



Fewer Cars Produced Last Month by British Factories Than in Any July Since 1956

Description

UK: Demand for new cars may not have fallen too far over the past year of lockdowns, but staff absences caused by the 'pingdemic' and problems in supply chains means car manufacturers have recently been struggling to keep up. In July this year, the U.K. car industry produced fewer cars than in any other July since 1956. The *Guardian* [has the story](#).

U.K. carmakers made 53,400 vehicles in July, a 37.6% drop when compared with the same month in 2020, according to data from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), the industry's lobby group. ...

Manufacturers around the world have struggled to keep producing because of problems in their supply chains, most notably in the months-long delays to computer chips, or semiconductors, that are used to control everything from windscreen wipers to electric car batteries within the car.

Some analysts expect the chip shortages to last until next year, holding back the recovery of the car industry.

U.K. production over the course of 2021 is up by 18% compared with the first seven months of 2020, when car factories were shut for long periods during the first national lockdowns. Yet at 552,400 units, it is 29% below the 774,800 it reached over the same period in 2019 before the pandemic.

No large carmaker has been spared, and buyers are being forced to wait months for some new cars. German carmaker Volkswagen last week warned that it may have to scale back production further, after Japanese rival Toyota said that it would cut output by 40% in September.

Jaguar Land Rover and Nissan, the two largest manufacturers in the U.K., have both previously been forced to cut production because of shortages.

During June and July manufacturers also had to contend with increased levels of employee absences, as more and more workers were 'pinged' by their NHS apps when they had come into contact with people who later tested positive for coronavirus. ...

Mike Hawes, the SMMT's Chief Executive, said U.K. carmakers still faced "extremely tough conditions".

"While the impact of the 'pingdemic' will lessen as self-isolation rules change, the worldwide shortage of semiconductors shows little sign of abating," he said.

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