

UK is Europe's second biggest new car market – by a mile

Figures released this morning by the European car manufacturers association, ACEA, confirm that the UK has cemented its position as Europe's second largest new car market, behind Germany. Buyers in this country registered 292,731 more cars than the Italians and 418,558 more than the French last year.

And while Italy and France saw registrations drop 5.9 per cent and 4.9 per cent, the UK market ended the year up 4.3 per cent to a record total. More than 2.56 million new cars left UK showrooms in 2002.

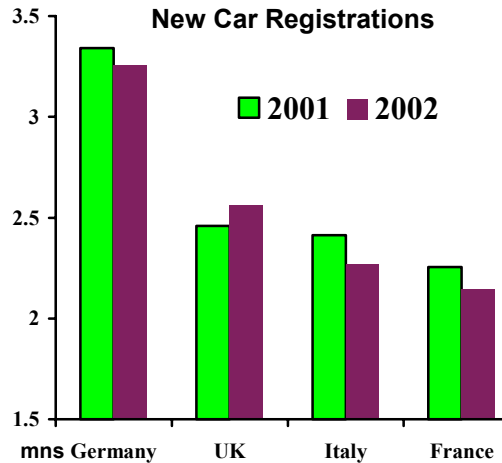
Commenting on the ACEA figures, SMMT chief executive Christopher Macgowan said, 'The UK had another exceptional year for new car sales in 2002. And these latest ACEA figures confirm just how well the market performed in contrast to the rest of Europe. As well as being the second largest market in Europe, we were the only country of the major five markets to see an improvement last year, adding more than 100,000 units to the market.'

Note to editors:

1. New car registrations in the UK reached 2,563,631 units, up 4.3 per cent. The German new car market saw a drop of 2.6 per cent to 3,253,402 units in 2002. Of the other major European markets, Italy was down 5.9 per cent to 2,270,900 units, France fell 4.9 per cent to 2,145,073 and Spain dropped 6.6 per cent to 1,331,878 units.
2. ACEA is the European automobile manufacturers association. Figures for all European countries can be accessed from the ACEA web site at www.acea.be

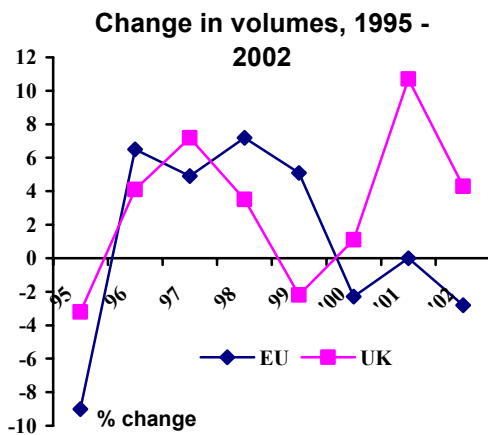
According to figures released today, 14 January 2002, by ACEA:

- Of the five biggest markets in Europe, the UK alone increased sales in 2002
- UK market share was 18.3 per cent in 2002, up 3.4 per cent since 1999



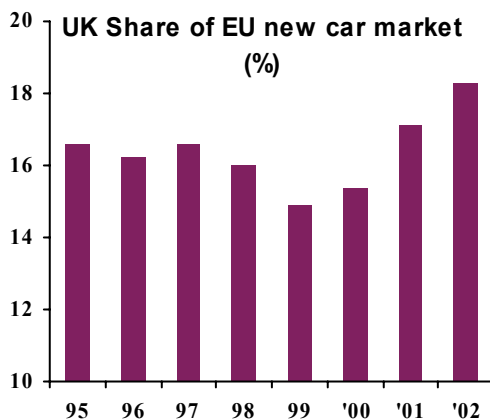
European new market since 1990

- In 1991 and 1992 the UK lagged in fourth spot behind Germany, France and Italy in the European new car market table.
- From 1993 until 2000, the UK improved its position to third spot, except in 1995, when the UK reached second place, beating France by fewer than 15,000 units.



UK growth outpaces EU average

- While overall the EU market has cooled in recent years, the UK market has continued to grow, up by 4.3 per cent in 2002, or 104,862 units to a record high.
- Across the whole of the EU, the market fell by 2.8 per cent last year. This represented the steepest decline since 1995 and the first time new car sales have dropped below 14 million units since 1997.



UK market share reaches high

- The UK took 18.3 per cent of EU new car registrations in 2002. This is up 3.4 per cent from a low of 14.9 per cent in 1999.
- Although UK volumes are expected to cool in 2003, to around 2.38 million units, the market here is expected to remain the second largest in Europe.