

Media Information

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Series production gets underway: BMW Group officially opens Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen

New site to supply German vehicle plants with high-voltage batteries for the Neue Klasse – Investment of around one billion euros – Head of Production Wittmann: "Strong signal for Germany as a business location" – First high-voltage batteries for the new BMW i3 from Munich – Bavarian battery network: research, production and recycling

Straßkirchen, Irlbach. The BMW Group officially opened its new Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen in Bavaria today, marking the start of series production. Just two-and-a-half years after construction began, the facility is now supplying sixth-generation high-voltage batteries to BMW Group Plant Munich for installation in the BMW i3. Due to strong demand for Neue Klasse models, the ramp-up has progressed more rapidly than originally planned, with series production immediately operating on a two-shift basis. "The new plant plays a key role in our production network: As the central platform, it will supply our German vehicle plants with sixth-generation high-voltage batteries", said Raymond Wittmann, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, responsible for Production. "In this way, our high-tech plant in Irlbach-Straßkirchen is making a vital contribution to the ramp-up of the Neue Klasse."

A strong signal for Germany as an industrial hub

The BMW Group's investment of around one billion euros underlines the company's commitment to Germany's industrial base. "With our Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen, we are sending a strong signal: for our technological competitiveness, for electromobility – and for Germany as a business location", Wittmann emphasises. "We are convinced that successful industrial production in this country will remain possible in the future. The decisive factor is a reliable and competitive framework."

Söder: "A celebration day for Lower Bavaria, Bavaria and the whole of Germany"

Minister-President Dr Markus Söder: "Bavaria is the land of automotive! Today's opening is a day of celebration for Lower Bavaria, Bavaria and the whole of Germany. The batteries produced here are high-tech 'Made in Bavaria' and are also at the forefront by international standards, for example compared with China. The BMW plant was built at 'Bavarian speed' – this is a prime example of what the future holds. Overall, we need to speed up approvals and investments so that we can keep up with international competition. Speed is becoming an increasingly important factor in attracting business. The Free State of Bavaria is a close partner to the business community in this regard and is committed to significantly speeding up administrative processes and reducing bureaucracy. The automotive sector is systemically important for Bavaria and a key industry. We want to secure technology, value creation and local jobs for the future as well. BMW's massive investment is a strong commitment to Bavaria as a business location, and the i3 represents a major opportunity in the face of international competition – congratulations and every success!"

From construction start to first pre-series battery in less than two years

Construction of the plant on the 60-hectare site and installation of the production facilities was completed in record time: Less than two years elapsed between the start of construction in April 2024 and the production of the first pre-series battery in March 2026. This was made possible by the close cooperation between the company, policymakers, authorities and regional partners, with the support of the local population. Extensive communications and ongoing dialogue between all parties involved, combined with the use of digital planning and management tools, contributed significantly to the success of the project. In September 2023, the municipality of Straßkirchen held a referendum on the construction of the plant. A significant majority of over 75 percent of residents approved the construction of the BMW Group plant – with very high voter turnout of around 77 percent. "Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen shows what is possible in Germany when everyone involved works towards the same goal," said Wittmann. "The location in Eastern Bavaria offers ideal conditions: highly skilled employees, modern production structures,

short distances within the German plant cluster and a highly efficient regional environment. This puts us in an optimal position for continued growth and increasing demand for fully-electric vehicles."

Strengthening Eastern Bavaria as an industrial base

With its new plant, the BMW Group continues to expand its footprint in Eastern Bavaria. About 40 percent of all BMW cars ever produced have been built at the vehicle plants in Dingolfing and Regensburg. Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen is now further strengthening the region's status as a hub for electromobility. About a fifth of the company's global workforce is employed at Plants Dingolfing, Regensburg, Landshut and Irlbach-Straßkirchen.

Intelligent production for maximum quality

The BMW Group has established state-of-the-art, intelligent and efficient production processes for its in-house-developed sixth-generation (Gen6) high-voltage battery. The new cylindrical round cells are integrated directly into the high-voltage battery, based on the "cell-to-pack" principle. The high-voltage battery itself serves as an integral part of the body structure ("pack-to-open-body"). All production steps are continuously monitored inline and comprehensively documented in real time. In-house developed AI assistants and agents analyse this data and, together with 500 robots working across a 50,000-sq.m. production area, help ensure zero-defect battery production. At the same time, the extensive use of artificial intelligence enhances Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) in production. Well before commissioning, digital twins of production and virtual reality applications support planning and employee training. "Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen demonstrates how quickly we can scale a new battery concept to industrial production," said Rudolf Hummelsberger, Head of High-Voltage Battery Production Dingolfing and Irlbach-Straßkirchen. "The key factor is the interaction between a skilled and committed team and the continuous sharing of experience within the production network." Once fully operational, around 1,600 employees will work at Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen, producing several hundred high-voltage batteries per day on two production lines.

How the BMW Group builds its Gen6 high-voltage batteries

The fundamentally new Gen6 high-voltage battery concept will be used across all BMW Group vehicle segments. In developing the sixth generation of BMW eDrive technology, the BMW Group has filed patent applications for more than 500 innovations. The BMW Group is also setting new industry standards in production: During the production process, more than 3,500 data points per battery are collected and monitored in real time. The battery cells for the high-voltage batteries are supplied by leading cell manufacturers. The highest technical standards apply. Upon receipt of goods, additional measurements – such as voltage checks – are carried out. Next comes so-called cell clustering, where the battery cells are connected to coolers. This step ensures optimal insulation and cooling. The cell clusters and cell contact system are then laser-cleaned and welded with pinpoint precision. An innovative foaming process follows, ensuring that all elements are protected as a mechanical unit. The hardened foam guarantees the safety, stability and durability of the high-voltage battery. The housing is then closed, sealed and riveted. In the final step, the Energy Master – the central control unit – is installed onto the high-voltage battery. A permanently elastic sealing adhesive is applied to ensure a reliable seal. Finally, each high-voltage battery undergoes a 100% end-of-line inspection.

Global production strategy: local for local

Installation of the Gen6 high-voltage batteries takes place at five new production facilities worldwide, which the BMW Group is building close to its vehicle plants, in line with its "local for local" principle. Alongside Irlbach-Straßkirchen, state-of-the-art high-voltage battery assembly plants have also been built in Debrecen (Hungary), Shenyang (China), Woodruff (USA) and San Luis Potosí (Mexico). This approach strengthens regional infrastructure and existing facilities and helps secure jobs. The distances between battery and vehicle plant remain short. The "local for local" principle also applies to construction and operation of Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen: All directly contracted construction companies came from Germany, with two thirds from Bavaria. A similar picture emerges regarding the production equipment: More than three quarters of the plant engineering firms are from Germany, with one third based

in Bavaria. In this way, the BMW Group is relying on German cutting-edge technology in its choice of plant engineers and giving the local economy a major boost.

Resource efficiency at the plant, secondary material used in battery cells

Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen requires no fossil fuels for regular operations. A photovoltaic system generates a share of the electricity required directly on site. All additional energy needed is supplied entirely from renewable sources. The process is designed so that no water is required for assembling the high-voltage batteries. In this way, the site is combining the industrialisation of electromobility with lower emissions and resource-efficient production. The Gen6 battery cells for the BMW i3, which are assembled into high-voltage batteries at Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen, rely on secondary materials for a portion of their cobalt, lithium and nickel. Renewable energy is used in the production of anode and cathode materials, as well as in cell manufacturing. In comparison with the Gen5 cell in the previous model, the CO₂e emissions per watt-hour were reduced by approx. 33 percent.

Leap in technology with batteries from Lower Bavaria in the new BMW i3

For the start of series production, Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen will supply Plant Munich with sixth-generation high-voltage batteries that will help the new BMW i3 achieve outstanding numbers: Its high-voltage battery boasts a capacity of 108.7 kWh. Thanks to the pack-to-open-body concept, the battery housing forms part of the vehicle structure. The range of the First Edition of the BMW i3 50 xDrive extends up to 906 kilometres (according to the WLTP test cycle), demonstrating its long-distance capabilities. At the same time, the 800-volt technology ensures significantly shorter charging times. With a DC charging capacity of up to 400 kW, the BMW i3 50 xDrive can add up to 423 kilometres of range in 10 minutes (according to ISO 12906 in the WLTP cycle) when plugged in to a DC fast charger. The new BMW i3 also offers bidirectional charging capabilities.

Bavarian battery network

Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen is part of the BMW Group's Bavarian battery network. The Competence Centers, pilot and series production facilities span the entire battery cell and high-voltage battery value chain: from research and development to production and recycling.

Pilot plants for high-voltage batteries: from idea to series production

The road from development to series production goes through the pilot plants for high-voltage batteries in Parsdorf and Hallbergmoos, as well as the Research and Innovation Center (FIZ) in Munich. This is where prototypes of high-voltage batteries for the Neue Klasse are assembled, and the production processes are developed and tested. The teams optimise production processes, define quality standards and gather experience for subsequent large-scale manufacturing. What proves effective here is passed on to the battery plants worldwide. In this way, the global production network for high-voltage batteries benefits from close collaboration between the German pilot plants and series production facilities worldwide.

Battery Cell Competence Centers

At the Battery Cell Competence Center (BCCC) in Munich, the BMW Group is exploring new cell technologies for future high-voltage batteries. The Cell Manufacturing Competence Center (CMCC) in Parsdorf examines how these battery cells can be manufactured in the highest quality and with maximum resource efficiency. This is where battery cells are manufactured and tested under near-series-production conditions. The new Cell Recycling Competence Center (CRCC) in Salching – just 16 kilometres from Straßkirchen – went into operation in December 2025. Here, valuable raw materials are recovered using the innovative direct recycling concept developed by the BMW Group and reintegrated into the production process. Direct recycling enables residual materials from battery cell production, and even whole battery cells, to be mechanically dismantled. This eliminates the need for energy-intensive chemical or thermal processing. While the

Competence Center is built and operated by Encory GmbH, the intellectual property for the recycling method is owned by the BMW Group.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Corporate Communications

Christian Marxt
Press spokesperson Production Network BMW Group
Mobile: +49-151-601-79158
Email: Christian.Marxt@bmwgroup.com

Thomas Niedermeier
Press spokesperson BMW Group Plant Dingolfing
Mobile: +49-151-602-27666
Email: Thomas.Niedermeier@bmwgroup.com

Julian Friedrich
Head of Communications, BMW Group Plant Dingolfing
Mobile: +49-151-601-25885
Email: Julian.Friedrich@bmwgroup.com

Media website: www.press.bmwgroup.com/
Email: presse@bmw.de

The BMW Group

With its four brands, BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2025, the BMW Group sold 2.46 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,500 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2025 was € 10.2 billion on revenues amounting to € 133.5 billion. As of 31 December 2025, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,540 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group's corporate strategy and covers all products – from the supply chain through production to the end of their useful life.

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