

€2 million support for synthetic diamond production

SUMMARY

Flanders' government has backed the production of synthetic diamonds for use in optics, telecoms and energy – where natural diamonds are not hard enough – by contributing to a new facility in Limburg



A YOUNG, GROWING INDUSTRY

Following a proposal by economy and innovation minister Philippe Muyters, the Flemish government has approved €2 million support for Heyaru Engineering in Lommel, Limburg, to begin developing synthetic diamonds.

The synthetic diamond industry is still young, particularly in Flanders, but the material is being used in an increasing number of applications. Just 2% of natural diamonds have the necessary hardness to be used in industrial and technological applications such as optics, telecoms and energy, meaning synthetic diamonds fill

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an important gap. The limited number of suppliers currently working in the field cannot meet the demand, which is expected to increase significantly in the coming years – up by as much as 82% in 2025 from 2016.

“Heyaru, which is now producing synthetic diamonds on a small scale in India, is aiming to open the first such plant in Europe in Lommel,” Muyters said in a press release. “The production facility will become the group’s central hub for production and for research into new techniques and applications. The company is investing more than €24 million. For such an important development, the Flemish government is contributing €2 million.”

The first phase will see approximately 15 jobs created. Heyaru aims to grow into a facility with hundreds of reactors and 120 to 150 employees within the next five to 10 years.

“The investment in Heyaru not only brings with it new jobs; the company also wants to contribute to the expansion of a Flemish knowledge cluster based on synthetic diamonds,” Muyters said. “An important part of the project is the establishment of its own research and development centre, working with Flemish knowledge institutions. Heyaru’s presence will provide important pulling power for other businesses – something that’s good for the future of the Flemish economy.”