

Bocholt, July 18, 2023

**Vice Chancellor Dr. Robert Habeck visited Flender at the Penig site**

## Habeck praises digitization and AI in mechanical engineering and the associated "great leap in efficiency through this next technology"

- **Paperless production, digital gearbox solutions and wind expansion are key topics of the visit**
- **Discussions between Habeck and apprentices and Ukrainian employees also give space to personal stories**

On Friday, July 14, 2023, the German Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Dr. Robert Habeck, visited the drive specialist Flender at its production site in Penig, Germany. Part of the delegation were several advisors from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action as well as 30 journalists from the daily and business press. The members of the Bundestag Bernhard Herrmann (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) and Carlos Kasper (SPD) as well as Penig's mayor André Wolf (CDU) also took part in the visit.

Digitization and Industry 4.0, which are also an integral part of the production of Flender's industrial gear units, were the focus areas of the plant tour led by Flender CEO Andreas Evertz and the site manager Jens Klein. Real models with Flender gearboxes were used to illustrate the efficiency improvements of the new Flender One gearbox platform and the new AIQ gearbox intelligence. AIQ enables digital condition monitoring of the driveline and prevents unplanned downtimes.

Minister Habeck: "Well, you may think: There is artificial intelligence and digitization, but the classic industries such as mechanical engineering and drive technology, to which I also count you, are mature. And now, all of a sudden, you do a thing like

this. Suddenly, you have such a big leap in efficiency with this next technology. That is really amazing."

Flender's new industrial gear unit platform Flender One features a high degree of individualization and is produced paperless at the site. "We have to map a batch size of 1, and we have to do it fully digitized," emphasizes Jens Klein, site manager at Flender Penig. Flender trainee Lisa-Marie Söll explains the process: "During my training, I still stood at the drawing board. Today, I only work with 3D models." Minister Habeck, laughing, "It's a bit like the instructions of a Swedish furniture company, only in cool."

Two former refugees from Ukraine are also employed in manufacturing. Artur Buniian, one of the refugees, says he feels at home in Germany and became aware of Flender through a personal recommendation. Minister Habeck: "Then I thank the company (...) and all the best to you and good luck with the integration in Germany."

Wind expansion was also a topic of the minister's visit. Flender CEO Andreas Evertz commented: "The mood in the industry was very pessimistic a year and a half ago. Now, the industry is looking forward, but the real boom is not expected until 2025." With its Winergy brand, Flender offers drive technology for the wind industry and is one of the pioneers of wind energy, with 350 gigawatts of drive capacity delivered to date. Taking a look at the future, Evertz adds, "The focus now is on volumes and scalability to be able to meet the upcoming demand, also from an economic point of view."

Other topics discussed during the minister's visit included increases in energy and material costs and the reduction of bureaucracy in sustainability reporting. The appointment was part of the Vice Chancellor's summer tour, during which Habeck met with entrepreneurs, employees, and citizens. He followed the invitation of Flender CEO Andreas Evertz from last April at the Hannover Messe, when Habeck visited the Flender booth.

Flender employs around 550 people at its Penig site, making it the largest employer in the town. In Penig, Flender mainly manufactures standard gear units for industrial applications. In 2023, the site celebrated its 150th anniversary.

This press release and press pictures are available at [www.flender.com/company/press](http://www.flender.com/company/press).



From left to right: Robert Habeck, Flender Penig site manager Jens Klein and Flender CEO Andreas Evertz



Artur Buniian, now part of the Flender workforce, fled from the Ukraine and recounts his story



Flender trainee Theres Gräfe (middle) and Robert Habeck



Matthias Hartmann (right) explains the digital solutions in new Flender gearboxes



From left to right: Flender Penig site manager Jens Klein, Robert Habeck, and Flender CEO Andreas Evertz

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**Flender** headquartered in Bocholt, Germany, is a leading global supplier for mechanical and electrical drive systems and has the reputation for highest performance, innovation, quality, and reliability of drive components for more than 120 years. Flender offers a broad variety of gear units, couplings and generators and associated services, with a focus on key industries such as wind power, cement, mining, oil & gas, power generation, water and wastewater, marine, conveyor and crane technology. Flender products and services combine the latest technology with extremely high quality and have been reliably providing the optimal transmission of power for decades. Flender has around 9,000 employees globally. Further information is available on the Internet at [www.flender.com](http://www.flender.com).