Audi Hungary plant begins tooling up after three-week production halt

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"We believe that within a few weeks we can get up and running... Our clients worldwide are waiting for cars. We have to be a reliable supplier," he said.

First operations to restart include maintenance work, and organisational measures aimed at relaunching production lines while implementing anti-virus health rules.

Physical distancing between workers will be enforced, and workstation plexiglass dividers and personal protective equipment provided where necessary, said the firm.

Buses transporting workers to the plant will be continuously disinfected, it said.

Later Tuesday, other car plants in Hungary shuttered since late-March also announced plans to restart.

Japan's Suzuki said in a statement it plans to relaunch single-shift production on April 27 at its plant in Esztergom north of Budapest.

German car giant Daimler AG told a Hungarian news-site that its Mercedes-Benz plant in Kecskemet, southern Hungary, will restart operations April 28.

Management at PSA's Opel car engine plant in the western town of Szentgotthard also said it is ready to reopen depending on market conditions but did not give a date.

The carmakers' moves came as countries consider lifting sweeping lockdowns that have crippled economies and kept billions confined to their homes.

Italy and Austria, a neighbour of Hungary's, allowed some shops to reopen on Tuesday, a day after Spain allowed construction and factory workers to return to their jobs.
Hungary's nationalist premier Viktor Orban has ordered confinement measures over the pandemic that were extended indefinitely last week.

Hungary, which has a population of almost 10 million, has recorded more than 1,500 COVID-19 infections and 122 deaths.