

100th anniversary of the Škoda–Laurin & Klement merger

- › On 12 September 1925, the Mladá Boleslav carmaker Laurin & Klement merged with the Pilsen-based industrial group Škoda
- › The merger triggered a period of rapid growth, supported by significant investment in development, manufacturing and distribution. Since 1995, the Laurin & Klement designation has marked Škoda's highest trim levels
- › Integration into the Volkswagen Group in 1991 gave Škoda the momentum for modernisation, innovation and global expansion that continues to shape the brand today

Mladá Boleslav, 12 September 2025 – In 1925, as the Mladá Boleslav-based company Laurin & Klement was celebrating its 30th anniversary and 20 years of automobile production, it joined forces with the Škoda industrial and armaments group. Under the Škoda brand, the strong strategic partner launched an ambitious investment programme, introducing assembly line production, transferring cutting-edge technologies, rolling out a new wave of models, and strengthening the brand's position at home and abroad. Since 1995, Škoda's top trim levels have borne the Laurin & Klement designation. The philosophy of Laurin and Klement – built on innovation, precision and passion for mobility – remains an integral part of the brand's DNA.

The history of the Pilsen-based engineering company dates back to 1859, and ten years later it was acquired by engineer Emil Škoda. Under his leadership, and carrying his name, the company grew into the largest industrial enterprise in Austria-Hungary and even collaborated with the carmaker Laurin & Klement. In the 1920s, both companies faced economic difficulties in the wake of the First World War and the collapse of traditional markets. In 1924, a devastating fire further damaged the L&K factory in Mladá Boleslav. Václav Laurin and Václav Klement therefore decided to seek a strong strategic partner.

At that time, L&K employed 1,125 people, while Škoda Plzeň had more than 30,000 employees. However, its automotive output was limited, focusing mainly on the licensed production of British Sentinel steam lorries and Hispano-Suiza luxury cars. Unlike other options considered, the merger with Škoda Plzeň guaranteed the continuation of independent automotive development and production in Mladá Boleslav.

On 20 July 1925, the general meetings of both companies approved the merger, with shares exchanged at a ratio of 2:1 (L&K/Škoda). The decisive date came on 12 September 1925, when the Ministry of the Interior granted its approval. Laurin & Klement was formally removed from the Commercial Register on 29 December, but its traditional logo continued to appear alongside the Škoda name on models introduced up to August 1925. The Mladá

Boleslav carmaker emerged from the merger significantly stronger – a resilience soon put to the test by the looming global economic crisis. The link with the Pilsen headquarters was forcibly severed by nationalisation in 1945.

Laurin & Klement today

Although Laurin & Klement was officially taken off the Commercial Register as an independent manufacturer, the rights to the legendary brand – including its iconic Art Nouveau logo – remain with Škoda Auto. Customers will find it on Škoda's highest trim levels, a tradition that began in 1995 with the Škoda Felicia Laurin & Klement, featuring leather upholstery, pearl-effect dark blue paintwork, 13-inch retro-style alloy wheels and more. Key models from the L&K era continue to inspire Škoda Auto's designers, while Škoda Motorsport has proudly built on racing successes dating back to 1901. Also the company's new office complex bears the name Laurin & Klement Kampus. The numbers tell the story: a century ago, 1,800 employees produced 833 cars. In 1991, 16,974 Škoda staff built 172,074 cars. Last year, Škoda, with a global workforce of around 40,000, delivered more than 926,000 vehicles to customers worldwide. This year, students at the Škoda Auto Vocational School modified a Škoda Superb Combi into an escort vehicle for cycling races. Its name, [L&K 130](#), and special design also commemorate Škoda Auto's 130-year history.

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Media images



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Models developed up to August 1925 carried both the Laurin & Klement and Škoda names, while later designs were produced solely under the Škoda brand. The famous trademark, however, remained the property of the company.

Source: Škoda Auto



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Source: Škoda Auto

Škoda Auto

- › is successfully steering through the new decade with the Next Level Škoda Strategy;
- › aims to become one of the top three best-selling brands in Europe by the end of the decade by offering its customers the best of both worlds through a range of attractive BEV, hybrid & ICE products;
- › effectively exploits the potential in important growth markets such as India, Vietnam and the ASEAN region;
- › currently offers customers 12 passenger car model ranges: Fabia, Scala, Octavia, Superb, Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Elroq, Enyaq, Slavia, Kylaq and Kushaq;
- › delivered more than 926,000 vehicles to customers worldwide in 2024;
- › has been part of the Volkswagen Group, one of the world's most successful car manufacturers, for more than 30 years;
- › is part of Brand Group CORE, an organisational merger of the Volkswagen Group's volume brands, with the aim of achieving joint growth and significantly increasing the overall efficiency of all five volume brands;
- › independently develops and produces components such as MEB battery systems, engines and transmissions for other Volkswagen Group brands;
- › operates three production plants in the Czech Republic; has production capacities in China, Slovakia and India, mostly through group partnerships, as well as in Vietnam and Ukraine in cooperation with a local partner;
- › employs around 40,000 people worldwide and is active in almost 100 markets.