

The 17th Taicang Day in Stuttgart Celebrates Over 30 Years of Sino-German Cooperation and Innovation

Wednesday 25 June, 2025

On June 25, the 17th "Taicang Day" event kicked off in Stuttgart, marking a significant milestone in the longstanding relationship between Taicang, a city in E China, and Germany. The event returned to its original location in the heart of the "Motor City," where nearly 300 guests, including officials from the Baden-Württemberg state government, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Stuttgart government, the German Chamber of Commerce, renowned trade and investment promotion organizations, and executives from German companies, gathered to discuss new opportunities for Sino-German cooperation.

Hosted by the Taicang municipal government, this year's theme, "Innovation-Driven, Green Win-Win," highlighted Taicang's deepening ties with Germany across various sectors, including trade, education, culture, and sustainability. The event was a platform for fostering continued collaboration between both nations, with key discussions on shared innovation and sustainable development.

In his opening speech, Wang Xiangyuan, Party Secretary of Taicang, highlighted the city's strong ties with the automotive industry. He noted that 70% of a car's components can now be produced in Taicang, and 70% of German enterprises in Taicang are related to automotive manufacturing. The first German company to settle in Taicang, KERN-LIEBERS, also hails from the Baden-Württemberg region, where Stuttgart is located. Today, Taicang is home to over 550 German companies, with one-fifth of them originating from this region.

Taicang's strategic location in China's most economically developed Yangtze River Delta, coupled with its strong transportation network, has made it a key economic hub. Taicang is a vibrant symbol of the country's reform and opening-up, often referred to as a "small gem city" of in the southern Yangtze River region. With per capita green park space at levels comparable to European cities and a life expectancy exceeding 85 years, the city is known for its leisurely urban lifestyle. Though a small city in China, Taicang is well-known in Germany. Former Chinese Ambassador to Germany, Shi Mingde, once remarked that Taicang's reputation in Germany surpasses its recognition in China.

The city's proximity to Shanghai, with six rail lines connecting them and a travel time of just 30 minutes to major transportation hubs, has further strengthened its role as a satellite city for international business. With its bustling port, Taicang is also an essential gateway for global trade, boasting one of China's largest foreign trade ports, Taicang Port. More than 200 international shipping routes connect Taicang to key markets across Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Notably, one in every ten cars exported from China passes through Taicang Port, underscoring the city's vital role in global supply chains.

During the event, Dr. Steim, at 84 years old, received both the "Hi Taicang Card" (a special citizen's card) and the "City Honor Card," which earned him a standing ovation for his contribution to Sino-German cooperation. Dr. Steim arrived in Taicang in 1993, when it was much like a German city, and soon after, the first German enterprise was established there. He has since been a driving force and witness to over 30 years of deepening cooperation. The "City Honor Card" is awarded by the municipal government to individuals who have made significant contributions to the economic and social development of Taicang. The "Hi Taicang Card" is a special initiative for foreign residents, offering convenience in healthcare, education, transportation, and other daily life needs.

On the same day, several important cooperation agreements were signed, including agreements between Taicang High-Tech Zone and the Bundesliga, as well as with GIZ (the German Development Agency). These agreements, spanning areas such as trade, culture, and vocational education, underscore Taicang's continued efforts to strengthen its economic ties with Germany while promoting cross-cultural exchange and sustainable development.

To celebrate the 255th anniversary of Beethoven's birth, the 2025 Sino-German Beethoven Choral Art Exhibition and the first Sino-German Choral Festival will be held in Taicang from August 22 to 24, 2025.

Looking ahead, Taicang is positioning itself as a leading center for Sino-German collaboration. With a robust industrial ecosystem, a rich cultural heritage, and a commitment to sustainable development, the city offers abundant opportunities for businesses and investors. As the event concluded, attendees were reminded of the deep and lasting bond between Taicang and Germany, one that continues to thrive and evolve with each passing year.

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