



ŠKODA
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PRESS RELEASE

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ŠKODA AUTO in Vrchlabí: high-tech site at the foot of the Giant Mountains

- › 155 years of heritage: Vrchlabí plant was opened in 1864 and has been part of ŠKODA AUTO since 1946
- › Switch from manufacturing vehicles to components was made in 2012
- › ŠKODA AUTO is one of the largest industrial employers in the Hradec Králové region
- › State-of-the-art Industry 4.0 technologies are used at the Vrchlabí site

Vrchlabí, 10 October 2019 – This year, the Vrchlabí plant is celebrating its 155th anniversary since it opened in 1864. It has been part of ŠKODA AUTO since 1946, who initially made cars there. In 2012, over a period of 18 months, the Czech company then comprehensively modernised the former car factory, turning the site into a progressive component plant. In 2015, Vrchlabí was awarded ‘Factory of the Year’ for transformation of the production so quickly and for the site’s dynamic development. Today, the roughly 1,000 members of staff based at the foot of the Giant Mountains build approximately 2,200 DQ 200 automatic direct-shift transmissions every single day.

Michael Oeljeklaus, ŠKODA AUTO Board Member for Production and Logistics, stressed, “The Vrchlabí plant plays a central, strategic role in component production for ŠKODA. It is here that we build DQ 200 dual-clutch transmissions which reliably do their work in millions of vehicles from various Group brands every day. In recent years, we have introduced numerous Industry 4.0 technologies and, in doing so, have systematically turned Vrchlabí into a high-tech plant.”

Ivan Slimák, Vrchlabí Plant Manager, added, “The Vrchlabí plant is one of the most state-of-the-art Volkswagen Group production facilities today and – employing around 1,000 members of staff – is also one of the most significant industrial employers in the Hradec Králové region. Last year, the team built more than 538,700 DQ 200 gearboxes here. We will exceed the mark of having produced a total of 3 million transmissions this year still.”

As part of a profound transformation, ŠKODA AUTO converted the Vrchlabí site from a vehicle factory into a state-of-the-art component plant in 2012. In just 18 months, a new factory building was constructed and the existing production halls were comprehensively modernised.

These days 38 per cent of the automatic 7-speed dual-clutch transmissions produced here are used in ŠKODA cars, 62 per cent are fitted in other Volkswagen Group vehicles. ŠKODA AUTO ships well over half of the gearboxes to Germany, other customers include factories in India, Poland, Russia, Spain, South Africa and Hungary.

Industry 4.0: pioneering technologies at the high-tech plant in Vrchlabí

For the production of direct-shift transmissions in Vrchlabí, ŠKODA AUTO is utilising Industry 4.0 technologies. Collaborative robots are helping staff to insert the gear actuator piston, for example – a sensitive task in gearbox production. And a handling robot supplies dozens of machines with parts and returns empty containers to the warehouse.



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ŠKODA AUTO also uses an autonomous [transport robot](#) at the Vrchlabí plant. Along its journey through the factory, this self-learning robot is able to recognise obstacles and incorporate other information from its surroundings in real time when planning its route. If necessary, it changes its course to get to its destination as quickly as possible. The robot can transport a load of up to 130 kg in one go, and – unlike traditional automated transport systems – does not need any lane guidance in the form of induction loops, magnetic strips or reflectors. To learn the route, the robot only has to be guided between the stations via a tablet or joystick. Per day, it completes approximately 120 trips and travels a total distance of 35 km. The robot has been in regular use since June 2018.

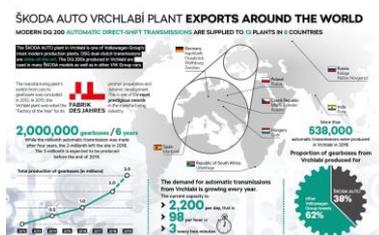
The Vrchlabí site has also already been given numerous prizes for its consistent implementation of Industry 4.0 technologies. In 2015, the plant was presented with the accolade 'Factory of the Year' – one of Europe's most prestigious manufacturing awards.

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Media infographic and images:



Infographic: ŠKODA AUTO in Vrchlabí: high-tech site at the foot of the Giant Mountains

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



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Since 2012, ŠKODA AUTO has been producing the modern DQ 200 automatic dual-clutch transmission in Vrchlabí

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ŠKODA AUTO in Vrchlabí: high-tech site at the foot of the Giant Mountains

Around 1,000 members of staff build up to 2,200 DQ 200 transmissions each day. The mark of 3 million units produced will be exceeded this year still.

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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.