

European auto sales up in Sept, first time this year

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The European auto market, pummelled by the coronavirus crisis, rose in September for the first time this year, driven by gains in Germany and Italy, figures showed Friday.

September new car registrations in the European Union rose 3.1 percent from a year earlier to 933,987, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) said in a statement.

Car sales plummeted 55.1 percent in March and then 76.3 percent in April as countries went into lockdown in an effort to curb the outbreak but they have recovered some lost ground as restrictions were relaxed.

The overall picture is very uneven however and the [market](#) as a whole is down very sharply.

Italy new car registrations rose 9.5 percent and Germany, Europe's economic powerhouse added 8.4 percent but France was down 3.0 percent and Spain off 13.5 percent.

For the nine months to September, registrations fell nearly 29 percent on the same period in 2019.

ACEA, which groups 16 top EU automakers, expects the market to shrink 25 percent for the full year.

In January, it said it was expecting the 2020 market to slip 2.0 percent after six years of strong gains brought it back to near record levels.

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