

Milestones on the way to 50 years of Hydro-Elektrik GmbH

1971 was a special year: Agatha Christie received a knighthood in the UK; the Aswan Dam was inaugurated in Egypt; Greenpeace was founded in Canada; Walter Ulbricht was forced to resign in the GDR and the innovation powerhouse Hydro-Elektrik was founded as a limited company in the German city of Ravensburg.

The company's purpose: the planning, production, installation and servicing of electrical and hydraulic water technology systems with an emphasis on water storage, water treatment and automation technology.

As the newly founded company had no pro-

duction workshop of its own, one of the initial contacts was made with Tannheim-based metal workshop Kühle for an order in **1972**, laying the foundation for a lasting, intensive cooperative partnership. **1972** also saw the foundation stone for the first company build-

ing laid at the current company headquarters in Obereschach, which was expanded in **1983** to include a warehouse.

As the company grew, it required a larger workforce, so office space was increased with a further extension in **1988/89**.

The death of company co-founder Anton Locher on **30 May 1997** was a serious blow for the company. Nevertheless, in **1999**, the company made a major leap forward with the construction of a pilot plant and a research contract for the Norwegian SINTEF Group with the aim of investigating ozone bio-filtration as a means of treating surface water. Water News appeared for the first time in **2001** while RWT-GmbH in Gütersloh changed ownership and became a subsidiary of Hydro-Elektrik GmbH. Tank construction was developed in the same year, which earned us an innovation award and required further investments. The first large production hall for tank production was built in Tannheim in **2003**.

The Norwegian subsidiary Hydro-Elektrik AS, based in Bergen, was founded in **2004**, aided by a successful entry onto the Norwegian market.

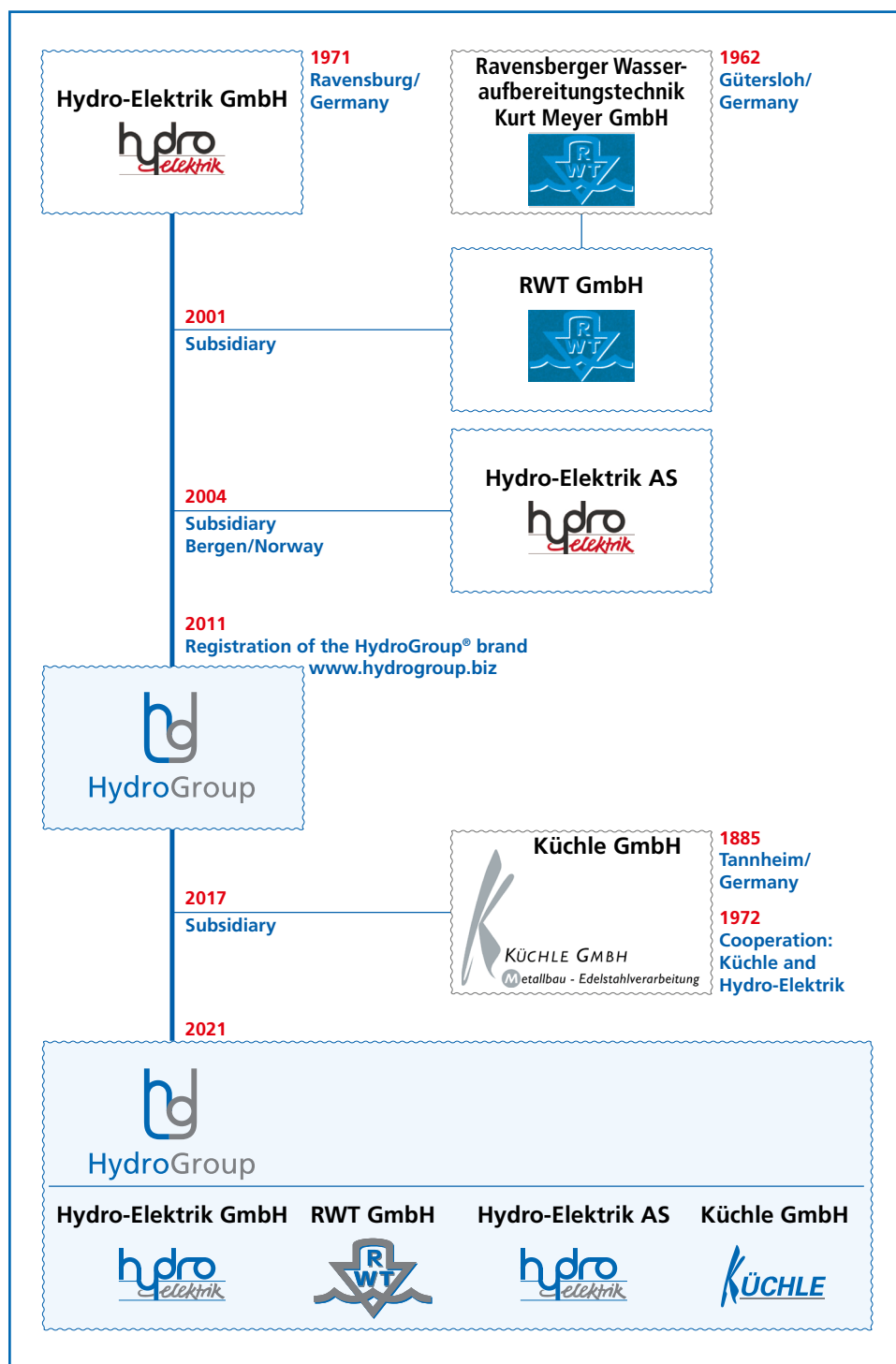
In 2006, a second production hall was built in Tannheim, just three years after the first one. The first waterworks were built in Romania in **2007** and **2010**.

Registration of the HydroGroup® brand in **2011** meant marketing activities could be combined more effectively, a common website created and a standardised external image presented.

In **2013**, an extension at the Ravensburg site largely doubled the usable space for production and administration.

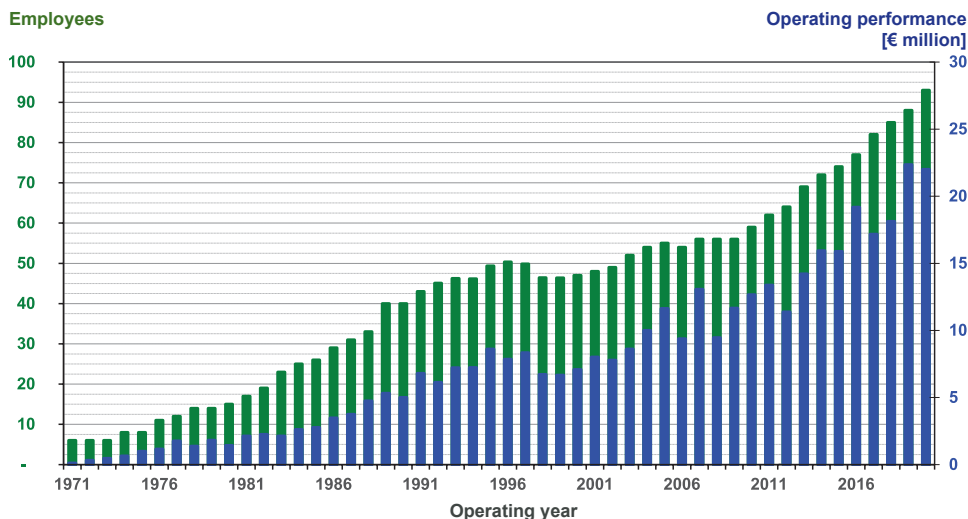
They say all good things come in threes and that certainly was the case when the third subsidiary was added to the group in **2017** with the complete takeover of Kühle GmbH. The second company founder Bruno Bachhofer died shortly before the 50th anniversary on **8 May 2021**.

Now headed by second generation family members, the HydroGroup® looks positively into the future in the spirit of the company's founders and eagerly awaits further development.



Hydro-Elektrik GmbH with stable organic growth

Ravensburg-based Hydro-Elektrik GmbH also achieved solid organic growth in 2021. Both its operating performance and the number of employees have steadily expanded at all levels in recent years.



Alongside the large tank construction segment, the water treatment sector in particular has expanded sharply. The demand for plants has not only risen in Norway and Romania, but also in the German-speaking countries. New plants, replacement purchases, modernisation of obsolete plant technology and process changes with the aim of optimising energy and chemical consumption are fields where Hydro-Elektrik GmbH can shine and deliver interesting ideas and future-oriented products.

The company's best assets are teams with motivated, dedicated employees. Keeping them enthusiastic and recruiting new ones is one of the key objectives in the company's policies for the next few years.

VOICES FOR THE 50TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Working for the most valuable foodstuff – our water

Great products, full order books, satisfied customers, motivated employees – what else does a company wish to improve? What motivates Executive Management? What do they expect from the future?

For **Andrea Strobel, CEO of Hydro-Elektrik GmbH**, Hydro is "home and an almost family community". As an executive manager in the company, she sees it as her life's task to help build trust-based cooperation among the teams so that they are able to undertake fascinating projects for the benefit and satisfaction of the customers. Taking individual strengths into account to an optimum extent and developing freedom for each individual ensure enhanced team performance, thus enabling teams to overcome ever-changing challenges. For the future, Strobel hopes that the technical accomplishment achieved by the company's work will continue to form the centre of the company's activities and that bureaucracy will not increase any further. She also regards even closer cooperation between the companies in the HydroGroup® as a guarantee of success in the future. **Karl Weisshaupt, CEO of Hydro-Elektrik GmbH**, agrees with her assessment and adds that high-quality products and systems for drinking water treatment and storage and innovative processes and procedures are more important than ever, especially in today's world. Working in highly motivated teams at Hydro, where many years' experience, curiosity and enthusiasm for technology converge, leads to individual, perfectly tailored solutions for customers. At the end of this process, there are satisfied customers, who have usually been associated with the company for decades and thus form the basis for further growth. Hydro has always been a fair, reliable partner for Kühle GmbH since they started working together. **Rainer Kühle, CEO of Kühle GmbH**, particularly appreciates the fact that customer satisfaction takes a top priority and that all those involved care about employees' well-being. One particular event he remembers is how an open space in the courtyard was swiftly concreted at the location in the centre of the village

of Tannheim when tank production was first being developed. The neighbourhood and villagers looked on astonished as the first water tank was being built in the open air with great skill and invention until late into the evening.



The fact that Hydro-Elektrik's success story with the HST tanks has continued so magnificently fills him with joy and pride. For the future, he hopes that innovative capacity will remain strong and that the courage to try out new things will remain unbroken.

Markus Stüker, CEO of RWT GmbH, is not only impressed by the healthy growth, but also by the fact that the company accepts bureaucratic challenges such as those posed by the Biocidal Products Regulation, and is looking for solutions that help its customers. What RWT finds particularly helpful is the team-

work and mutual support, especially for larger projects, plus the personal working relationships and exchange of information on tricky issues. For the future, Stüker anticipates great demand for new solutions to clean process water and provide wastewater-free systems among other things. He considers the companies in the HydroGroup® well-positioned for the future with a permanent cross-company collaboration in process development for these new applications.

For **Peter Paskert, CEO of HE AS** in Norway, the company's foundation was a success right from the very start, especially thanks to the intensive joint work in all areas. Importantly for him, the HydroGroup® is synonymous with customers as partners, plants as reference projects and quality as trademarks. What's more, he also considers common objectives can also be achieved over long distances, something which digital structures should make even easier in the future.

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