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ŠKODA AUTO launches operation of new paint shop at Mladá Boleslav plant

- › Paint shop capacity increases by 168,000 car bodies to 812,000 vehicles per year
- › ŠKODA AUTO has invested 214.5 million euros and created more than 650 new jobs
- › New paint shop facility is one of the most cutting-edge and eco-friendliest of its kind in Europe

Mladá Boleslav, 22 August 2019 – ŠKODA AUTO has today opened a new paint shop at its main plant in Mladá Boleslav. Up to 168,000 car bodies will be coated with paint there each year, taking the plant's total annual painting capacity up to 812,000 vehicles. ŠKODA AUTO has invested 214.5 million euros in the new building, creating more than 650 new jobs. The facility is one of the most cutting-edge and eco-friendliest of its kind in Europe. Robots are taking over numerous production steps. Innovative technologies mean that the ŠKODA employees' workstations have been given a particularly ergonomic design.

Bernhard Maier, ŠKODA AUTO CEO, said, "By opening the new paint shop, we are making our main plant in Mladá Boleslav stronger for the long term. It is a key component of our growth trajectory that we are rigorously continuing as part of our 2025 Strategy. This allows us to increase our capacity and therefore meet the high customer demand much more effectively. At the same time, we have created more than 650 new jobs at ŠKODA's headquarters, making a considerable contribution towards strengthening the Czech Republic as an automotive hub."

ŠKODA Board Member for Production and Logistics, Michael Oeljeklaus, added, "With the opening of the new paint shop, one of the most advanced facilities of its kind in Europe is commencing operation. It allows us to markedly increase production capacity at our main plant in Mladá Boleslav. Up to 168,000 car bodies will be coated with paint here each year, taking the plant's total annual painting capacity up to 812,000 vehicles. Numerous production steps are undertaken or assisted by a total of 66 robots. The use of innovative technologies makes the ŠKODA employees' workstations particularly ergonomic."

The state-of-the-art painting technologies include a fully autonomous system for transporting the individual bodies during pretreatment and primer application. This conveyor system enables the process parameters for each car to be selected individually. In traditional painting lines, such customisation is not possible because the bodies are transported using chain conveyors.

All of the data from the production process is electronically matched with the identity of the relevant car and transmitted via radio to the individual workstations, allowing the appropriate materials to be used.

With regards to the choice of technical equipment, ŠKODA AUTO placed particular importance on low energy consumption. One example is the new paint shop's unique drying technology: to offset the differences in temperature between solid, high-strength body components and light sheets of metal when baking the various paint layers, central recuperators blow hot air into certain areas. This way, ŠKODA reduces the amount of energy used to dry the layers of paint by up to 20 per cent.



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An innovative wet brush system for cleaning the car bodies enables the sealant and primer to be baked at the same time – which means the facility can forego an entire drying step and therefore does not have to heat and cool the bodywork.

The painting robots boast an innovative seventh rotational axis in their cantilever arm, meaning one robot can coat car bodies with a total surface area of up to 108 m². To put this in perspective: the average surface area of present-day passenger cars is 88 m².

New paint shop sets benchmarks for environmental sustainability

Just like in the already established ŠKODA AUTO paint shops, the new facility only uses water-based coatings, with the exception of the final clear coat. However, in the new paint shop, 55 per cent of this topcoat is made up of solid matter. Thanks to this composition, each car requires approximately 210 g less solvent and the amount of clear coat required is reduced by 17 per cent to 2 kg per car.

In total, the five coats of paint applied to a ŠKODA result in a layer that is around 0.1 mm thick. The paint shop can produce a total of 17 different tones, many of which have a metallic or pearlescent finish.

The new technologies also provide an essential contribution to the shop's eco-friendliness. Paint residues such as pigment particles are absorbed in a process known as dry separation. In this procedure, ground limestone replaces the water which was used until now. As a result, no paint sludge accumulates as a waste product. The exhaust air decontamination system using ground limestone reduces the amount of paint residue created per car body by more than 2 kg. The used ground limestone and the paint absorbed by it are then thermally recycled and used in the desulphurisation of flue gases emitted at the heating plant run by ŠKODA's subsidiary Ško-Energo. By using this technology, ŠKODA recycles up to 80 per cent of the air used in the spray booths, which substantially reduces the amount of energy used in purifying the intake air.

Furthermore, the new paint shop features a system that thermally disposes of all emissions. This allows ŠKODA AUTO to reduce its production-related emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) created during the painting process by 36 per cent.

At 35 m high and featuring seven storeys, the new paint shop is now the tallest building at ŠKODA AUTO's main plant in Mladá Boleslav. Measuring 276 m in length and ranging between 60 and 140 m in width, the building covers 25,094 m² – the equivalent of three football fields. At 828,058 m³, the volume of the building corresponds to that of 265 Olympic swimming pools.

The Czech car manufacturer groups its environmental activities under the umbrella of its GreenFuture strategy. Investments such as the eco-friendly paint shop fall under GreenFactory and form an important pillar of the brand's sustainability strategy. In ŠKODA AUTO's recently published sustainability report, the company revealed that it was able to reduce the environmental impact of its vehicle production by 56.1 per cent between 2010 and 2018.

[More information, photos, infographics and a video of the new paint shop in Mladá Boleslav can be found on ŠKODA Storyboard.](#)



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ŠKODA AUTO launches operation of new paint shop at Mladá Boleslav plant

ŠKODA CEO Bernhard Maier and Michael Oeljeklaus, ŠKODA AUTO Board Member for Production and Logistics, open the new paint shop at ŠKODA's main plant in Mladá Boleslav.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



Video: New paint shop of ŠKODA AUTO in Mladá Boleslav

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[YouTube](#)

Source: ŠKODA AUTO



Infographic: New paint shop of ŠKODA AUTO in Mladá Boleslav

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

ŠKODA AUTO

- › was founded during the pioneering days of the automobile in 1895, making it one of the longest-established car companies in the world.
- › currently offers its customers nine passenger-car series: the CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ, as well as the KAMIQ and the SUPERB.
- › delivered more than 1.25 million vehicles to customers around the world in 2018.
- › has been part of Volkswagen Group since 1991. Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world. In association with the Group, ŠKODA AUTO independently develops and manufactures vehicles, as well as components such as engines and transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic; manufactures in China, Russia, Slovakia, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan with local partners.
- › employs over 39,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.
- › is pressing ahead with the transformation from a traditional car manufacturer to the 'Simply Clever company for the best mobility solutions' as part of the ŠKODA 2025 Strategy.