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The new BMW Group Plant Munich

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The new BMW Group Plant Munich: More efficient, more flexible and more digital for production of the Neue Klasse

+++ Tradition meets the future: 104 years young and using state-of-the-art technology +++ Series production of new BMW i3 to start in August 2026 +++ More models to follow +++ All-electric vehicle plant from 2027 +++

Munich. BMW Group Plant Munich is approaching the biggest milestone in the transformation process: series production of the BMW i3, the second model in the Neue Klasse range, gets underway here in August. This marks the start of the rollout of the Neue Klasse within the BMW Group's global production network.

"We have been making rigorous preparations. With the BMW iFACTORY we have devised a consistent, strategic framework for our production," explains Milan Nedeljković, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, Production. "We have paved the way for the upcoming start-ups in all our plants and have invested heavily in technologies, digitalisation and AI."

BMW Group Plant Munich has undergone extensive modernisation in recent years. The result is a plant that now works even more efficiently, flexibly and digitally, and is optimally positioned for the requirements of electric mobility and the Neue Klasse.

But that's not all: as of 2027, the Munich plant will exclusively produce all-electric vehicles and thereby achieve a further boost in efficiency. This is assisted by proactive planning, close collaboration with development teams and suppliers, as well as modern production technology in the new structures. "We have considerably reduced production costs over recent years. With the start of production of the BMW i3, we will reduce overall production costs at the Munich plant by a further 10 per cent, bringing them below the level of the current vehicle generation," says Peter Weber, Head of BMW Group Plant Munich. In addition to optimised production processes and targeted automation and digitalisation, the new vehicle architecture of the Neue Klasse also ensures efficiency.

Plant Munich is investing around 650 million euros in its transformation into a fully electric production site.

Highly efficient production at historic site

Plant Munich has been consistently reinventing itself for more than 100 years – from a location outside the city to today's site surrounded by it. The facility has undergone a fundamental process of redevelopment for the Neue Klasse – with production of up to 1,000 vehicles a day continuing during this period. A new body shop and state-of-the-art vehicle assembly including new logistics areas were set up on an area spanning around a third of the plant's footprint. Extensive updates have also been made to existing technologies.

Plant manager Peter Weber highlights what the workforce has achieved: "The people at the factory played an essential role in making this transformation a success. With their high level of expertise, enthusiasm and tremendous dedication, our employees have shown that world-class industrial production is possible even under the toughest conditions. The BMW i3 is just the beginning – several Neue Klasse models will be manufactured in Munich in the future, including the BMW i3 Touring."

A vision for all technologies: the BMW iFACTORY

The **BMW iFACTORY** focuses on the areas of efficiency, sustainability and digitalisation. Within this framework, the company's plants around the world are implementing site-specific solutions and, in so doing, strengthening the company's resilience as well as its ability to deliver reliably at any time and worldwide. This vision has now also been consistently implemented across all technologies at BMW Group Plant Munich.

"We have rethought the entire value stream from supplier to finished customer vehicle. We have looked at every single process in detail and made optimisations. Now our plant is even more efficient, more flexible and even more digitised than ever before. We are thereby safeguarding the future viability of the plant," adds Peter Weber.

In the **press shop**, steel and aluminium boards are turned into tens of thousands of components on highly automated press lines daily. Uniform press and tool standards across the global production network result in efficiencies on many levels: installation and integration of the systems are standardised, tools for the presses can be swapped within the network, and employees can work at various locations and help each other. An AI-assisted camera system supports quality control before an underground transport system moves the parts to the body shop. Output has increased significantly compared with previous structures. Cuts of steel and aluminium are collected, sorted and then used to manufacture new steel or aluminium coils.

Plant Munich has set up a new **body shop** for the Neue Klasse featuring systems planned and realised using a virtual twin. A total of 800 new industrial robots take care of the joining processes here; decreasing the

number of joining processes to five reduces process complexity. With an automation rate of around 98 per cent, robots perform the majority of standardised processes. Automated surface inspection (ASI) assists with quality assurance.

In the **paint shop** at Plant Munich, digital and AI-assisted systems control central quality processes. Automated surface inspection (ASI) uses cameras and artificial intelligence to detect even the most minor deviations on the surface and documents them digitally. Automated surface processing (ASP) works on the variations detected directly during the running process. To purify the exhaust air, the paint shop uses the energy-efficient, electrically powered eRTO process. This is complemented by heat and energy recovery as well as water-saving cycles.

What once was the home of engine manufacturing at BMW Group Plant Munich has become a new **assembly area** for the Neue Klasse. The assembly area is set up for end-to-end digital processes: vehicles, systems and tools are interconnected and digital live tracking and automated inline quality checks support employees in the assembly line process. During assembly already, the BMW i3 digitally transmits the status of up to 20,000 features to the production system. Ergonomic workstations, height-adjustable systems and simplified processes lighten the load for employees, while targeted training supports new digital fields.

As part of the transformation, **logistics** at BMW Group Plant Munich has focused squarely on efficiency and direct integration of production. The logistics department at the Munich plant moves around 2.5 million parts every day; in future around 70 per cent of these parts will be delivered directly to the assembly workstations. This will reduce internal transport distances, save space and accelerate supply to the production lines. This is made possible by a multi-storey building structure developed specially for the plant's city location. Delivery is at ground level and then conveyor technology transports the parts to the right levels, where they are distributed directly to the assembly workstations. This enables the principle of direct delivery to be applied systematically even in a multi-storey plant. At the same time, the level of automation in logistics has been significantly increased. Automated supply systems, smart transport robots and driverless transport systems will handle around 60 per cent of supply tasks in the future. A digital logistics control station manages all processes centrally, ensuring transparency and data-driven optimisation.

Unique to Plant Munich is the in-house **seat manufacturing** facility. It is a "plant inside a plant" and takes on a central role for quality assurance and expert evaluation within the production network. The seats for all versions of the models produced in Munich are manufactured here

and delivered to vehicle assembly directly and “just in sequence”. The in-house seat manufacturing facility is regarded as the benchmark for quality assurance across the BMW Group. Modern, largely automated processes ensure seamless quality control. This is complemented by fully automated end-of-line checks, including for safety-relevant components. The seat manufacturing facility also systematically strengthens the BMW Group’s in-house expertise. It serves as a competence centre and innovation hub, tests new materials, technologies and manufacturing concepts, and supports the evaluation of costs, quality and production processes – making an impact far beyond the Munich location.

Global network, regional value creation: high-voltage batteries and e-drive

With the new assembly plant for high-voltage batteries in Irlbach-Straßkirchen (Lower Bavaria, Germany) around 90 minutes away, the BMW Group is significantly boosting value creation in the Bavaria region. In keeping with the “local for local” approach, Irlbach-Straßkirchen will deliver high-voltage Gen6 batteries to the Munich plant as well as other German locations. Here, the batteries will be installed in the BMW i3. Manufacture of the high-voltage batteries combines a rigorous zero-defect approach with the latest production technologies, which were developed at Bavarian pilot plants. With seamless inline quality controls, digital twins and the systematic use of artificial intelligence, the BMW Group is setting new standards in battery production.

The Gen6 e-motor for the BMW i3 is produced at BMW Group Plant Steyr in Austria – a location that has been manufacturing drivetrains for over 40 years. With the first e-motor in the portfolio, the plant is developing its role as a prime example of technology openness. All core components of the highly integrated e-drive – from the rotor and stator to the inverter and transmission – are produced on-site. New production lines and state-of-the-art clean room environments have been set up for this. The aluminium foundry at BMW Group Plant Landshut supplies the e-motor housing for Plant Steyr.

Change is in its DNA: the history and transformation of Plant Munich

- More than 100 years of history keep the plant young
- First existing plant to switch to producing electric vehicles only
- A Neue Klasse sets the course for the future – for the second time

In its more than 100-year history, Plant Munich has consistently reinvented itself and adapted to the times. Starting out as an engine manufacturer, then moving on to production of motorcycles and cars, BMW's main plant duly evolved into the birthplace of the BMW 3 Series and has paved the way into electric mobility for the company. Now Munich is the first plant in the BMW Group's global production network to fully transition to exclusively producing all-electric vehicles – without interrupting production. More than any other company location, the Munich plant epitomises the motto "We can do change". And the Neue Klasse is playing a key role in this process – for the second time.

Early days as an engine manufacturer; making its first motorcycles

Plant Munich's story begins in 1922, when the company moves to the former Gustav Otto Flugwerke site far beyond the city boundaries to the north of Munich. There, it produces small engines for various motorcycle manufacturers as well as stationary engines and engines to be installed in vehicles. Just one year later it builds its first BMW motorcycle: the BMW R 32. This also lays the foundation for the first plant expansion. This includes a hardening shop and a light metal foundry, which soon becomes renowned for its superior quality. Aircraft engines are also manufactured successfully in Munich in the 1930s, including for the legendary JU 52.

Post-war repositioning

Manufacturing resumes in 1945 amid the rubble and demolition caused by the Second World War – initially focussing on aluminium saucepans and other household items. Series production of motorcycles starts up again in 1948 with the BMW R 24. The first BMW car produced in Munich, the BMW 501, follows in 1952, and then the first post-war V8 engine in 1954 – for the BMW 502. The BMW Isetta, more than 160,000 units of which are built from 1955, becomes symbolic of Germany's "economic miracle" and safeguards jobs in Munich that had been threatened by the emerging motorcycle crisis.

The (first) Neue Klasse

Plant Munich undergoes its most extensive transformation yet at the beginning of the 1960s. Sections of demolition work are followed by construction of the now legendary Hall 140, the plans for which incorporate cutting-edge manufacturing technology. From now on, this is the site of final

assembly for the Neue Klasse – a completely new vehicle generation that goes into production in 1962 with the BMW 1500 and reaches the milestone of 100,000 vehicles in 1965. The BMW 02 Series introduced in 1966 is a runaway success and firmly establishes BMW in the passenger car market with its sporting character and dynamism. To create space and capacity for what will soon become the most successful BMW model series, the historic motorcycle division is relocated in full from the Munich plant to Berlin Spandau in 1969.

The launch of the BMW 3 Series and start of automation

Consistent growth continues in the 1970s with the introduction of the first BMW 3 Series. This is the first model to sell over a million units. The high quantities planned require huge investment in machinery. This marks the beginning of automated manufacturing at the Munich plant, and further adjustment of the plant structure follows with a series of renovations and constructions. The pilot plant is constructed in 1979; this is where series production of every new model is first tested. The expertise gained in the pilot plant helps develop production processes at other plants. The first industrial robots are deployed in the early 1980s. They continue to dominate the production line to this day and significantly improve processes. Employees can take on more highly skilled tasks and the number of vehicles produced increases significantly. Just-in-time manufacturing (JIT) is introduced in 1985.

Getting started with electric mobility

The Munich plant also hosts the dawn of the electric mobility era at the BMW Group, the company having gained early e-mobility experience with two fully electric support vehicles during the 1972 Olympic Games. In 2007, project i starts life as a think tank, from which the first BMW i3 and the BMW i8 emerge. The series production processes for these models are tested at Plant Munich. In addition, a small-series MINI E is created behind the scenes at Munich in 2008, the plant supplying its drivetrain and high-voltage battery. The first BMW 3 Series plug-in hybrid rolls off the assembly line in 2015, followed by the fully electric BMW i4 in 2021. Since then, the Munich plant has been producing combustion engines, plug-in hybrids, and fully electric vehicles on a single production line.

Neue Klasse II meets the BMW 3 Series

Now a Neue Klasse again brings about lasting change in the structure and production programme of Plant Munich in its second iteration. With production of nearly 1,000 vehicles per day continuing alongside, several major rebuilding projects pave the way for the launch of the Neue Klasse in 2026. 650 million euros have been invested in a total of four buildings, including a new vehicle assembly area with logistics facilities and a new body shop. To create the necessary space within the plant's limited plot in the heart of Munich, the long-established engine manufacturing operations in Hall 140



are relocated to Hams-Hall in the United Kingdom and Steyr in Austria after around 70 years at the main plant. In addition, the site of the old paint shop – which was decommissioned in 2018, a more modern facility having been brought online in 2017 – is reappropriated.

The restructuring will make Plant Munich – as of the end of 2027 – the first already existing BMW Group plant to manufacture electric vehicles only. Following the launch of the BMW iX3 – the first model in the Neue Klasse – at the brand-new Debrecen plant, the new BMW i3 will follow in Munich from the second half of 2026. This brings together two important strands at the main plant: electric mobility and the iconic BMW 3 Series.

The painted car body: perfect interaction between press shop, body shop and paint shop

- Tools produced in-house, transition possible in just three minutes
- Scrap metal is collected, sorted and used to produce new steel and aluminium
- Around 800 newly installed high-precision industrial robots are deployed in the new, highly energy-efficient body shop building
- Number of joining processes in body shop reduced to five for Neue Klasse
- Exhaust air purification in paint shop using innovative eRTO process
- Precision and quality thanks to automated surface inspection (ASI) and processing (ASP) in paint shop

The press shop: precision with power and dynamism

The life cycle of a vehicle begins in the press shop – this is also true at the BMW Group's main plant in Munich. The press shop is where the first body components are made from steel and aluminium sheeting in up to five steps.

Proven strategy, high productivity

An optimal value stream and efficient systems in the press shop enable high levels of productivity. To make this possible, the BMW Group is employing a proven strategy of using the same tools and presses across its global network. The Munich plant uses the same presses as Plant Lydia (China), Plant Leipzig and Plant Regensburg, which, along with Plant Dingolfing, can be supplied by and supply the Munich plant where necessary. The Munich plant also acts as a training partner for the whole network, including training the toolmakers. This standardisation of the press shops throughout the production network results in efficiencies on a variety of levels: the installation and integration of the facilities are standardised, tools for the presses can be shared within the network, employees can work at different locations and support each other, and procurement also benefits.

As space is limited compared to the press shops at other sites, the steel and aluminium sheets are delivered to Munich directly as blanks rather than in large rolls of sheeting, known as coils.

The blanks are fed onto the press line and transported from station to station by an automated transport system equipped with grippers – the crossbar feeder – to perform further moulding and cutting processes. The largely automated facility can perform up to 18 strokes per minute, meaning that up

to 30,000 parts can be manufactured daily, depending on the size. Over the course of a year, this adds up to around five million components.

Latest servo technology and tools produced in-house

The press line is equipped with the latest servo technology, which enables the BMW Group to produce large quantities of components very efficiently. An overhead crane moves the correct press tool into each station. A separate press tool, which can weight up to 45 tonnes, is used for each step in the pressing process. The BMW Group produces some of the specific tools for manufacturing the individual sheet metal parts in-house for all its locations, the tools can be changed on the individual presses in just three minutes. Overall, since the modernisation work was carried out, the press shop has been set up so that it can produce up to 30 per cent more outer panels. The press shop was modernised during brief production downtimes at the plant. Furthermore, operating costs have been reduced by ten per cent. The press shop operates three shifts daily from Monday to Saturday; only Sunday is reserved for preventative maintenance. The company has invested a total of around 12 million euros in modernising the press shop.

At the end of the line, all the parts undergo quality control, during which permanently installed, high-resolution cameras are now used. The system performs a comparison with stored reference images, automatically identifies any possible fissures in the material and displays these on a screen. The finished components are then taken to the body shop via an underground transport system.

Closed-loop material cycle for scrap steel and aluminium

Like at other BMW Group plants, the Munich plant has a material cycle for scrap steel and aluminium from the press shop. Underneath the presses are areas where the scrap metal is gathered and sorted. During series production and when the plant is at full capacity, more than 90 tonnes of scrap metal is accumulated each day. A roughly 200-metre-long conveyor system carries the scrap away for loading. The scrap metal is pressed into cubes and packaged, to make transportation easier and to reduce the space needed. The cubes are taken out of the Munich plant by train. The material – kept separate by type – is then melted down and used to manufacture new steel or aluminium coils.

The body shop: from sheet metal to car body

After the sheet metal parts required have been manufactured in the body shop, the car body is formed as part of a flawlessly coordinated process in the body shop. The Munich plant has created a new, state-of-the-art body shop for the BMW i3 and the Neue Klasse models.

High degree of flexibility: multiple models at the same time

The new body shop at Plant Munich is highly flexible and designed to be able to produce multiple body variants on one line. An underground transport system carries the finished pressed parts from the press shop to the new body shop. Digital, high-precision, efficient and flexible processes come together to form the structure of the car through precise connections. The choreography of the roughly 800 new industrial robots was simulated in advance using a virtual twin of the new building and is perfectly tailored to the requirements at hand. Extensive digitalisation has significantly reduced the time required to set up the facilities. Each individual robot is in the optimum position.

High-precision connections, intelligently connected systems

The servo-electric, energy-efficient welding guns at the Munich plant perform roughly 3,800 high-precision spot-welds per body. Laser welding in the doors has made it possible to reduce the amount of adhesive used there. As such, these body components remain a mono-material, which is easier to recycle.

Fewer joining processes and beneficial design features

The close cooperation from the outset between the development and production teams working on the Neue Klasse project has led to efficient processes and maximum benefits for the customer. For example, the number of joining processes has been reduced to just five compared to similar models thus also reducing complexity. Design features worked on in the development phase can also be found in details of the Neue Klasse, such as the invisible door seal. The window appears to be connected directly to the door, giving it a unique look.

The “pack to open body” principle, employed for the first time with the Neue Klasse, has created more installation space for the high-voltage battery. This optimised the space available for the battery in the body structure and benefits the customer directly by allowing a more powerful battery to be fitted. Added to which, integrated, reinforced side sills increase passive safety. And the body concept of the Neue Klasse allows a large number of features to be carried over into other models and derivatives.

High rate of automation in the body shop

The body shop is already a highly automated area and is boosted by a constant stream of very high-level upgrades. The rate of automation in the new body shop at Plant Munich is around 98 per cent. One example is the 100-per cent automated component supply process in the standardised production of the floor assembly, which is performed entirely by robots. They use a cast-aluminium gripper developed in-house and manufactured in 3D printing moulds to move very large components. At just 111 kilogrammes,

it is 50 kilogrammes lighter than a conventional gripper, meaning it can be moved by smaller robots.

Another innovation is measurement-based, fully automatic bolt positioning. This ensures attachment parts and control units are installed precisely and accurately in the new assembly area.

More pleasant working conditions, liberated from takt times

Employees who work on the machinery are no longer bound by takt times. This makes working conditions more pleasant and enables employees to take on supervisory tasks. The small and medium-sized body structure parts required are stored and made available to the robots. Compact Smart Transport Robots (STR) autonomously deliver the containers in universal containers to the respective installation point. There, a 180-degree rotating mechanism exchanges full containers for empty ones. The collection of the empty container and the delivery of a new, full container are triggered automatically at the same time.

The next level up are the rack changers installed in the system, which use a similar principle to exchange the special containers for the large components that are transported by DTS (driverless transport systems).

Automated surface inspection (ASI) in the body shop

Plant Munich also utilises automated surface inspection (ASI) in the body shop. The system uses deflectometry to identify deviating features. While large monitors project black-and-white striped patterns onto the vehicle surface, cameras scan the same area and identify even the smallest variations through shifts in the striped pattern. Like a perfectly trained eye, the camera registers any deviations from the ideal and feeds them directly into the connected computer system.

New, efficient building exceeds KfW 40 EE standard

The new body shop set up for the Neue Klasse models is made up of three floors under one roof, meaning that a footprint of around 17,000 square metres can accommodate a total production area of approximately 51,000 square metres. The building has been constructed in line with the KfW 40 EE standard, which requires low energy utilisation and the use of renewable energies. To achieve this energy efficiency, special attention was paid to the insulation of the building envelope. This includes the façade, windows, shafts, channels, pipes, and the tightness of the building. To reduce heat input in summer, in particular, the roof and external façades are designed with a light, reflective surface. The calculated energy requirement of the building is just 14.23 kWh per square metre annually – i.e. at a low level. The natural warmth of the groundwater is used across six wells to heat the new body shop efficiently. The groundwater also provides cooling in warmer months.

Optimum use of electricity and heat

The photovoltaic system on the new body shop building measures 1,800 square metres and is designed to generate 325 MWh each year. A BMW iX3 (BMW iX3 50 xDrive: combined energy consumption: 17.9 – 15.1 kWh/100 km (WLTP); combined CO₂ emissions: 0 g/km (WLTP); electric range: 678 – 805 km (WLTP); CO₂ class(es): A) could cover more than 170,000 kilometres (105,600 miles) powered by this energy, equivalent to circling the earth more than four times.

The robots and welding guns in the new body shop are liquid-cooled. The thermal energy heats the cooling water to approximately 35 degrees Celsius. This thermal energy is used in the ventilation system to heat the supply air.

The paint shop: flawless protection and high-quality colours

Numerous new technologies have benefited the paint shop at the Munich plant, which was reopened in 2017. In a production area of approximately 13,500 square metres, up to 1,000 car bodies are painted each day. Innovative six-axis robots enable maximum freedom in painting processes and therefore allow the paint shop to respond flexibly to special customer requests, such as individual colours and matt paints.

ASP joins forces with ASI in the paint shop

Like in the body shop, automated surface inspection (ASI) is also performed in the paint shop; it uses artificial intelligence to detect irregularities and record the smallest deviations digitally. Automated surface processing (ASP) then rectifies the deviations.

Innovative exhaust air purification in the paint shop through eRTO process

The paint shop at Plant Munich has been implementing the innovative eRTO process to purify exhaust air since the middle of the year. eRTO stands for "electric regenerative thermal oxidation", a process that purifies exhaust air from the paint lines at temperatures of 800 to 900 degrees Celsius and, unlike in the past, runs exclusively on electricity. During the purification process, the exhaust air passes through a ceramic bed, where solvent residues are burned off. For this, the air must be heated to high temperatures in a short space of time. Due to its high thermal recovery rate, with heat effectively retained within the system, the eRTO system delivers a high level of energy efficiency.

Consistent use of exhaust air energy

To conserve energy when heating and cooling the general factory air, the paint shop uses a rotary heat exchanger in various buildings. The supply and exhaust air is routed through this heat exchanger all year round. Depending on the time of year, the fresh air is either warmed or cooled by the exhaust air. This enables 72 per cent of the heat to be recovered.

The process temperature from the drying machines is also recovered. A hot water heat exchanger is used for this purpose, to prevent the waste heat from being released unused and unnecessarily into the environment. The thermal energy gained in this way is fed into the paint shop's heat network and thus made available again to process-related heat consumers.

Responsible water use

Water is an essential element of the painting process. Thanks to efficient processes and innovative technologies, water consumption per vehicle has already been reduced in recent years. A particular attribute of the Munich plant is that groundwater from the site – rather than fresh water – is used as process water.

Global network and value creation in Bavaria: high-voltage battery assembly

- Pilot plants and series-production plants: know-how from Bavaria deployed around the world
- Quality is key: rigorous zero-defect approach
- “Local for local”: high-voltage batteries from the Irlbach-Straßkirchen plant
- Irlbach-Straßkirchen plant: stimulus for the economy and assembly in record time

For the production of high-voltage batteries for sixth-generation BMW eDrive (Gen6), the BMW Group has built five new assembly sites on three continents: Irlbach-Straßkirchen (Lower Bavaria, Germany), Debrecen (Hungary), Shenyang (China), San Luis Potosí (Mexico) and Woodruff (USA). In October 2025, the plant in Debrecen became the first to begin large-scale production of high-voltage batteries. The remaining locations will follow within less than two years. In keeping with the “local for local” approach, the BMW Group has located its new assembly plants for high-voltage batteries close to their respective vehicle production facilities. This approach increases the resilience of the global production network, strengthens existing sites and secures jobs. Furthermore, short transport routes bring benefits for. The Irlbach-Straßkirchen plant is taking on a special role here: as the production hub in Germany, it will supply multiple vehicle plants with high-voltage batteries. As such, the Munich plant, at which the BMW i3 is produced, will also be the first to be supplied from Lower Bavaria.

Rigorous zero-defect approach – tried and tested at Bavarian pilot plants

In order to prepare the series-production plants for manufacturing high-voltage batteries, the production processes were developed and tested at the pilot plants in Parsdorf and Hallbergmoos, as well as at the Research and Innovation Centre (FIZ) in Munich. The networking of pilot plants and the Irlbach-Straßkirchen assembly plant boosts innovation in Germany. Knowledge gained at the pilot plants is incorporated at the new production plants around the world, ensuring the production of high-voltage batteries starts without any issues. Artificial intelligence, data analytics and constant knowledge sharing within the production network also play an important role here. Digital twins are used to plan and optimise production processes, as well as to train employees. The rigorous zero-defect approach is made possible by seamless in-line quality inspections and 100% end-of-line monitoring. This way, the pilot plants and series-production plants are setting new industry standards when it comes to battery production.

How the BMW Group builds Gen6 high-voltage batteries

The BMW Group has developed highly intelligent production processes with cutting-edge technologies for its Gen6 high-voltage batteries, which are developed in-house. In so doing, it follows a rigorous zero-defect approach. Quality is key: in the chassis of the Neue Klasse, the high-voltage battery takes on the role of a structural component ("pack to open body"). The cylindrical cells are integrated directly in the high-voltage battery ("cell to pack"). The BMW Group sources battery cells from leading cell manufacturers, who produce the cells to the company's specifications. The highest technical standards apply. Upon receipt of goods, additional measurements – such as voltage checks – are carried out.

Next comes cell clustering, where the battery cells are connected to cooling elements. This step ensures optimal insulation and cooling of the cells. The cell clusters and cell contact system are then laser-cleaned and welded with pinpoint precision. An in-line inspection continuously monitors each weld seam in real time. An innovative foaming process follows, ensuring that all elements are protected as a mechanical unit. The foam thus guarantees the safety, stability and durability of the high-voltage battery. In the final assembly 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 to ensure quality, safety and function.

High-voltage battery assembly at the Irlbach-Straßkirchen plant

BMW Group Plant Irlbach-Straßkirchen produces high-voltage batteries for the BMW i3. The new plant is located roughly 30 kilometres from Dingolfing in Lower Bavaria. It is one of five new BMW Group assembly plants, which have been built around the world for the sixth generation of high-voltage batteries and will supply vehicle plants in Germany. The site follows the "local for local" principle: the high-voltage batteries are produced where they are needed – in close proximity to the vehicle plants. This way, the BMW Group is strengthening the regional economy, reducing transport distances and improving supply reliability.

Local expertise in construction and production

The "local for local" approach was implemented as early as the construction phase: all the construction companies used came from Germany. One in three companies was located within a radius of 100 kilometres. The same principle was applied to the sourcing and installation of the production facilities: more than three quarters of the plant constructors are German companies, with a third of them based in Bavaria.

The new plant demonstrates how industrial construction in Germany can happen at record pace. The BMW Group was granted building rights in

April 2024 in one of the fastest approval processes in Germany. Installation of the production facilities commenced just a year or so later, in June 2025. At the end of 2025, the first high-voltage batteries were produced for test purposes. Series production will commence in October 2026. Thanks to the close cooperation with authorities, suppliers from the local region and the use of digital planning tools, it has been possible to complete the construction project in just two-and-a-half years.

High-tech jobs for the region

The new plant will create up to 1,600 jobs, giving the region a sustainable boost. The majority of the employees come from existing BMW Group sites and have been recruited through an internal selection process. They were prepared for their new tasks through a host of retraining and further training programmes. Many future employees will already have experience of battery production. To ensure that the new plant can call upon specialists trained in-house when it commences production, more than 70 additional new training places have been created since 2024 at the nearby Dingolfing and Regensburg plants. Local jobs and training opportunities boost the economic strength of the region. As such, BMW is not only investing in production capacity, but also the future of local people.

The electric drive system from BMW Group Plant Steyr

- Fully electric drive system from BMW Group Plant Steyr for the BMW i3
- All core components for the highly integrated Gen6 drive system manufactured in-house
- Plant Steyr is a prime example of technological openness

The electric drive unit for the Munich-built BMW i3 is manufactured at BMW Group Plant Steyr. The electric motor for the sixth generation of BMW eDrive is the first fully electric drive unit to be produced at the long-standing location in Austria.

Technological openness: Plant Steyr, a centre of excellence for drive technology

Since 2022, new halls have been built and existing ones modified at Plant Steyr in preparation for entering the electric mobility market. By expanding its capacity, the plant remains a central site for drive technology within the BMW Group. For over 40 years, the plant has been developing and manufacturing combustion engines for the BMW and MINI brands. Many years of experience and a high level of expertise in the field of drive technology make the engine plant the ideal location for production of the Gen6 electric motors.

All the core components of the innovative, highly integrated electric drive – rotor and stator, inverter and casings – are produced in Steyr. The transmission is also assembled here. Inverter production in an in-house clean-room environment marks Plant Steyr's entry into the field of electrical engineering. The electric motors are produced on two lines. One has been in operation since summer 2025. The second line will commence series production in spring 2026 and will expand the plant's scope for handling a range of variants. For example, a high-performance electric motor for the first fully electric models from BMW M GmbH will also be manufactured here in the future. Furthermore, series production of BMW's fuel cell system will begin at BMW Group Plant Steyr in 2028.

At the same time, the site will also continue to produce diesel and petrol engines. As such, Plant Steyr is a perfect example of technological openness at the BMW Group. More than 450 people were already employed in the production of electric motors in Steyr at the end of 2025. Depending on how global demand develops, half of the total workforce at the Steyr plant could be employed in e-mobility by 2030.

Thermal management: complex interaction is key to performance

Unlike cars with combustion engines, an electric motor produces little waste heat. Depending on the operating situation, the battery and passenger

compartment not only need to be cooled, but also heated. For this reason, precise thermal management is key to many performance parameters, such as range, real-world energy consumption, acceleration and charging time. It is important to ensure that the temperature of the electric motor, power electronics and high-voltage battery is constantly kept in the right range, while at the same time guaranteeing passenger comfort. Efficient thermal management is also important for fast charging. Here, the battery temperature must be kept within a defined range, in order to be able to make maximum use of the charging capacity available. Thermal management for all the BMW Group's electric vehicles is developed at Plant Steyr. The development centre in Steyr is also responsible for inverter development.

A changing plant – with a solid basis

With 4,700 employees, BMW Group Plant Steyr is the largest engine/motor plant in the BMW Group: half of all BMW and MINI vehicles in the world are fitted with a power unit from Steyr. Since it was founded in 1979, the plant has been renowned for top-level expertise in the field of drive technology.

New logistics systems tailored specifically to city location

- Significantly higher level of automation for the Neue Klasse
- Punctual supply logistics in an urban environment from four supply centres and new Irlbach-Straßkirchen battery plant
- State-of-the-art logistics focused on digitalisation and intelligent processes
- Supply to production areas over multiple storeys; debut for hydrogen-powered intralogistics

Logistics plays a key role in the supply and disposal systems for all technologies in an automotive plant. With its location in the heart of the city, Plant Munich places particularly exacting demands on the supply chain, in which many components must be made available in the exact order of production. Due to the space restrictions on site, the value stream comprises four supply centres located outside the city limits, where the reserve stocks for certain parts are temporarily stored. These are then delivered to the production areas on time. Although incoming volumes are increasing overall thanks to deliveries of, among other things, high-voltage batteries from Irlbach-Straßkirchen for the Neue Klasse models, efficiency is improving too. This is supported, among other factors, by the extensive expansion of digitalization and a higher share of direct deliveries to the assembly line. This also enabled the elimination of one external supply center.

More direct deliveries to the multi-storey building structure

With a total of around 2.5 million parts moved within the plant in 18,000 containers each day, delivering parts directly to the respective assembly workstations is the most efficient supply method. As a result of the logistics modernization, the share of direct deliveries to the assembly line increases from a previous 40 to 60 percent to now 70 percent. Another special feature of Plant Munich is that the production areas are arranged above one another over several storeys. They are supplied with materials using freight elevators and special vertical conveyor systems that allow short-term buffering to stabilize production line supply.

When parts are delivered, the trucks are unloaded on the ground floor, where forklifts move the containers to various lifts or logistics conveyor systems. A fully automated process starts on each floor, with Smart Transport Robots (STR) handling individual distribution in the hall and delivering the containers directly to the appropriate point of installation on the production line.

High level of automation and more logistics space

Production of the Neue Klasse at Plant Munich has been accompanied by a quantum leap in terms of the level of automation: over 17,000 logistics missions – i.e. individual transportation tasks – are now carried out fully automatically every day, equating to a share of around 60 per cent. From the outset, the structures in the new production halls were consistently designed for automated supply. For example, the logistics routes along the assembly lines no longer include any dead ends, thus enabling sophisticated traffic management with a robust flow of traffic. At the same time, the new production halls offer more space for logistics and thereby allow new workstations to be created where components for production, for example, are placed in the correct order in advance.

New logistics control centre for monitoring logistics

Rigorous implementation of a long-term digitalisation strategy has played a large part in the improvements that have been made. A new control centre known as the Logistics Control Room coordinates all processes. It intelligently combines data from the past and present, uses its wealth of experience to optimise stock levels and processes, and anticipates material shortages in the near future. Tracking of parts from the moment of receipt until they arrive at the assembly line is fully digitalised and transparent.

First-time use of hydrogen-powered forklifts increases efficiency

The Munich plant is using hydrogen-powered forklifts for the first time. The 125 forklifts deployed in the new assembly hall are fueled with hydrogen produced from renewable energy sources. One advantage of this technology is the rapid refueling time of around three minutes. Compared with electric forklifts, this significantly reduces charging and refueling times. At the same time, there is no need for extensive charging infrastructure, and vehicle availability increases—supporting more efficient and flexible logistics processes. The use of hydrogen-powered forklifts in intralogistics also supports the BMW Group's technology and decarbonization strategy. This approach contributes to reducing CO₂ emissions in Scopes 1 and 2 and strengthens the BMW Group's technological openness in production.

Zero-emission electric trucks have formed an integral element of parts logistics at the Munich site for a long time now, and they are also used for transporting finished vehicles away from the factory.

Assembly: precision on the production line

- Assembly processes integrated and secured fully digitally
- Automated quality control with help of camera system and sensors in production line sections
- The BMW i3 transmits the status of up to 20,000 characteristics digitally to the production system during assembly already
- Efficient, ergonomic assembly processes thanks to extensive modularisation, a simplified wiring harness and height-adjustable workstations
- Smart conveyer maintenance: systems report maintenance requirements and malfunctions themselves

Assembly is the beating heart of an automotive plant. It sets the tone for all the technologies in the plant and is where the most employees work. They install the individual components and systems in the painted body – and at the end of the process, a ready-to-drive vehicle rolls off the production line. The new assembly in Munich is the most compact in the entire BMW Group production network. New high-tech solutions and state-of-the-art technologies that have been tried and tested at other plants are spread across three levels.

Digital live tracking, automated inline quality control and smart system maintenance

Like the Neue Klasse, assembly in Munich is digital. The production facilities and tools, components and every BMW in assembly are digitally connected to the BMW production system. Digital live tracking makes it possible to seamlessly follow the status of every BMW being built at any time. During assembly already, the BMW i3 digitally transmits the status of up to 20,000 features to the production system. Camera systems and sensors along the production line provide additional data, which is analysed by AI. This means that the employees on the production line receive feedback in real time. With the Neue Klasse, a wide range of quality checks can be performed digitally while the cars are still on the production line. This makes chassis dynamometers, for example, redundant – so they are no longer present at the plant. This approach, where the vehicle checks itself, has already been employed at the Debrecen plant with the start of Neue Klasse production, and other sites are set to follow.

As well as the vehicles, the conveying technology is also constantly checking itself, making maintenance intervals a thing of the past. The systems independently report any maintenance requirements and malfunctions and to the maintenance staff.

The innovative vehicle architecture of the Neue Klasse also opens the door to totally new possibilities: greater efficiency thanks to modularisation, fewer different connecting elements and simplified installation of the wiring harness. For example, the front end of the car consists of over a third fewer components. And, with a standardised strategy for the vehicle roof, a wide range of roof variants can be installed using the same system.

Neue Klasse enables simple, fast assembly processes

The radically simplified wiring harness, which compared to other models is divided into multiple parts, is easier and more ergonomic to install. This fundamental component of the digital nervous system of the BMW i3 is based on a "zonal" wiring harness architecture, which requires 600 fewer metres of wiring and weighs 30 per cent less than the previous generation. The harness is split into four zones: front end, body, rear and roof. High-speed data connections link the superbrains of the Neue Klasse to smaller control units – the zone controllers. These control and consolidate the data flow of the electronics in and out of the zones. This means the cables in the car are for specific zones and can therefore be shorter, thinner and lighter. Height-adjustable workstations, swivel-mounted assemblies and easy-to-assemble components also have a positive impact.

Modularisation reduces complexity

The BMW Group also utilises modularisation when it comes to components. Many small individual parts are grouped into a module. The variation of connecting elements has also been radically reduced for the Neue Klasse. This in turn reduces the number of different plugs, screws and clips considerably. All of this makes assembly significantly more straightforward.

High-tech solutions from existing plants

When planning the new assembly, the BMW Group used a completely virtual design process as well as BMW iFACTORY principles. They also referred to tried-and-tested standards and high-tech solutions from existing plants on many occasions. The Lydia plant in China and the Debrecen plant in Hungary provided inspiration for many of the assembly processes. Plant Lydia was opened in 2022 and was the first BMW Group location to be planned and simulated completely virtually. Debrecen began series production at the start of the year. Many systems are identical across the three plants. This meant that the technology was available quickly and had already been tested, which simplified setting up the completely new assembly line.

Seat manufacturing: a unique plant inside a plant

- Made in Munich: the only seat manufacturing facility in the entire BMW Group production network
- Up to eight derivatives possible on one production line
- AI-assisted quality control and fully automated end-of-line inspection
- Numerous automated processes for the Neue Klasse seats

There are many things that make the in-house seat manufacturing facility in Munich special. As a small "plant inside a plant" it pools extensive internal knowledge of seat production and takes on a central role in the quality assurance and expert evaluation of seats within the BMW Group.

In the new assembly building, around 550 employees produce the seats for the Neue Klasse models manufactured in Munich. All types of seats from classic leather to fabric are manufactured on three production lines – a line for each of the two front seats and another line for the rear seat bench. In-house seat manufacturing is linked to the takt time of vehicle assembly. Thus, the seats are produced in sync with vehicle manufacturing and are transported directly to the installation point on the main assembly line "just in sequence" via automated conveyor technology.

Up to eight different derivatives with wide-ranging trim levels can be manufactured on the production lines. Depending on the complexity of the equipment, the time taken to inspect the seats at the end of the production line varies between 60 and 200 seconds. Every individual customer request is implemented in series production with precision and the highest quality.

AI-assisted quality assurance using cameras and sensors

In the new seat manufacturing facility, fully automated end-of-line camera stations evaluate numerous quality and safety features. A total of 127 features are checked at 21 camera stations. Furthermore, 360-degree photo documentation has been implemented for each seat and an AI developed in-house assists in the detection of unwanted creases. Safety-relevant checks, such as for the belt buckle, are also fully automated. A robotic arm clicks the belt buckle into place, pulls on the belt, performs a check and uses the red opening button to release the belt buckle again.

Many steps in the production of seats are automated, such as screwing in the backrests, checking the head restraint extension and installing the seat mechanism. A ScanGate takes care of automatic goods receipt posting and SAP posting. In addition, the data from the production process is integrated into a central database. Modern dashboards for data visualisation and

analysis are employed, as well as consistent cloud-based software solutions and intelligent memory and rework controls.

Digital solutions have been applied in planning as well as in production. The new production line was planned digitally using virtual reality glasses, even before the building had been built. This enabled production employees to inspect the new production facility, test their workstations virtually and provide feedback – all at an early stage.

Expertise in seat manufacturing

Various objectives are behind the decision to produce seats in-house. The primary goal is to retain expertise within the BMW Group; however, we are also keen to develop innovative production and inspection concepts as well as evaluation skills in costs, quality and production processes. Seat manufacturing is one example of in-house production. The various in-house manufacturing facilities serve as innovation hubs and test new materials, processes and designs. New technologies are initially produced in-house to establish in-depth process understanding. In the subsequent stage of bringing suppliers up to speed, the in-house manufacturing facilities offer start-up support, troubleshooting and knowledge transfer.

Furthermore, in-house manufacturing contributes to sustainability and future viability – by using resource-saving technologies, for example. Modular production systems (one world design) reduce complexity, handle multiple variations and enable production standards to be reproduced globally. In this way, the BMW Group is safeguarding key technological skills, strengthening its technological and process leadership, and responding to quality and supply problems quickly and flexibly.

Quality: the result of close working relationships and worldwide knowledge sharing

- Design for manufacturing: Development, Production, and Purchasing working together on Neue Klasse
- Employees from Plant Munich involved in pilot production at FIZ as well as production of first Neue Klasse model, the BMW iX3, in Debrecen
- Experience of Plant Munich team will benefit global production

Consistent quality across all locations is a key success factor in modern vehicle production. The BMW Group is strengthening its global production network through very early and close collaboration between the Development, Production, and Purchasing departments – in product development, in vehicle validation during testing and in continuous quality assurance across the production network. The goal is to manufacture vehicles with the same quality, efficiency and reliability – regardless of the plant involved.

Design for manufacturing

Consistent implementation of “design for manufacturing” underpins this approach. During vehicle development, the development, production and purchasing departments work together closely from the outset and integrate their respective production and quality standards. During production of the initial Neue Klasse prototypes at the Research and Innovation Centre (FIZ), employees from Plant Munich contributed their expertise from series production. The close proximity of Plant Munich to the FIZ, which is just ten minutes away, is a significant advantage here.

Prototype test drives also play a role in the thorough validation process for new products. This enables potential faults to be identified and resolved early on, ensuring that series production runs smoothly.

Efficient use of global production expertise

To ensure quality is maintained, the BMW Group leverages the existing expertise in its global production network. A key principle here is learning from each other. Insights from one plant flow directly into other locations. This allows potential variations in quality to be detected and avoided early on – i.e. before they are repeated in the production process. This interconnected way of working elevates both quality and efficiency throughout the production network.

More than 30 specialised technical teams of several hundred experts work across locations in topic clusters, such as interior & exterior, electrical system

architecture, drivetrain, complete vehicle and digitalisation. As part of a structured, systematic weekly schedule, the international teams discuss current issues and utilise production expertise from around the world. This means that an employee in Debrecen, Hungary could end up solving a production problem for the plants in Munich and San Luis Potosí, Mexico.

Since the product architecture and technical modules are the same, the network comprising the pilot plant at the FIZ, the new Debrecen plant and the Shenyang (China) and San Luis Potosí (Mexico) locations is particularly relevant for Plant Munich.

Universal information exchange and digital tools

A shared database and cloud-supported solutions enable the continuous exchange of experiences, best practice and quality data in real time. All hierarchies – from management to the specialists at employee level – work across locations using the same data and tools. This means that everyone has the same information available to them and solutions for all parties are implemented as quickly as possible. This approach is a key element in the validation of complete vehicles at the plants, ensuring that the ramp-up cascade can be managed efficiently.

Milestones of BMW Group Plant Munich

- 1922: Bayerische Motoren Werke AG establishes its headquarters on Lerchenauerstrasse in Munich, a few kilometres outside the city centre to the north of what is today the Olympic Park.
- 1923: The first BMW motorcycle, the R 32, is built. From the mid-1920s, the plant premises grow from 140,000 square metres to around 216,000 square metres.
- 1930: As well as in-line aircraft engines, BMW also builds radial power units. In 1934 production of the first large radial engine developed by BMW – and fitted in aircraft including the legendary JU 52 – begins in Munich and continues there until 1945.
- 1948: Post-war series production of vehicles starts with the launch of the R 24 single-cylinder motorcycle.
- 1952: For the first time, BMW cars are built in Munich. The first model is the BMW 501.
- 1954: Motorcycle production hits a new milestone of 30,000 units a year. However, as a result of the 'motorcycle crisis', sales slump to 5,400 units over just three years.
- 1955: Production of the BMW Isetta begins in April. The success of the model safeguards jobs at the Munich plant.
- 1962: The first Neue Klasse model, the BMW 1500, goes into production in mid-1962. The sporty, four-door, mid-size sedan lays the foundation for BMW's economic success.
- 1965: The 100,000th Neue Klasse car is built in late August.
- 1968/69: The relocation of parts of production to Dingolfing and Berlin gets underway. Production of BMW motorcycles in Munich ends after 46 years.
- 1975: Production facilities at the Munich plant are reconfigured for the first BMW 3 Series. The change allows BMW to build cars to customers' specific needs from as early as the body shop stage.
- 1977: After streamlining the plant structure, the BMW 3 Series range and all engines for BMW cars come from Munich.
- 1978/79: The BMW plants are adapted to meet the new production volumes. The look of the Munich plant changes quite a bit with the alterations and new constructions. These include tearing down and redesigning the South Gate on Dostlerstrasse, which was originally built in 1934.
- 1981: On 20th July, the original building at the Munich plant has to make way for structural changes.
- 1986: Although the development departments have gradually been moved to the new Research and Innovation Centre (FIZ), the only way to meet production targets at the plant, given its location in an urban neighbourhood, is to optimise and automate the production processes.

- 2001: The Plant Award in Gold – recognising the “Best Car Plant in Europe” – goes to the Munich plant for the first time in 2001. This attests to the premium quality achieved by BMW production.
- 2003: Plant Munich is presented with the City of Munich's Environmental Award.
- 2008: As part of Project i, a small series of MINI E cars are manufactured at the Munich plant.
- 2010: The world premiere of the sixth-generation BMW 3 Series takes place at the Munich plant. A high-speed servo press is put into operation in the press shop.
- 2014: BMW Group Plant Munich wins the Lean Award in the OEM category. An all-electric truck is deployed to supply the parts required.
- 2015: In April, the foundation stone is laid for the new paint shop.
- 2016: The ten-millionth vehicle runs off the assembly line at the Munich plant. The plant is presented with the Ludwig Erhard Award.
- 2017: In May, the new paint shop, one of the most state-of-the-art facilities in the automotive industry, goes into operation. This investment is part of the plant's preparations for the future.
- 2019: A package of investment totalling 200 million euros is channelled into the preparation – up to 2021 – of buildings, production facilities and logistics systems for series production of the BMW i4.
- 2020: The BMW Group announces that it will relocate its long-established engine manufacturing operations in Munich to BMW Group plants in Steyr (Austria) and Hams Hall (UK) by the middle of the decade. A new assembly and logistics facility entirely dedicated to electrified vehicles is built on what used to be the engine production site. The ambitious schedule for the work envisages just over two years from the first day of demolition to commissioning of the new facility and production of the first vehicles. At the same time, a new body shop is being built on the site of the old paint shop, which was decommissioned in 2018. The two new buildings will enable series production of the modern Neue Klasse at the Munich plant from 2026.
- 2021: The start of production of the BMW i4, the BMW Group's first all-electric Gran Coupé, means that five different models with all the available drive system variants (internal combustion engine, plug-in hybrid and fully electric) are built on the same line at Plant Munich.
- 2022: Plant Munich celebrates its centenary.
- 2026: The new buildings for assembly and body construction, with a new production area covering 200,000 square metres, are completed and put into operation. In addition, the logistics systems for production at Plant Munich have been comprehensively modernised and integrated into the existing structures. Series production of the new BMW i3, the first Neue Klasse model to be manufactured at the Munich plant, will commence in the second half of the year.

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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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