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E-drive production expands in Leipzig: Second battery module line goes on stream

+++ E-component production expands +++ Manufacture of battery modules for BMW i4 +++ €70 million invested +++ 250 new jobs created +++ Plant Director Petra Peterhänsel: "Plant Leipzig remains electrified" +++

Leipzig. Today sees the launch of BMW Group Plant Leipzig's second battery module production line. Further expanding e-component production in the German state of Saxony, the new system manufactures modules for the fully electric BMW i4, made in Munich. Plant Leipzig's first such production line went on stream in May 2021 and supplies the battery modules for the BMW iX.

"Today's launch of Leipzig's second battery module production line makes an important contribution to delivering the battery components needed to make a growing number of electrified vehicles," said Markus Fallböhrer, Head of Engine and E-Drive Production at the BMW Group. The gradual expansion of e-component production is taking the BMW Group ever closer to its goal for 2030, when fully electric models are expected to account for at least half of the BMW Group's sales.

Ensuring the future viability of Plant Leipzig

The new battery module production line alone comes at an investment of around €70 million. As the expansion of e-component production continues, new jobs are being created as well, with some 250 people working on the new line by the end of 2022, in addition to the current 700-plus already in e-component production in Leipzig.

Plant Leipzig's second battery module production system occupies an area of approx. 4,250 m² and uses BMW i production areas that are now vacant after the BMW i3 was phased out on 30 June. Each battery module passes through 196 production stations in total before it is complete and ready for further processing.

"Plant Leipzig remains electrified," said a delighted Petra Peterhänsel, Plant Director. "Now that BMW i3 production has wound down, we can use the skills and experience of our employees elsewhere and offer them secure jobs for the

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long term," she commented, adding that this would continue to ensure the future viability of the plant.

To prepare for the steady increase in electrified vehicles, e-drive production in Leipzig will become even more extensive and flexible as early as next year, with upcoming stages of the expansion programme creating further new jobs. Another major milestone will be production of the successor to the MINI Countryman, due to roll off the production lines from 2023. The crossover model will be available with combustion engines as well as an all-electric drive.

From battery cell to high-voltage battery

Production of high-voltage batteries can be broken down into two stages: module production and high-voltage battery assembly.

Module production is a highly automated process in which the lithium-ion cells first undergo plasma cleaning, before being coated by a specially developed system to ensure optimal insulation. They are then combined to form larger units known as modules. The BMW Group sources its battery cells from partners who produce them to the company's exact specifications.

The completed battery modules are then installed in an aluminium housing, together with the connectors and the control and cooling units. The size and shape of the housing and the number of battery modules used differ depending on the vehicle variant. So, each high-voltage battery can be optimally adjusted to suit the car it will power.

Global production network for e-drives focused in Germany

To meet rising demand for e-drive component production capacity, the BMW Group draws on a worldwide production network. The high-voltage batteries and battery components for the full range of electrified BMW and MINI vehicles are made at the company's own battery facilities, in Dingolfing, Leipzig and Regensburg in Germany, as well as Spartanburg (USA) and Shenyang (China). There is also localised production of high-voltage batteries in Thailand, for the plant in Rayong. In Munich, the BMW Group operates an e-drive pilot plant and a Battery Cell Competence Centre, where battery cell value creation processes are analysed in full and technologies for production processes are refined. Just outside Munich, the BMW Group is soon to open a Cell Manufacturing Competence Centre.



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Located in Parsdorf, just to the east of the city, the new facility will be a pilot plant for battery cell production. It will model series production of lithium-ion battery cells and validate the feasibility of their large-scale manufacture, especially with regard to quality, time and costs.

In Dingolfing and at BMW Group Plant Landshut, the BMW Group manufactures electric motors in the Competence Centre for E-Drive Production. The casing for the highly integrated fifth-generation e-drive is made at BMW Group Plant Steyr.

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The BMW Group Plant Leipzig

The BMW Group plant in Leipzig is one of the most modern and sustainable car factories in the world. Series production began in March 2005. Today, around 1,000 vehicles roll off the production line here every day, currently the BMW 1 Series, the BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé and the BMW 2 Series Active Tourer. The BMW Group has already invested a total of more than three billion euros in the Leipzig location. The core workforce currently comprises around 5,300 employees.

The BMW Group

With its 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 and mobility 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 2021, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million automobiles and more than 194.000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2021 was € 16.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 111.2 billion. As of 31 December 2021, the BMW Group had a workforce of 118,909 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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