**UK CAR AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MANUFACTURING** (data for May 2025)

Strictly embargoed until 00:01, Friday 27 June 2025

**Hi-res charts available via Dropbox:** <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/bsdvg1bw3bdn9nwsg3e9i/ABObCoOby9GENFyQXyxwfkE?rlkey=6bz8z7j7uyol576b7uvjb44b1&st=rc88sdn3&dl=0>

**UK vehicle production constraints continue in May**

* New car and commercial vehicle production volumes fall by -32.8% as multiple challenges beset industry.
* US share of exports shrinks prior to government securing new agreement with biggest single market.
* Industry welcomes Industrial Strategy as crucial foundation for recovery, with rapid implementation and action on energy costs critical to restoring competitive edge.

**Friday 27 June, 2025**UK car and commercial vehicle production fell for the fifth consecutive month in May, down -32.8% to 49,810 units, according to the latest figures published today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). Excluding 2020, when Covid lockdowns saw factories shuttered or running at greatly reduced capacity, it was the lowest performance for the month since 1949.1 Year to date, total output is down -12.9% on 2024, to 348,226, the lowest since 1953.2

Car production declined by -31.5% in the month, due primarily to ongoing model changeovers, restructuring and the impact of US tariffs, with 47,723 units rolling off factory lines. Commercial vehicle output was also down sharply, by -53.6% to 2,087 units, as the closure of one of the UK’s CV plants continues to impact comparisons with last year.

Car production for export fell by -27.8%, although a -42.1% fall in output for the smaller domestic market meant exports comprised a larger share of production, up to 78.5%. Shipments to the EU and US, the UK’s two largest markets, fell by -22.5% and -55.4% respectively with the US share of exports declining from 18.2% to 11.3%. This was in large part due to the imposition by the US administration of supplementary 25% Section 232 tariffs on cars from March which depressed demand instantly, forcing many manufacturers to stop shipments. However, with the trade agreement negotiated by government due to come into effect before the end of June, this should hopefully be a short-lived constraint. Declines were also recorded in exports to China and Turkey, down -11.5% and -51.0% respectively.

Export volumes of vans, buses, coaches, taxis and trucks also declined in May, down by -71.7% year on year. The EU remained overwhelmingly the sector’s biggest customer, accounting for 94.7% of exports, although volumes fell -72.1%. As a result, the export share of overall commercial vehicle production fell from 67.9% to 41.4%, with the domestic market now the primary destination for UK commercial vehicle output.3

While overall vehicle output is currently constrained, with the right competitive conditions in place, automotive manufacturing can deliver significant gains for UK jobs, the economy and decarbonisation. With three major new trade deals secured with the US, EU and India, the sector has pledged to build on the government’s landmark Industrial and Trade Strategies published this week. Rapid action on energy costs and an increased ability to access key overseas markets – plus additional measures to energise domestic demand – could put the UK on course to reclaim its place in the top 15 automotive manufacturing nations, for the first time since 2018.4

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive**, said, “While 2025 has proved to be an incredibly challenging year for UK automotive production, there is the beginning of some optimism for the future. Confirmed trade deals with crucial markets, especially the US and a more positive relationship with the EU, as well as government strategies on industry and trade that recognise the critical role the sector plays in driving economic growth, should help recovery. With rapid implementation, particularly on the energy costs constraining our competitiveness, the UK can deliver the jobs, growth and decarbonisation that is desperately needed.”

**Notes to editors**

1 May 1949: 49,287 units

2 Jan-May 1953: 318,306 units

3 Domestic share of CV production has been below 50% for one quarter, since March 2025

4 [Industrial Strategy can be springboard for UK auto success](https://www.smmt.co.uk/industrial-strategy-can-be-springboard-for-uk-auto-success/), 24 June 2025

**About SMMT and the UK automotive industry**

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) is one of the largest and most influential trade associations, representing the automotive industry in the UK.

The automotive industry is a vital part of the UK economy, integral to growth, the delivery of net zero and the UK as a global trade hub. It contributes £93 billion turnover and £22 billion value added to the UK economy, and invests around £4 billion each year in R&D. With 198,000 people employed directly in manufacturing and some 813,000 across the wider automotive industry. Many of these automotive manufacturing jobs are outside London and the South-East, with wages that are around 13% higher than the UK average. The sector accounts for 13.9% of total UK exports of goods, with UK-produced vehicles traded globally, generating £115 billion of trade in total automotive imports and exports.

The UK manufactures almost every type of vehicle, from cars, to vans, taxis, trucks, buses and coaches, as well as specialist and off-highway vehicles, supported by more than 2,500 component providers and some of the world's most skilled engineers. In addition, the sector has vibrant aftermarket and remanufacturing industries. The automotive industry also supports jobs in other key sectors – including advertising, chemicals, finance, logistics and steel.

More detail on UK Automotive available in SMMT's Motor Industry Facts publication at [www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=http%3a%2f%2fclick.agilitypr.delivery%2fls%2fclick%3fupn%3dq-2FLDa0hDiW76FMqhIH6mp5-2FMTGpUEJbaCvc6DuDo36VcR8RSJY3Bb5j6PbOH1m-2BGBroLVjN0i37n2XGzfuZqWeJIleDttsiCosv-2FDCrC6xU-3DNJg9_FQC2LT8GxayrM161hhHVAu067ZxSQQmW4GgEbtFUHlnhSWpWCBkdzj4Kj3fTDj3UcGAZVk99-2Bu1tfX9z9RQO-2B9fp1S7-2Fexh6yUV9D8RBopPF9ftQfnPc7Oo8dF-2F33tfJjdydmYFo-2B3-2FZ4S3f9yiwFBWbAH2cHJTjoEr5feTUeIMrD8UWKTM1I1WBxqo-2BXD3fbqrVstjQgJpCVUtkuS44mATwZi-2FbDS0RLy4Kc-2Fak9mJlNrH2Nah4rxWcpFJUTjG3RiewRLsY-2FAZI6U0gEwzyg9f9kMfDtIVBFWqvytbp6QcWQj2PeXkpCxvRodUjf3F1bU-2FxLse2gxEG9OKOYYxtS1tA2LYKxhRnFj9q53jyGZweydKCFcHXXvlm-2BEtwQKouRDkalUMxcmwIMiSFD018yHvLjhh-2FC8go6WJBD0qJAAoMxe6pRcHATJUuLQLxwba6pecZLrra-2Fg4iylWC-2FWgmiA-3D-3D&c=E,1,shIdwDxv4DuE5O9ruDV8SOnjRMbYMUMBvtuJxpEKqrl46ScL8uWK0I3vTeCBbKaz6ApDgOsYVpzNo1oLsNWSiqoAg1rNS4OJq8sxq_-Rh3TtLukLbc6Kt-UlbkI,&typo=1)

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