

DSC Forst

Deutsche Sprengchemie Forst-Scheuno as part of the Reich armaments economy

G.E.O.S. 1995 · Preuß et al. 1994 · Jürgen Scholz · archiwa / archives

Research status: 4 September 2026

<https://fundacja-rokita.eu/en/regional-history/third-reich/dsc-forst/>

Editorial note: this is a public-history study. Propellant production is described only historically, without recipes or manufacturing parameters. The full 2004 work by Jürgen Scholz was not publicly available during this research.

Sources and method

The page is based on the 1995 G.E.O.S. report, the unpublished 1994 reconstruction by Johannes Preuß and colleagues, collection 89/1299/0 at the State Archive in Zielona Góra, and digital records from the German Federal Archives and Brandenburg State Main Archive. Jürgen Scholz is used primarily as a guide to the subject of foreign labour in Forst; since his 2004 text is not openly available in full, details about people are grounded in archival records and testimony instead.

Source-supported fact

DSC within the armaments system

Deutsche Sprengchemie GmbH operated a network of armaments plants. Bundesarchiv record BArch R 8135/7252, concerning the audit of the 1941 financial statement, lists Forst alongside Torgelow, Kietz, Kraiburg, Moschwig, Oderberg, Dreetz and Wolfratshausen and notes links to Montanindustriewerke and WASAG. G.E.O.S. likewise places Forst in a military-controlled structure. The complex should therefore be seen not as an isolated “secret factory in the forest” but as part of a distributed Reich armaments network.

Source-supported fact

From site investigation to production

G.E.O.S. reconstructs geological and hydrogeological work from 1938 and subsequent planning. The State Archive in Zielona Góra gives 1938 as the start of construction and 1941 as its principal completion. Earlier planning deadlines proved too optimistic; labour and material shortages delayed the schedule. Plant section I entered production in 1941 and section II in 1942, while supplementary construction continued.

Source-supported fact

Scale: different boundaries explain different areas

The archival description of collection 89/1299/0 gives 500-600 hectares, about 400 bunkers, 72 km of concrete roads and 38 km of railway track. G.E.O.S., by contrast, cites an RBK plant card dated 18 August 1941 with a parcel of 3,364,000 m² (about 336 ha), 300,000 m² built-up area, 120,000 m² working area and 2,398 employees. The area figures likely describe different boundaries - a narrower plant parcel versus a broader industrial and protective zone - so the page presents both rather than forcing a false single figure.

Source-supported fact

Water, roads and rail - a dispersed industrial city

G.E.O.S. documents 28 plant wells, major utility systems and dense transport infrastructure. About 70 km of internal roads linked widely separated functional areas. Roughly 38 km of railway appears in the reconstruction and is also stated in the public archival description. The key point is structural: the works functioned like a dispersed industrial town, with energy, water, workshops, laboratories, administration, fire protection, sidings, roads and safety zones.

Production - historical scale without instructions

The plant produced solvent-free POL propellants in several forms for military applications. G.E.O.S. describes the main production departments, but the Foundation does not publish recipes, process parameters, proportions or manufacturing instructions. The production table for 1941 to January 1945 totals about 38.5 thousand tonnes of propellant, demonstrating mass industrial output.

People: labour shortages and coercion

War diaries evaluated by G.E.O.S. show labour shortages during construction. Later the works also relied on foreign and coerced labour. The State Archive description mentions forced workers from France, Italy, the Netherlands and Ukraine, as well as Jews from concentration camps. The Polish testimony at the Documentation Centre for Nazi Forced Labour links Schönforst camp, the Forst labour office and employment by DSC. Ruth Heimann's 1942 file records a conviction for refusing work at DSC Forst-Scheuno; related DDB objects include "Forst: Frauenlager Scheuno".

Forst was the immediate hinterland

The main access road ran through Scheuno toward Forst-Berge and the railway connection through the Groß Bademeusel area. The factory depended on the urban transport node, labour office, suppliers and workers. The new "Third Reich → DSC Forst" page is therefore a thematic gateway. Detailed existing pages on the plant's origins, MONTAN, technical infrastructure, production, environmental research and corporate links remain at their current URLs. Moving them would require controlled 301 redirects.

End of the war and post-war reconstruction

The public archival description states that production continued almost until Soviet troops entered on 28 February 1945. After the war equipment was dismantled and the new Neisse border separated the complex from Forst. In 1994 Johannes Preuß and colleagues produced for GEOS an unpublished 141-page reconstruction with 38 tables, 12 illustrations, 36 building descriptions and a 1:5000 plan. The 1995 G.E.O.S. report combined archives, aerial photographs, field survey and environmental investigation.

Limits of certainty

Strongly supported are DSC's role, the construction and start-up sequence, RBK data, the broad scale of infrastructure, mass production and forced labour. More caution is required for assigning individual camps, precise annual workforce numbers and connecting local memories to specific plant departments. Where sources differ, the differences are shown rather than hidden.

Sources and verification

Source hierarchy: records, archival catalogues and institutional sources take priority over regional secondary accounts. Unavailable full texts are explicitly flagged.

1. Jürgen Scholz, "Konzeption, Analyse und Erstellung eines journalistischen Produktes zum Thema: Ausländereinsatz in Forst (Lausitz) 1939-1945", Berlin 2004 - bibliographic record in the BLHA catalogue.
<https://blha-bibliothek.brandenburg.de/>
2. Jürgen Scholz, "Der Ausländereinsatz in Forst 1939 bis 1945", Museumsverein Forst, 2006 - bibliographic confirmation.
<https://museumsverein-forst.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Auflistung-Jahrb%C3%BCher-von-Geisler.pdf>
3. Documentation Centre for Nazi Forced Labour - testimony of a Polish forced labourer: Schönforst camp, Forst labour office, barracks and work for Deutsche Sprengchemie.
<https://www.dz-ns-zwangsarbeit.de/zeitzeugenarchiv/zeitzeugen-objekte/objekt-singleansicht/obj/98/?section=ankerdok>
4. State Archive in Zielona Góra / Szukaj w Archiwach, collection 89/1299/0 - 67 worker passes and the collection history describing DSC Forst-Scheuno.
<https://www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl/zespol/-/zespol/64472>
5. German Digital Library / Brandenburg State Main Archive, 29 LGgef Guben 245 - Ruth Heimann, convicted in 1942 for refusing work at DSC Forst-Scheuno; related record "Frauenlager Scheuno".
<https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/B55LW5XNAU6V6OUXFDF7CD7FP5VTP37K>
6. German Digital Library / Federal Archives, BArch R 8135/7252 - audit of the 1941 DSC accounts; Forst is listed among the branch works.
<https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/J6NO64FRTVCS44NUQQD5HYXR4T6DOYXE>
7. Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz - Johannes Preuß bibliography: unpublished 1994 reconstruction of DSC Forst, 141 pages, 38 tables, 12 illustrations, 36 building descriptions and a 1:5000 plan.
<https://www.geo.uni-mainz.de/personen/johannes-preuss/>
8. G.E.O.S. Ingenieurgesellschaft mbH, 1995 study of the former ammunition and explosives works at Forst, Berlin/Hennigsdorf, 30 Nov 1995 - local project source.
[/historia-regionu/dsc-forst/informacje-techniczne/zrodla/GEOS_Rokita_J_Preuss_1995.pdf](/historia-regionu/dsc-forst/informacje-techniczne/zrodla/GEOS_Rokita_J_Preuss_1995.pdf)

Intellectual property of the author Krzysztof Bausa · 2026-09-04 18:17 CEST. This notice does not apply to cited sources, archival documents or third-party materials.