

Anniversary: 20 years of series production at BMW Group Plant Leipzig

+++ Production launch on 1 March 2005 with BMW 3 Series Sedan +++ 3.75 million vehicles made since +++ Plant Leipzig uniquely innovative and flexible +++

Leipzig. On 1 March 2005 BMW Group Plant Leipzig went on stream – with series production of the fifth-generation BMW 3 Series Sedan. Its construction had been announced four years earlier, in July 2001, with the location chosen from among more than 250 applicants. Since then, some 3.75 million cars have rolled off the production lines, and the plant has been steadily extended and upgraded. The BMW Group has so far invested more than 5 billion euros in the site – and will continue to capitalise on its flexibility in the future.

BMW Group Plant Leipzig currently manufactures four models with three different types of drive by two different brands – all on the same production line: the BMW 1 Series, BMW 2 Series Active Tourer (including the plug-in hybrid version) and BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé as well as the MINI Countryman in both its fully electric and conventionally powered variants. When the plant was in planning, output was expected to total 650 units a day. Now, 20 years down the line, capacity stands at up to 1,300 units a day. Since 2005 there have been 20 different product launches of BMWs and MINIs Made in Leipzig.

Extraordinary architecture and flexible structures

In its 20 years of existence, BMW Group Plant Leipzig has set standards time and again and clocked up a succession of milestones. The architecture of the central building alone remains impressive to this day. Designed by the renowned Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid, it was awarded the German Architecture Prize in 2005, the year it opened. As the centrepiece and linking element of the plant, it provides the backdrop to the spectacular procession of vehicles that pass overhead through the offices on their way through the production process.

The flexible structures of the plant halls have also proven their worth to this day, throughout the various expansion stages of the facility. Leipzig was the first assembly plant in the world to **feature a 'finger' arrangement in the production hall, for example**, which offers ideal logistics solutions and can be flexibly adapted as needed. Developed specifically for this site, the finger layout allows trucks to deliver parts and preassemblies straight to the production line. It also means extensions can be added as needed and new assembly stations integrated easily without having to rebuild the line from scratch. At the moment various further extensions are being added on the 240-hectare site.

For the last 20 years, BMW Group Plant Leipzig has demonstrated tremendous flexibility and adaptability, accommodating new products, processes and technologies. It has often played a pioneering role within the BMW Group production network. Its first upgrade consisted of the addition of a new press shop. This went into operation in 2009 and incorporated the first high-speed servo press in the world, able to produce pressed parts with unprecedented speed and efficiency. By 2014 three additional large-scale presses and two coil systems for body panels had also been installed, completing the press shop upgrade.

Electromobility pioneer

One particularly defining moment for Plant Leipzig was the decision to produce its first fully electric vehicle there, making it the birthplace of electromobility at the BMW Group. Between 2013 and 2022 more than 250,000 all-electric BMW i3 vehicles rolled off the production lines. Their carbon bodies were a world first in series production. In 2014 the BMW i8 followed: the first plug-in hybrid by the BMW Group, it featured an award-winning, futuristic design and progressive technologies, which together made it an icon among sportscars. With 20,500 units made – including the BMW i8 roadster launched in 2018 – the era drew to a close in 2020.

But the team's expertise in electromobility continues: in 2021 BMW Group Plant Leipzig

launched e-component manufacturing for high-voltage battery production. Having started with the production of battery modules for the BMW Group production network, facilities were expanded within four years to include further stages of manufacturing and additional production lines. Since the start of MINI Countryman Electric production in March 2024, Plant Leipzig has carried out the entire process of high-voltage battery manufacturing for the fifth generation of batteries, with its five cell-coating lines, three module assembly lines and two lines for high-voltage battery assembly. The batteries are used in the MINI Countryman Electric and fully electric BMW models at various BMW Group sites.

From rear-wheel to front-wheel drive

It's not just the BMW i8 that made 2014 a landmark year: it was also the year production of the first generation of BMW 2 Series Active Tourer began. This brought fundamental change to BMW Group Plant Leipzig: it was the first ever BMW with a front-wheel drive architecture and **paved the way for this drive technology to become integrated into Plant Leipzig's production lines. Thanks to Leipzig's flexibility, the sports activity tourer was able to roll off the same line as the BMW 1 Series, 2 Series and first-generation BMW X1, all of which were then are rear or all-wheel drive vehicles.**

Integrating the BMW 2 Series Active Tourer required just a few minor adjustments to the paintshop and assembly, but in the bodyshop, its new front-wheel drive concept and vehicle architecture meant a whole new production area was needed.

About a year and a half later, production of a plug-in hybrid model was launched: the BMW 225xe. Like the BMW i8, this featured a combined combustion-engine and electric drive. Its successor, the second-generation BMW Active Tourer, in production since 2021, is also manufactured with either a plug-in hybrid drive or an internal combustion engine. In 2021, **Leipzig's rear-wheel drive era came to an end when the BMW 2 Series Coupé, BMW 2 Series Convertible and BMW M2 were phased out.**

Production of the MINI Countryman is another USP of Plant Leipzig within the production network: it is the only full vehicle production facility in the BMW Group to produce BMW- and MINI-badged cars on one and the same production line.

Important employer in the region

With some 6,800 BMW employees and more than 11,000 people based locally, the BMW Group plant is a major contributor to the economy and a key employer in the region. When it first went on stream, it had roughly 2,600 BMW employees, with plans for around 5,500 jobs over the medium term.

In 2001, when Leipzig was chosen as the site for a new plant, the enthusiasm and welcome across the region were huge. Job applications poured in. On the day of the announcement alone, the specially established call centre took more than 4,000 calls. Over the next few days, the post bags were full, and by September 2001 thirty-five apprentices had become the first cohort to receive an employment contract with BMW Group Plant Leipzig. Since then, Leipzig has trained some 1,100 apprentices.

Last year Plant Leipzig opened its Talent Campus. This accommodates training and development spaces in a single new building on the plant premises, offering the perfect conditions for employee training.

In 2024 the MINI Countryman meant production volumes increased, marking another first for Leipzig: the introduction of nightshifts – unprecedented in the history of the plant. Today, BMW and MINI vehicles are manufactured round the clock, in three shifts. The additional shift has created jobs for another 900 employees.

Progressive energy management

Planning the BMW plant in Leipzig, efficient and sustainable processes played a crucial role – **not just in vehicle production but in energy supplies as well. Visible from afar, the plant's four** wind turbines are among its landmark features and have been powering production with green energy since 2013. With a total capacity of 10 megawatts, they generate 26 gigawatt hours a year of electricity from wind energy – **enough to cover about 15 percent of the plant's total** energy needs.

In addition, BMW Group Plant Leipzig is equipped for interim energy storage, with a battery storage farm that went into operation in 2017. This comprises up to 700 second-life high-voltage batteries from BMW i3 cars, enabling us to optimise local energy management and help stabilise the electricity network.

Looking to the future, BMW Group Plant Leipzig attaches great importance to hydrogen as a fuel. In pursuit of its vision of largely decarbonising production – by replacing fossil fuels with hydrogen – it will need sufficient supplies from a grid. A regional hydrogen network is currently under construction, and Plant Leipzig plans to tap into it.

BMW Group Plant Leipzig has extensive experience of working with hydrogen, having already used it for in-house plant logistics for more than a decade. A pioneer in the automotive industry, **it opened Germany's first indoor hydrogen filling station in 2013.** It now operates five such facilities for refuelling forklifts and tug trains in intralogistics. Its hydrogen fuel cell-powered fleet currently consists of over 200 vehicles and is one of the largest in Europe.

Plant Leipzig was also the first car plant in the world to introduce a brand-new bivalent burner technology that can run on either natural gas or hydrogen. It can even switch between the two while operations are ongoing. In the paintshop, five such gas- and hydrogen-capable burners are currently used to dry the contrast roofs of the MINI Countryman, BMW 1 Series and BMW 2 Series Gran Coupe, and another six have replaced the previous systems in the PVC drying section.

BMW Group Plant Leipzig is currently undergoing further extensions and upgrades in preparation for forthcoming models – and for the next 20 years in its history.

BMW Group Plant Leipzig – Key milestones:

- 2001 Leipzig is chosen as the location for the new plant
- 2002 **Zaha Hadid's design is selected for the central building. The ground-breaking is celebrated**
- 2003 The foundation stone is laid for the central building, and the topping-out ceremony is celebrated later that year
- 2005 Series production is launched with BMW 3 Series. Plant Leipzig is inaugurated. The central building wins the German Architecture Prize
- 2007 Production of the three-door BMW 1 Series and the BMW 1 Series Coupé begins
- 2009 Leipzig produces its 500,000th car. Production of the first generation of BMW X1 **begins. The press shop opens with the world's first high-speed servo press**
- 2011 Plant Leipzig delivers its 1,000,000th BMW
- 2013 Four wind turbines go on stream. Production of the BMW i3 begins. Carbon is used in series production – a world first
- 2014 Production of the BMW i8 begins. Plant Leipzig is extended for production of the BMW 2 Series Active Tourer (the first front-wheel drive BMW). The press shop is upgraded
- 2016 Plant Leipzig delivers its 2,000,000th BMW
- 2018 The plant is upgraded
- 2021 Plant Leipzig delivers its 3,000,000th BMW. Battery module production begins
- 2022 The BMW i3 is phased out
- 2023 Production of the MINI Countryman begins
- 2024 Production of three models begins: the MINI Countryman Electric, fourth-generation BMW 1 Series and second-generation BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé. Night shifts are introduced in assembly

All BMW Models made by BMW Group Plant Leipzig		
Model	Production period	Quantity
BMW 3 Series Sedan E90	2005 - 2009	333.427
BMW 1 Series three door E81	2007 - 2011	187.263
BMW 1 Series Coupé E82	2007 - 2013	130.205

BMW 1 Series Convertible E88	2007 - 2013	131.664
BMW X1 E84	2009 - 2015	635.194
BMW 1 Series M Coupé E82	2011 - 2012	6.342
BMW 1 Series five door F20	2012 - 2019	424.111
BMW 2 Series Coupé F22	2013 - 2021	165.224
BMW i3 i01	2013 - 2022	250.271
BMW i8 i12	2014 - 2020	16.581
BMW 2 Series Active Tourer F45	2014 - 2021	368.503
BMW 2 Series Convertible F23	2014 - 2021	119.092
BMW M2 F87	2015 - 2021	61.856
BMW i8 Roadster i15	2018 - 2020	3.884
BMW 1 Series five door F40	2019 - 2024	442.859
BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé F44	2019 - 2024	220.795
BMW 2 Series Active Tourer U06	2021 - *	103.390
MINI Countryman U25	2023 - *	95.150
BMW 1 Series five door F70	2024 - *	41.817
BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé F74	2024 - *	4.109
* Stand 12/2024		

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 2024, the BMW Group sold over 2.45 million passenger vehicles and more than 210,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2023 was € 17.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 155.5 billion. As of 31 December 2023, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,950 employees.

The 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 and production to the end of their useful life.

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About BMW Group Latin America

The BMW Group is the leader in Premium individual mobility technology, products and services in Latin America, where it markets its three brands: BMW, MINI and BMW Motorrad. BMW is the favorite Premium automotive brand in Latin America, with more than one in every three vehicles sold in the region. In 2024, the brand has sold 42,682 units. MINI has sold 6,431 units in the same period. BMW Motorrad has sold 27,742 motorcycles in the entire region, setting a sales record. BMW is the best-selling Premium brand in Brazil, Mexico and Importer Markets. BMW Motorrad has achieved record sales and today has 3 of its 15 major global markets in Latin America: Brazil, Mexico, and Importer Markets. BMW Group's Technology Openess Approach is ideal for a gradual transition to electromobility, offering customers a range of options including battery-electric, plug-in hybrid, or combustion engine powertrains. Over 20% of BMW Group's sales in Latin America come from electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles. The BMW Group has delivered around 80,000 personal or corporate charging equipment in the region.

The Group has 5,000 employees in the Latin American region. Its sales offices are located in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico (where the regional office is located). The BMW Group production Plants in the region are located in Brazil and Mexico. Brazil has two plants, one located in Araquari -**Santa Catarina, focused on cars' production, where the** production of the BMW X5 PHEV began in 2024; the other plant in Manaus, Amazonas, which is the first facility to manufacture motorcycles outside of Germany. In Mexico, the investment of one billion dollars for the construction and operation of a BMW Group Plant in San Luis Potosí was announced in July 2014. This production site began operations in 2019 with the production of the BMW 3 Series; in 2021, the expansion of its operation was announced to include the manufacture of the BMW 2 Series Coupé and in 2022 the BMW M2, both exported worldwide. In 2027, the BMW San Luis Potosí Plant will incorporate the production of electric vehicles and batteries with an investment of 800 million dollars.

As additional information, Brazil has an Engineering team to support global developments, in addition to the challenges in the region, and a customer support organization that offers attention to consumers.

Data updated as of January 2025 referring to the end of the year 2024.

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