



WIG

The Whitehall & Industry Group  
connecting the sectors



## 'Economic Growth & Prosperity' Series

COVID-19 Sector Updates: Automotive

8 September, 2020

### Expert Insight

We were joined by Ian Howells, Senior Vice President at Honda Motor Europe to discuss the impact that COVID-19 has had on Honda and the Automotive sector. Ian touched on many points, including:

- The crisis impacted the automotive sector on a global scale. The earliest impacts disrupted supply chains before the outbreak reached Europe– the recovery of the UK is linked to global conditions.
- The combination of a focus on employee safety, lockdown measures, lower consumer demand and economic uncertainty have resulted in a sharp decrease in UK car sales and manufacturing.
- Manufacturing in May 2020 decreased to -95.4% year on year. By July 2020, year on year, this was down to -20.8%. Plants are now up and running, with social distancing introduced. Capacity has been reduced slightly but overall, Honda are now manufacturing at target levels.
- A recovery has started as dealerships reopened and social distancing measures were clarified, but there remains ongoing uncertainty. The UK Government has a significant role to play in ensuring that the UK automotive sector remains productive and competitive, while meeting decarbonisation ambitions.



MAY 2020

NEW CAR MANUFACTURING  
TOTAL: 5,314

-95.4%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



HOME 1,054

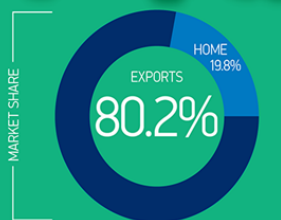
-95.2%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE

EXPORT 4,260

-95.5%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



JULY 2020

NEW CAR MANUFACTURING  
TOTAL: 85,696

-20.8%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



HOME 13,434

-37.1%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE

EXPORT 72,262

-16.8%

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



### Our members' questions

Attendees from WIG's cross-sector membership tuned in live, and posed a number of important questions. Some of the key issues raised included:

- The pre-COVID-19 expectations for growth across Honda's range of vehicle types.
- Learnings around transitioning the workforce back to the workplace.
- If COVID-19 has given the sector a unique opportunity to approach the 2035 Electric Vehicle Ambition from a new starting point or if the priority recouping losses.
- Possible public and private sector collaboration to help accelerate Electric Vehicles to ICE baseline more efficiently and effectively.
- Honda's involvement with the innovation consortia and how they collaborate effectively with other organisations.

WIG members can listen to Ian's presentation [here](#)

To see our full programme of webinars, visit [www.wig.co.uk](http://www.wig.co.uk)