

Volkswagen ends shorter-hours scheme at German factories

June 30 2020



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German car giant Volkswagen said Tuesday its German factories would end in July a shorter hours scheme used to cushion the impact of the coronavirus pandemic as production ramps back up.

After around 80,000 workers' hours were slashed from March, a remaining cohort of around 20,000 at VW's own-brand passenger cars, utility vehicles and components works will also return to normal schedules at sites across Europe's top economy, the sprawling 12-brand group said in a statement.

At present, production levels in the German factories stand at between 75 and 95 percent of pre-coronavirus levels, VW said.

But with the outlook for the [car industry](#) uncertain as businesses and consumers emerge from months of infection-control lockdown, "we'll continue to manage production very precisely according to how markets develop and customer demand," VW brand production and logistics chief Andreas Tostmann said.

Official data released earlier this month showed that new car registrations on German roads alone fell 16.1 percent year-on-year between January and May, to 2.5 million.

Sales were down almost 50 percent on May 2019 last month, after a more than 60-percent drop in April and almost 40 in March.

A similar picture has been seen across Europe and further afield, after the pandemic hit an already shrinking global car market.

Looking to other major carmakers' German operations, BMW told AFP that workers were still on shorter hours "here and there" in June, for a total around 4,000 compared with over 30,000 in April and May.

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Citation: Volkswagen ends shorter-hours scheme at German factories (2020, June 30) retrieved 24 April 2024 from

<https://techxplore.com/news/2020-06-volkswagen-shorter-hours-scheme-german-factories.html>

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