

MARC GOMBEER

PLANT MANAGER
VOLVO CAR KOŠICE



Marc Gombeer is the Plant Manager and Head of the Volvo Car Košice plant, leading the construction and launch of the state-of-the-art, climate-neutral electric vehicle plant in Valalíky, Slovakia. With over 30 years of international management experience in the automotive industry, he specializes in manufacturing, procurement, and large-scale project execution. Prior to his current role, Marc held prominent leadership positions within Volvo Cars globally, including Vice President of Manufacturing Americas (Volvo Car USA) and Vice President for the Chengdu and Daqing plants in China. He is a strong advocate for transparency, proactive problem-solving, and building highly efficient teams. Under his leadership, the new Košice plant aims to set a benchmark in sustainable premium EV production, with a planned capacity of 250,000 cars annually.

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VOLVO CARS IS BRINGING A MAJOR INVESTMENT TO EASTERN SLOVAKIA. WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE NEW PLANT IN VALALIKY, AND WHAT ARE THE NEXT MILESTONES?

We are progressing at a very strong pace, proving that Volvo Cars is a highly active investor here. Anyone driving past Valalíky can already see the major buildings rising. The construction of all our production halls is now complete. We are actively installing advanced technologies across our facilities, including the paint shop and final assembly. In fact, we have already begun testing in the stamping shop and the body shop, where 600 robots are currently being commissioned. Our schedule is ambitious but strictly managed. We are on track for test production by mid-2026, which will flow into serial production in early 2027. The ramp-up phase will be steep, aiming for a planned capacity of 250,000 premium electric vehicles annually.

YOU HAVE EXTENSIVE GLOBAL EXPERIENCE, HAVING LED MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS FOR VOLVO IN THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA. HOW DOES THAT EXPERTISE HELP IN ESTABLISHING A GREENFIELD SITE IN SLOVAKIA?

Building a new plant from the ground up always comes with unique challenges, whether you are in Daqing, South Carolina, or Košice. One of the main lessons I've carried over is that success relies entirely on the team's ability to proactively anticipate issues. A high-performing team is one that actively looks for what could potentially go wrong, rather than just celebrating what is going right. Transparency is critical—both internally and externally with our suppliers and the public sector. If there is a bottleneck, we identify it early and

solve it collaboratively. We have a clear business case: to deliver a highly efficient facility with an optimal balance of quality, cost, and timelines.

SUSTAINABILITY IS A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND VOLVO'S STRATEGY. HOW IS THE KOŠICE PROJECT CONTRIBUTING TO THESE GOALS?

This facility is designed from the outset to be climate-neutral. It represents the newest and most modern manufacturing hub in the Volvo Cars network. We are exclusively producing premium, next-generation electric vehicles here. This aligns perfectly with our global ambition to become a fully electric car company. Beyond just the final product, the entire construction and operational philosophy—from energy usage to supply chain logistics—is centered on minimizing our environmental footprint.

BUILDING A PLANT ALSO MEANS BUILDING A WORKFORCE. WHAT KIND OF CORPORATE CULTURE ARE YOU ESTABLISHING, AND WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM FUTURE EMPLOYEES?

We are creating thousands of new jobs, and our recruitment is currently underway. We are looking for people across the board, from production operators to highly specialized engineering and management roles. I believe in a culture of ownership and open communication. We all must understand the purpose of this investment by Volvo Cars and carry together the responsibility to make it successful. For this, we invest heavily in the competence of our people through training and coaching. In return for our team's dedication, we provide a modern, inclusive, and technologically advanced working environment where people can genuinely shape the future of mobility. The energy in the region is fantastic, and we are excited to be part of Košice's transformation.

