

Europe 2020 auto sales post record fall as virus hits

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New car sales in Europe last year suffered a record fall of nearly 24 percent due to the coronavirus pandemic, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) said Tuesday.

"The EU passenger car [market](#) contracted by 23.7 percent to 9.9 million vehicles as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic," the ACEA said in a statement.

"Containment measures—including full scale lockdowns and other restrictions throughout the year—had an unprecedented impact on car sales across the European Union," it said.

"2020 saw the biggest yearly drop in car demand since records began (in 1990)... all 27 EU markets recorded double-digit declines," it added.

The ACEA said that among the biggest auto markets, Spain recorded the sharpest fall at 32.3 percent for the year, with Italy down 27.9 percent and France 25.5 percent.

Germany, the bloc's strongest economy, dropped 19.1 percent.

For the month of December alone, EU car sales were down 3.3 percent at just over one million vehicles.

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