

Growth for British car manufacturing in February

British car manufacturing achieved another month of strong growth in February with output up 13.1%, according to figures released today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). Reflecting the growing popularity of UK-built cars both at home and abroad, February's performance puts production for the year-to-date up 10.6% over the same period last year. Output for the domestic market rose by 24.4% in the month, accompanied by a robust 9.1% increase in export production. Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said, "The UK automotive industry's impressive growth continued into February, with demand from both domestic and overseas customers showing no signs of slowing. The outlook for the sector is bright, but much will depend on global political and economic conditions in the months and years to come." (Source: [SMMT](#))

Steady February for CV manufacturing

British commercial vehicle (CV) manufacturing made moderate gains in February with overall output up 1.5% over the same month last year, according to new figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). For the second month in a row, a sharp lift in overseas demand, up 19.9%, offset a 13.2% fall in production for UK buyers. Following a strong January, production for the year so far is up 10.5% over the equivalent 2015 period. Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said, "February's positive CV output, while more subdued than in January, continued to reflect buoyant demand for British-built vans, trucks, buses and coaches. Once again, the ongoing recovery in European markets was the driving factor, with output for export growing for the seventh consecutive month, and up by more than a third for the year to date." (Source: [SMMT](#))

Growth for engine production

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders has released new engine manufacturing figures this week. In February, 230,868 engines were manufactured in the UK, up 11.1% on the same month last year. Production for the UK market rose by 44.4% with 101,967 units produced, while output for export fell by 5.9%. Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said, "February's 11.1% growth in British engine production was the sector's biggest in six months, led by a sharp rise in output for the domestic market. This was in contrast to a moderate fall in units built for export, which still accounts for more than half of overall production. We anticipate a positive year for engine manufacturing, as new facilities continue to ramp up volumes." (Source: [SMMT](#))



New multi-million pound fund to increase number of degree apprenticeships

A new multi-million pound fund to increase the number of degree apprenticeships available to young people has been launched by the Business Secretary Sajid Javid this week. First launched in September last year, degree apprenticeships allow for the study for a full Bachelor's or Master's Degree while working. The new funding will help even more people get a degree while earning in one of the country's top businesses. £8 million will be focused on supporting universities to design and deliver new degree

apprenticeships while a further £2 million will be devoted to encouraging more learners to choose degree apprenticeships. The fund will run for the next 2 years and the process for universities bidding for the funds will be announced in April 2016. [Provisional figures](#) released this week show a dramatic increase in the number of people starting higher apprenticeships. The official figures show that there were more than 30,000 people on higher apprenticeships between August 2015 to January 2016. The figures also show that there are more young people starting apprenticeships, with over 84,000 starts by under 19-year-olds between August 2015 to January 2016. (Source: [BIS](#))

Britain's automotive leaders line up to support UK's first Automechanika

SMMT will bring together more than 600 British automotive companies this summer to help them grow their businesses at the industry's key supply chain networking events. SMMT Open Forum and Meet the Buyer will be held this year at the first ever Automechanika Birmingham trade show in June. Visitors to the Show will be able to attend SMMT's networking event, Open Forum, where they will hear from key industry executives, including Andy Palmer, Chief Executive, Aston Martin; Nigel Stein, Chief Executive, GKN Plc; and Ian Harnett, Director of Human Resources and Global Purchasing, Jaguar Land Rover. They will share their insights into the trends, opportunities and challenges facing the automotive sector. June's Open Forum is set to be the biggest yet, with more than 400 delegates expected to attend. Meanwhile, car makers, including Aston Martin, Ford, General Motors, Jaguar Land Rover, McLaren, MINI, Nissan and Toyota are among the first companies who have signed up to meet potential new suppliers at Meet the Buyer 2016. The invitation-only networking event is run by SMMT in partnership with UKTI's Automotive Investment Organisation (AIO). Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said, "The automotive supply chain is the backbone of automotive manufacturing in the UK, where last year's car production reached a 10-year high. The industry looks set to achieve an all-time record of more than 2 million cars a year by 2020 and to support this we must continue to meet the challenge of re-shoring our domestic supplier base. Automechanika Birmingham gives us a platform to show the world the

opportunities on offer in Britain and help drive supply chain growth. That's why we're behind the Show, and why we're holding our flagship industry events there this year. Providing valuable insight and access to new business will support our members' competitiveness and encourage investment." Automechanika Birmingham takes place from 7-9 June 2016 at the NEC. With more than 550 exhibitors already confirmed, around two thirds of them British, the show is expected to attract thousands of visitors looking for new business opportunities in the UK. For more information and to register for the exhibition and SMMT's Open Forum and Meet the Buyer events in June, please [click here](#). (Source: [SMMT](#))

Week ahead

The House of Commons and the House of Lords will be in recess until 11 April 2016.

