

BASF's Coatings division has a new laboratory for automotive coatings at their site in Münster, using a lab dosing machine developed specially.

BASF

Division President Dirk Bremm says the new lab means "through the digitisation of processes, optimised use of resources, and automation, we can respond more efficiently and address our customers' needs". Since 2014, BASF have invested €24m to overhaul an existing laboratory building for this purpose, which included adding an extra storey. The building now features four laboratory levels with offices and lab workplaces which are all digitally linked.

A lab dosing machine which BASF say is unique in the coatings industry was specifically built for the lab in Münster. BASF collaborated with machine manufacturer Fricke Dosing + Filling Systems from Minden, Germany, to develop the machine. At 12 metres long and weighing eight tonnes, it can manufacture standard formulas from more than 300 liquid raw materials. All job orders and associated experiments within the lab are digitally stored and documented.

"The Lean Lab in Münster is our pilot project," says BASF's European Coatings Division Product Development Manager Wolfgang Reckordt. "Since late 2017, we have been gathering experience we can use for introducing the Lean Lab at other sites in Europe: in Würzburg, Germany; Guadalajara, Spain; and Clermont, France. Lean Lab is our new European standard and will open up many possibilities for us to intensify product development and respond flexibly to new challenges."