

Car sales in Europe fail to show signs of recovery

Despite a gloomy forecast for new-car sales throughout Europe this year, the British market is bucking the trend by being the only one of the top five markets to expand. The European new car market starts the year down 9.6 per cent compared with 2012, although the British market grew 11.5 per cent in the corresponding period, unique among the “big five” national markets (Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy and Spain). Sales in the Netherlands fell significantly in January, down 30.4 per cent on the same period in 2012. According to the latest new car sales analysis from JATO Dynamics, the Volkswagen Golf continues to be Europe’s best-selling car, despite a fall of 17.8 per cent in January sales compared to 2012. Four B-segment cars, the Ford Fiesta, Volkswagen Polo, Renault Clio and Peugeot 208, complete the top 5 – all with total European sales within a few hundred of each other. Opel/Vauxhall, BMW and Mercedes were the only brands in the Top 10 to record increased sales compared to January 2012, up 2.2%, 5.5% and 1.9% respectively. Outside the Top 10, Mazda, with sales up 25.0% thanks to the CX-5 crossover SUV, and Dacia, with sales up by 6.0% thanks to the introduction of the second generation Sandero hatchback and the Lodgy MPV, are the rising stars of the market in January. telegraph.co.uk