do not engage artists who are favoured by Putin's system. We established this after the Russian invasion in February 2022. We have also withdrawn invitations. Anna Netrebko has distanced herself from the war as much as she can as a Russian citizen with family in Russia. That's why her poster is displayed prominently at the entrance alongside the one for the TIKWAH Festival. And this drew no criticism from the city.

How do such collaborations come about?

It's all about personal contacts and encounters. Artists today don't just want to deliver a finished product – they want to co-develop formats. When



"Every concert needs a clear USP", says Marie Babette Nierenz.

they realise they have an open ear and an artistic home here, long-term partnerships emerge.

You also deliberately pursue new and unusual formats.

Absolutely! The more diverse we are, the more successful. Formats like "Takeover!", "Happy Hour" or cross-genre projects with pop artists are successful across generations. In February 2027, we are

HIGHLIGHTS AT THE PHILHARMONIE

www.theater-essen.de



22./23.05.2026 TAKEOVER! BY MIKI

Mihalj Kekenj, known as Miki, was born into a family of violinists and seemed destined for a career as a virtuoso. However, at 15, he put aside the violin for the first time to write and produce hip-hop beats and lyrics. Musically, he thrives where classical music meets the genres and styles of pop culture. His "Takeover!" concerts are a nationwide success. Special guest in May: Eva Briegel from the band Juli.



30.05.2026 TIKWAH FESTIVAL WITH DANIEL HOPE

Violinist Daniel Hope explores the intersection of music and history. At the closing of the TIKWAH Festival of Jewish Music, he will present the music and events of 1938 from the perspective of two radio hosts – one from Germany, one from the USA. Songs reflect the mood of the era – ironic on one side, carefree on the other. Together with chansonnier Horst Maria Merz, baritone Thomas Hampson and a band, he creates a memorable multimedia journey through a pivotal year in European history.



10.06.2026 HAPPY HOUR

Conductor Maxim Emelyanychev has been celebrated in Essen multiple times for his infectious musical energy. In the 2025/26 season, he is featured in a four-part portrait series. On 10 June, he will conduct the WDR Symphony Orchestra in the popular Happy Hour series, performing works by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy that fully capture the spirit of romanticism. Classical music at its finest, in just one hour!

even planning a football concert with fan chants. People come either for specific artists, a particular work or the format itself. Today, every concert needs a clear USP.

Do you struggle with the declining classical audience?

Not at all. On the contrary, we reach many young people through children's, youth and family concerts, and also through school and kindergarten projects. Many of these events are sold out. It's important to create access early – though projects such as "Music Comes Around the Corner" are not just about recruiting future concertgoers.

Then what is the goal?

It's about cultural and social work, about community and participation. Early childhood education is crucial. Since 2015, we have reached around

10,000 children in 60 kindergartens – that's a great success. With the support of Regionalverband Ruhr and as many partners as possible, we aim to expand this project regionally from 2027 onwards. This is one of my most important goals in the coming years.

Finally, why should someone visit the Philharmonie after a long day at a trade fair?

Because the Philharmonie is like a musical living room. You leave the world outside, immerse yourself in another world and come out happier than when you entered. We experience this every evening.



05.07.2026 SING MAL MIT DER MAUS

The Maus (Mouse) has been a cultural icon since 1971, explaining the world cleverly and humorously to children and adults every Sunday. On 5 July, families and children aged six and older are invited to sing along with the WDR Radio Choir Cologne and host André Gatzke. Traditional children's songs and current tracks from the Maus playlist are included. Because as the Maus knows, singing makes people happy. And it will certainly tell everyone why.



25.01.2027 ANNA NETREBKO

The "Primadonna Assoluta" Anna Netrebko will perform arias, duets and trios from operas by Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, Umberto Giordano, Francesco Cilea and Ruggero Leoncavallo, alongside tenor Brian Jagde and baritone George Petean. They will share the stage with the Philharmonie Baden-Baden under conductor Marco Armiliato. Advance ticket sales for this concert are already underway!

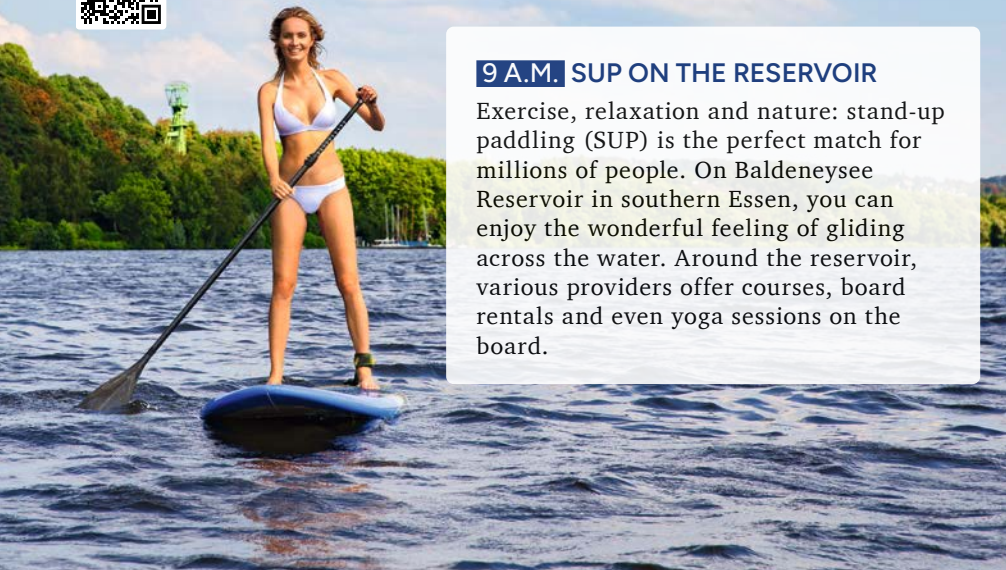


30.01.2027 PHILHARMONIC BALL

The Philharmonic Ball is a major social event. On 30 January 2027, the Philharmonie Essen will shine in festive splendour, with around 2,000 guests celebrating into the early hours. The evening will feature renowned orchestras, soloists and prominent dance couples performing waltz, disco and swing. An unforgettable, unique event – tickets are already on sale.

ESSEN IN 24 HOURS

With enough energy and curiosity, you can spend an entire day exploring surprising spots throughout Essen.



9 A.M. SUP ON THE RESERVOIR

Exercise, relaxation and nature: stand-up paddling (SUP) is the perfect match for millions of people. On Baldeneysee Reservoir in southern Essen, you can enjoy the wonderful feeling of gliding across the water. Around the reservoir, various providers offer courses, board rentals and even yoga sessions on the board.

11 A.M. PADEL AT THE PRINTING HOUSE

Padel is trending. Around Essen, there are now 25 facilities where you can try this mix of tennis and squash. The seven indoor courts of The Padellers, open around the clock, combine the joy of sport with the industrial chic of a former printing house. Very cool!



4 P.M. BOULDERING IN THE BILLIARD HALL

Bouldering became an Olympic sport in 2020, fuelling the boom of this climbing discipline and expanding the offerings in Essen. In 2023, Element Boulders opened a spectacular hall in a former billiard centre. In two halls totalling 2,000 square metres, bright wooden walls with colourful holds and rock-like shapes now stretch all the way to the ceiling.

7 P.M. SPLASHING AT THE ZOLLVEREIN POOL

One of the iconic images of the Ruhr metropolis: the bright blue pool in the middle of the former coke plant at Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex. The “works swimming pool” has symbolised both the city’s and the Ruhr area’s structural transformation since 2001. Once again this year, visitors to the Zollverein UNESCO World Heritage Site can relax for free at the pool during the NRW summer holidays (18.07.–01.09.).



IMPRINT

Publisher: Messe Essen GmbH, P.O. Box 10 01 65, 45001 Essen, www.messe-essen.de

Editorial responsibility: Daniela Mühlen, Senior Vice President Communication & Advertising

Overall coordination and advertising management: Andreas John

Managing editor: Jens Poggenpohl

Art direction: Tamara Bobanac

Editorial team: Dirk Maertens (Maenken Kommunikation)

Photo editor: Lothar Kempkes

Photo credits: Messe Essen; Kurbanov und Muchnik GbR (unless otherwise stated)

Cover image: © P.A.D. Werbeagentur GmbH

Realisation: Maenken Kommunikation GmbH, Von-der-Wettern-Str. 25, 51149 Cologne, Germany, www.maenken.com

Printing: ALBERSDRUCK GMBH & CO KG, Leichlinger Straße 11, 40591 Düsseldorf, www.albersdruck.de

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DATES UNTIL NOVEMBER 2026

TRADE FAIRS, CONGRESSES,
CONVENTIONS IN ESSEN

05.05.2026

ADN Transformation Day

05.–08.05.2026

METPACK*

International trade fair for metal
packaging

12.–14.05.2026

EACR Conference 2026

"Cancer Genomics"

28.–30.05.2026

GEW NRW Trade Union Congress

31.05.–01.06.2026

EDEKA In-house Exhibition 2026*

13.06.2026

RICHESSSES D'AFRIQUE –
DBC ESSEN

23.06.2026

Bank im Bistum 60th anniversary

22.–25.09.2026

security essen*

The leading trade fair for security

22.–25.09.2026

EURO DEFENCE EXPO*

The international trade fair for the
defence industry

30.09.2026

BILDUNG.DIGITAL

The EdTech Show for Digital Education

22.–25.10.2026

SPIEL ESSEN

The world's largest board game
exhibition

05.–08.11.2026

MHH Erlebniswelten

From pleasure to sports –
everything on-site

08.–12.11.2026

Northern Germany Camping
Day NCT

12.11.2026

HÜTTENTAG

Home of steel

21.11.2026

NOWEDA Annual General Meeting

21.11.2026

Day of Conservative Orthopaedics

27.11.–06.12.2026

ESSEN MOTOR SHOW

The performance festival of the year

TRADE FAIRS ABROAD

29.06.–02.07.2026

BEIJING ESSEN WELDING &
CUTTING (Shenzhen)International trade fair joining,
cutting, surfacing

30.11.–02.12.2026

INDIA ESSEN WELDING & CUTTING
(Mumbai)International trade fair joining,
cutting, surfacing

GRUGAHALLE

09.05.2026

Mädchen Klamotte
Girls clothing flea market

12.05.2026

Ruhr Piano Festival
Helge Schneider & Band
Elbows off the Table!

14.05.2026

Özcan Deniz
Tour 2026

23.05.2026

IFP Fight Series #5
Kickboxing/Muay Thai/MMA

25.05.2026

K-POP Showdown
The Ultimate Tribute Show

05.06.2026

DIKKA – WOW, THAT'S WICKED 2

26.06.2026

SASCHA GRAMMEL
"Make a Wish"

The puppet comedy show live in Essen!

04.07.2026

Ruhr Piano Festival
Diana Krall and Band

17.–26.07.2026

53rd Summer Festival at the
Grugahalle

06.09.2026

Mädchen Klamotte
Girls clothing flea market

19.09.2026

ABI Zukunft Essen

26.09.2026

Oldies Night Essen

11.10.2026

Mädchen Klamotte
Girls clothing flea market

31.10.2026

Chris Tall
"KEEP LAUGHING!"

03.11.2026

Elena Uhlig & Fritz Karl
Marriage – A Hostile Takeover

07.11.2026

Alaaf im Pott 2026
Volle Pulle Jeck

13.11.2026

Mario Barth
"Men Are Nothing Without Women"

14.11.2026

GameChanger by
Bastian Bielendorfer

28.11.2026

Özcan Cosar – VIP

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BUSINESS

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