

# Passenger car market extremely weak in first quarter of 2021



The number of new passenger car registrations in Germany fell by 6 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2021. The Federal Motor Transport Authority registered 656,500 new registrations. The first quarter of 2021 was 16 percent below the 10-year average. There has never been a worse first quarter since statistics began. Of the international brands, 245,900 passenger cars were newly registered in the first quarter. The market share of the VDIK members in this period is 37 percent (previous year: 39 percent).

In March 2021, there is nominally an increase of 36 percent to 292,400 new registrations. However, the background to this is solely the extremely weak month in the previous year. March 2020 was marked by a dramatic slump following the start of the first lockdown. At that time, registration offices were also largely closed.

Reinhard Zirpel, president of the Association of International Motor Vehicle Manufacturers, explained, "The growth in March exists only on paper. In reality, we have been dealing with an extremely weak passenger car market since the beginning of the year. The industry would not by any stretch of the imagination have expected the first quarter of 2021 to be even gloomier than the already

extremely poor prior-year period. In many regions, car dealers are now even having to do without appointment shopping again. This is making the situation increasingly difficult.”

The private market was particularly weak. Private new registrations fell by 13 percent in the first quarter of 2021, dropping their share to 32 percent (previous year: 34 percent). The level of private new car purchases was thus 25 percent below the long-term average.

Alternative drive systems recorded significant growth rates. According to the KBA, 30,200 new passenger cars with battery-electric drive systems (up 252 percent) were registered in March. In addition, 35,600 new plug-in hybrids (up 278 percent) hit the roads. In the first quarter as a whole, 142,800 new e-vehicles were registered.

The market for diesel-powered passenger cars lost 5 percent in March. A total of just over 158,000 diesel passenger cars were newly registered in the first quarter, down 29 percent. The share fell to 24 percent (previous year: 32 percent).

The commercial vehicle market recorded an increase of 5 percent in the first quarter, with over 89,000 new registrations. Heavy commercial vehicles over 16 tons showed above-average growth of 10 percent.

	March		January - March	
	+/- (%)	Share of total car market (%)		+/- (%)
<b>Passenger car</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>-6</b>
- VDIK-brands	38	38,6		-9
- german brands	34	59,5		-5
- other brands	54	1,9		46
<b>Electric vehicles (total)</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>173</b>
- purely battery-powered	192			149
- plug-in-hybrids	278			195
<b>Commercial vehicle</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>5</b>

Source: KBA, VDIK

