

Eve energy company

The Chinese battery cell manufacturer Eve Energy will build its first European factory in Debrecen, Hungary, to supply BMW with large round cells for new-class electric cars. This had been hinted at before; and is now officially confirmed.

According to Hungarian media reports based on official statements by Hungary's Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó and on an announcement by Eve Energy, the factory in Debrecen will have an annual capacity of 28 gigawatt-hours and go into operation in 2026. According to Szijjártó, Eve Energy will invest around 400 billion forints (just over 1 billion euros) in the factory and create over 1,000 new jobs. The Hungarian government is supporting the construction with 14 billion forints, the equivalent of about 38 million euros.

The cell plant is to be built on 45 hectares in the so-called Northwest Economic Belt, which is reserved for BMW suppliers. The German carmaker itself laid the foundation stone for its electric car plant in Debrecen in mid-2022 and in late summer and autumn 2022 appointed a total of three suppliers to produce the new round-format battery cells in the 'New Class' electric models. In addition to Eve Energy, these are CATL and Envision AESC. Together they are to cover the regions of North America, Europe and China with the construction of six factories.

It is now clear that Eve Energy is contributing a plant in Europe. This had already been hinted at: According to reports from late March 2022, Eve Energy had already signed a non-binding letter of intent with the Debrecen Municipality at the time to acquire 45 hectares in an industrial area and build a cylindrical cell production plant there. Most recently, Eve Energy has also made headlines with a strong capacity expansion in China. However, it has not been confirmed whether the announced new buildings will include an exclusive plant for BMW.

What is clear, however, is that Envision AESC will cover the North American cell deliveries for BMW. An Envision AESC factory announced in October for South Carolina with up to 30 GWh will be the company's first of two planned production facilities in the region dedicated to BMW supply. CATL is expected to complement Eve Energy in its supply activities in Europe and China. Details are not yet available. But: CATL is also setting up a 100 GWh factory in Debrecen, with Mercedes as a major customer.

BMW's round cells will have a uniform diameter of 46 millimetres and two different heights (format: 46XX). According to BMW, the module level is omitted during installation: the round cells are 'integrated flexibly and space-savingly in the installation space'. The storage system takes on a supporting role in the body structure. In technical jargon, this battery concept is called 'pack-to-open-body'.

It has been known for some time that the vehicles of the New Class will use an 800-volt system with up to 350



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kW charging power in addition to this battery concept. In this way, a significantly increased charging performance can be achieved with direct current charging at a current strength of up to 500 amperes, as BMW recently specified. The time required for charging from ten to 80 per cent is reduced by up to 30 per cent.

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