

Solar panel maker Conergy files for insolvency

July 5 2013



A Conergy solar panel factory in Frankfurt an der Oder, eastern Germany. German solar panel manufacturer Conergy said it will file for insolvency on Friday, the latest victim of ferocious competition from Asia in the industry.

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Conergy, which has workforce of around 1,200, said it would file an application for the opening of insolvency proceedings at a court in the northern city of Hamburg but remained "confident" of finding an investor.

"The management remains confident of achieving a continuation of the whole business operations in the context of insolvency proceedings by means of an investor," it said in a statement.

Conergy, set up in 1998, has annual sales of around 473 million euros (\$610 million). It was one of Germany's biggest solar cell makers in 2011.

Germany was once a leader in [solar technology](#), but the sector has dwindled recently as it battled falling government subsidies and [oversupply](#).

Cut-throat competition has come particularly from China and a number of German companies have recently gone bust or been bought up by foreign rivals.

German industry flagship Q-Cells was purchased by South Korea's Hanwha.

Engineering giant Siemens has also said it will phase out its activities in solar energy—where it currently employs some 280 people—by 2014 after failing to find a buyer.

Solar panels are at the heart of a current trade spat between China and the European Union, which accuses the Chinese of selling its [solar panels](#) below cost, a process known as 'dumping'.

According to German government figures, the number of people

employed in the [solar industry](#) fell to 87,000 in 2012 from 110,900 a year earlier, while sales plummeted by 11.9 billion euros.

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