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2012 proved extremely challenging for European new car market

- **2012 European new car sales were down 7.9% (over a million units less) compared to 2011**
- **Volkswagen's Golf is Europe's best-selling car in 2012; fourth year in a row despite a decrease in sales during 2012**
- **All the 'Big Five' European markets, apart from Great Britain, ended 2012 with a reduction in sales compared to 2011**

According to the latest new car sales analysis from JATO Dynamics, the world's leading provider of automotive intelligence, the Volkswagen Golf continues to be Europe's best-selling car, despite a sharp drop of 11.1% in 2012 sales compared to 2011. Even with a 12.7% drop the Ford Fiesta overtakes the Volkswagen Polo for second place in 2012, while the Volkswagen Polo comes in third, with sales down 19.8%.

JATO's key analysis of the market:

- *Great Britain was the only 'Big Five' market to experience growth in 2012 with sales increasing 5.3%*
- *Despite a 4.4% decrease in 2012 sales, Volkswagen remains Europe's most popular brand*
- *Audi and Mercedes were the only brands in the Top 10 to end 2012 with increased sales, up 3.4% and 0.6% respectively*

December proved to be a difficult month for the German market as sales fell by over 40,000 units, down 16.4% compared to December 2011. This was attributed to fewer working days in December compared to 2011, meaning Germany ended the year with a decrease of 2.9%.

Out of the other 'Big Five' European markets, only Great Britain saw consistent growth over the course of 2012 courtesy of the increase in private sales. France, Italy and Spain all experienced significant fall in sales, ending the year with decreases of 13.9%, 19.8% and 13.3% respectively.

Greece and Portugal continue to feel the effects of ongoing economic challenges with sales down 40.2% and 34.3%.

Sales by market

Country	Dec_12	Dec_11	% Change Dec	Yr_12	Yr_11	% Change Yr
Austria	18,421	23,358	-21.1%	336,010	356,145	-5.7%
Belgium	22,319	48,763	-54.2%	486,732	572,211	-14.9%
Croatia	1,313	2,563	-48.8%	31,323	41,487	-24.5%
Cyprus*	916	1,164	-21.3%	10,445	13,475	-22.5%
Czech Republic	12,784	15,019	-14.9%	173,379	173,282	+0.1%
Denmark	10,702	15,296	-30.0%	170,624	169,833	+0.5%
Estonia	1,043	1,135	-8.1%	19,424	17,070	+13.8%
Finland	6,414	6,892	-6.9%	111,170	126,041	-11.8%
France	160,314	187,817	-14.6%	1,898,771	2,204,229	-13.9%
Germany	204,331	244,501	-16.4%	3,082,504	3,173,634	-2.9%
Great Britain	123,557	119,188	+3.7%	2,044,609	1,941,253	+5.3%
Greece	3,641	5,535	-34.2%	58,296	97,528	-40.2%
Hungary	5,091	3,276	+55.4%	53,431	45,442	+17.6%
Iceland*	496	263	+88.6%	7,882	5,038	+56.5%
Ireland	316	371	-14.8%	79,498	89,896	-11.6%
Italy	88,149	112,824	-21.9%	1,410,302	1,759,385	-19.8%
Latvia	796	1,060	-24.9%	10,665	10,980	-2.9%
Lithuania	842	1,033	-18.5%	12,165	13,234	-8.1%
Luxembourg	3,072	2,642	+16.3%	50,398	49,881	+1.0%
Norway	9,377	11,557	-18.9%	139,373	139,677	-0.2%
Poland	21,067	27,016	-22.0%	272,639	274,328	-0.6%
Portugal*	11,787	11,258	+4.7%	100,789	153,486	-34.3%
Romania	4,828	7,721	-37.5%	66,436	81,707	-18.7%
Serbia*	1,642	1,844	-11.0%	21,986	28,795	-23.6%
Slovakia	5,091	6,379	-20.2%	67,966	67,864	+0.2%
Slovenia	2,489	3,280	-24.1%	48,648	58,417	-16.7%
Spain	52,630	66,233	-20.5%	701,026	808,132	-13.3%
Sweden	27,108	25,402	+6.7%	279,899	304,984	-8.2%
Switzerland	28,524	29,701	-4.0%	324,963	316,821	+2.6%
The Netherlands	18,306	17,244	+6.2%	502,489	555,813	-9.6%
Grand Total	**847,366**	**1,000,335**	**-15.3%**	**12,573,842**	**13,650,068**	**-7.9%**

* Denotes estimated figures used for December 2012

Amongst the top ten brands, only premium German brands Audi and Mercedes ended 2012 with no decrease in sales. This positive performance is primarily due to new and refreshed models such as the new Audi A3, Q3, A6 and the Mercedes B-Class and M-Class.

The overall German market decrease in December affected the European totals last month for other German brands, with Volkswagen and Opel/Vauxhall down 18.8% and 25.8% respectively.

Commenting on the findings, Gareth Hession, Vice President, Research at JATO said: "Despite the challenging economic conditions across Europe and at home, there is clearly still appetite for new offerings from premium German brands. Other brands are also benefiting from new products such as Hyundai and Kia for example, where their latest vehicles show that consumers continue to look for innovation as well as value for money."

Top 10 Brands

Make	Dec_12	Dec_11	% Change Dec	Yr_12	Yr_11	% Change Yr
VOLKSWAGEN	101,360	124,822	-18.8%	1,613,913	1,687,846	-4.4%
RENAULT	57,590	76,393	-24.6%	816,933	1,048,648	-22.1%
FORD	55,038	75,976	-27.6%	953,174	1,095,609	-13.0%
OPEL/VAUXHALL	53,883	72,574	-25.8%	838,206	993,877	-15.7%
BMW	53,617	51,247	+4.6%	641,378	641,964	-0.1%
PEUGEOT	51,270	60,445	-15.2%	795,839	913,661	-12.9%
MERCEDES	44,885	47,566	-5.6%	598,301	594,479	+0.6%
CITROEN	41,405	53,124	-22.1%	674,688	773,472	-12.8%
AUDI	40,034	48,263	-17.1%	705,739	682,728	+3.4%
FIAT	37,937	43,887	-13.6%	582,995	687,125	-15.2%

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VOLKSWAGEN	1,613,913	1,687,846	-4.4%
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OPEL/VAUXHALL	838,206	993,877	-15.7%
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Following the launch of the new Peugeot 208 in 2012, it finished the year with sales of over 155,000 units. Renault's new fourth generation Clio has also been well received, with the model claiming third place for December 2012 and increasing its share of the market.

The BMW Series 3 has also performed very well last month with sales up 20.9% compared to last year. It ended the year with a sales increase of 8.4%.

Hession commented: "The Peugeot 208 has been climbing steadily up the sales chart since its launch earlier in 2012, claiming second place for the month behind the Golf is a very strong performance, demonstrating PSA's ability to deliver a highly competitive and desirable product."

Top 10 Models

Make & Model	Dec_12	Dec_11	% Change Dec	Yr_12	Yr_11	% Change Yr
VOLKSWAGEN GOLF	22,698	33,239	-31.7%	431,742	485,824	-11.1%
PEUGEOT 208	19,407	13	-	159,945	198	-
RENAULT CLIO	18,758	20,151	-6.9%	244,280	295,627	-17.4%
VOLKSWAGEN POLO	18,532	26,125	-29.1%	287,828	358,726	-19.8%
FORD FIESTA	16,497	24,715	-33.3%	306,405	350,850	-12.7%
OPEL/VAUXHALL ASTRA	16,021	20,902	-23.4%	232,645	291,218	-20.1%
OPEL/VAUXHALL CORSA	15,481	23,860	-35.1%	265,297	316,254	-16.1%
BMW SERIES 3	15,171	12,549	+20.9%	175,308	161,660	+8.4%
FORD FOCUS	15,033	18,636	-19.3%	241,862	283,702	-14.7%
RENAULT MEGANE	14,391	17,832	-19.3%	199,167	241,483	-17.5%

Make & Model	Yr_12	Yr_11	% Change Yr
VOLKSWAGEN GOLF	431,742	485,824	-11.1%
FORD FIESTA	306,405	350,850	-12.7%
VOLKSWAGEN POLO	287,828	358,726	-19.8%
OPEL/VAUXHALL CORSA	265,297	316,254	-16.1%
RENAULT CLIO	244,280	295,627	-17.4%
FORD FOCUS	241,862	283,702	-14.7%
OPEL/VAUXHALL ASTRA	232,645	291,218	-20.1%
NISSAN QASHQAI	207,885	208,431	-0.3%
RENAULT MEGANE	199,167	241,483	-17.5%
VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT	195,617	235,852	-17.1%

For more information visit www.jato.com, or email jatoteam@firstlightpr.com

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About JATO

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 40 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 intelligence 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.

Major leasing companies use JATO's intelligence to drive the vehicle quotation process.

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