

European new car sales still below pre-Covid level

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Europe's new car market sold 1.5 million fewer vehicles in the first half of this year compared to the same period in 2019, sector data showed Friday.

With 5.4 million units moved off dealers' lots, the market did gain 25.2 percent from the Covid-hit first half of 2020, but remained well behind the nearly seven million sales racked up in the first six months of 2019, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association reported.

On a one-year comparison, i.e. the first half of 2021 versus the same period in 2020, Italy posted a jump of 51.4 percent for the strongest gain, while Belgium reported the worst result with a drop of 16.3 percent.

The Volkswagen group that includes brands such as Audi, Porsche and Skoda, accounted for 26.4 percent of the market this year, while Stellantis, which owns Fiat, Peugeot and Jeep, among others, was close behind, at 23.1 percent.

Among other brands, BMW-Mini, Hyundai-Kia and Toyota increased their [market share](#), while Ford and Daimler slipped back.

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