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Record 21,700 Robots In UK Factories – IFR reports

Frankfurt, September 24th 2020 – **The new World Robotics 2020 Industrial Robots report presented by the International Federation of Robotics (IFR) shows a record of about 21,700 industrial robots operating in factories of the United Kingdom – an increase of 5%. Sales of new robots slow with 2,000 units shipped in 2019. This is 16% less compared to 2018.**

“The United Kingdom has a surprisingly low robot stock for a Western European country in the manufacturing industry,” says Milton Guerry, President of the International Federation of Robotics. “Though the UK’s operational stock hits a new record, other European countries like France, Italy and Germany have between two times and even ten times the stock in operation. The automotive and the general industry need to invest in automation technology to keep up with international competition.”

The automotive industry is by far the largest user of industrial robots in the United Kingdom. At the end of 2019, this industry accounted for 52% of the total operational stock of robots (11,000 units). With 13% of the operational stock, the plastics and chemical industry was the second largest user of industrial robots (2,710 units).

Outlook

Even without the coronavirus, investments in the UK were already dampened because of the currently unclear Brexit situation. If no trade agreement is found until December 31st, 2020, the UK will be treated like a third-party country of the EU. This uncertainty inhibits the necessary modernization of manufacturing production facilities. It will also determine the speed of economic recovery after the pandemic. Brexit might, however, drive robot installations in the UK because immigrants from Eastern Europe are starting to return to their home countries and government policy is to restrict immigration. These immigrants often worked in low-wage jobs, particularly in the food industry as well as in other manufacturing jobs, and might not be easily replaced by human labour in times of low unemployment. Again, short-run figures will be impacted by the COVID-19 situation, which will likely see rising unemployment. When the economy recovers and labour becomes a scarce resource again, the demand for robots might start to rise.

Please find the **FULL INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE** for download here:
<https://tinyurl.com/y2de4dga>

Video for download at: https://youtu.be/Fsn_w_gmHyk

IFR on **LinkedIn** at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-federation-of-robotics/>

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