

15 January 2010

## **UNCERTAIN TIMES AHEAD FOR EUROPEAN CAR SALES**

- **Full year 2009 European new car sales only 0.7% down vs. 2008**
- **Italy ends December 16.4% up**
- **Total European December sales over one million units**
- **VW Golf is Europe's best-selling car**

A highly unusual year in new car sales has ended on a high, but there are growing signs of uncertain times ahead, according to the full-year 2009 analysis by the world's leading provider of automotive data and intelligence, JATO Dynamics.

While Fiat, Ford and Volkswagen performed strongly in 2009, with low-CO<sub>2</sub> European models, their sales rises have been in markets artificially stimulated by unprecedented government and manufacturer incentives that have maintained demand over the past 12 months.

"The figures we've seen over the past year tell a story of how incentives have driven certain markets through these tough times – but this story is not necessarily set for a happy ending," says David Di Girolamo, Head of JATO Consult.

JATO's analysis shows a strong finish in December for Italy, France, Great Britain and Spain, all of which recorded double digit percentage sales increases, vs. the same period 2008 – a period in the height of the recession, but without the support of scrappage incentives.

However, JATO's analysis also shows a significant reduction of December sales in Germany (-4.6%), the one major European new car market to have closed its scrappage incentive scheme. This continues a trend first spotted by JATO in November 2009.

It is supported by the situation JATO has analysed in Eastern Europe, where a lack of scrappage schemes and rising VAT has significantly restricted new car demand. For example, Latvia and Lithuania ended 2009 down 72.9% and 66.2% respectively, whilst even higher volume, Western-style markets such as Finland, Denmark and Hungary have seen demand drop between 20% and 60%.

“The concern is that these market conditions could be reflected in Western Europe in 2010,” suggests Di Girolamo. “For example, VAT is already rising in the UK and the remaining national scrappage schemes are scheduled to close in the early part of this year. This makes for uncertain times in new car sales across some of the key Western European markets.”

### Top 10 Models

Make & Model	Dec_09	Dec_08	% Change Dec	FY_09	FY_08	% Change FY
VOLKSWAGEN GOLF	38,394	35,110	+9.4%	571,838	461,539	+23.9%
FORD FIESTA	34,222	23,905	+43.2%	472,091	327,828	+44.0%
PEUGEOT 207	27,432	23,760	+15.5%	367,160	406,718	-9.7%
RENAULT CLIO	27,145	17,250	+57.4%	312,925	335,920	-6.8%
VOLKSWAGEN POLO	24,452	20,424	+19.7%	282,780	276,077	+2.4%
OPEL/VAUXHALL CORSA	24,012	26,496	-9.4%	351,807	360,761	-2.5%
FORD FOCUS	22,044	20,315	+8.5%	309,134	364,226	-15.1%
FIAT PANDA	21,695	14,379	+50.9%	298,914	223,441	+33.8%
FIAT PUNTO	21,595	16,013	+34.9%	323,536	279,115	+15.9%
OPEL/VAUXHALL ASTRA	20,892	21,127	-1.1%	275,638	320,878	-14.1%

The above data is provided by JATO Consult, the company's bespoke consulting service which offers customers access to its unique data and provides solutions and advice to meet a wide range of automotive business challenges. For more information visit [www.jato.com](http://www.jato.com), or email [consult@jato.com](mailto:consult@jato.com).

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#### Editorial note: JATO Dynamics background

JATO was founded in 1984 and provides the world's most timely, accurate and up-to-date information on vehicle specifications and pricing, sales and registrations, news and incentives. The company has representation in over 43 countries, providing unique local market expertise. The JATO client base includes all of the world's volume vehicle manufacturers, giving them the ability to react to short-term market movements, plan for long-term developments and ultimately to meet consumers' needs. JATO's data has also been adapted for consumer use in motoring web portals where customers can see the advantages and disadvantages of a specified model against any other while major leasing companies use JATO data to drive the vehicle quotation process. Visit JATO at [www.jato.com](http://www.jato.com).

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