

Electric Vehicle Sales Surge in the UK Following Strong Start to 2025

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Battery electric vehicle sales in the United Kingdom jumped by over a third in the first six months of 2025, according to early figures, signalling renewed momentum in the transition to cleaner transport. Preliminary data from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) showed a 34.6% increase in electric vehicle registrations, totalling 224,838 units.

The spike comes after June recorded the strongest overall car sales for that month since 2019, with 191,200 new vehicles sold, an annual rise of 6.8%. Electric vehicles made up nearly a quarter of those sales, with almost 47,400 units sold. Analysts attribute the June surge in part to the release of an updated Tesla Model Y, which continues to be the UK's top-selling electric vehicle despite controversies surrounding its founder, Elon Musk. Ford also saw notable growth in electric sales, according to data from New AutoMotive.

While sales are rising, the broader UK car market continues to grapple with challenges. Vehicle production dropped sharply in May, hitting its lowest point for that month since 1949. The decline followed tariff uncertainties, including a 25% import tax imposed by the United States earlier this year. A recently signed UK-US trade agreement has provided temporary relief by reducing the rate to 10% for up to 100,000 UK-made vehicles exported to the US.

Electric vehicle sales have been bolstered by widespread discounting as manufacturers work to meet the government's zero-emission vehicle mandate, which sets a target of 28% of new car sales being electric in 2025. So far, electric vehicles account for 21.6% of all new registrations. Although short of the target, rule "flexibilities" mean manufacturers may remain compliant. Industry observers have warned, however, that current discount-driven sales may not be sustainable in the long run.

Beyond passenger cars, demand for electric vans has also climbed significantly. Sales of electric vans rose by 50% in the first half of the year compared to 2024, now representing one in every ten new vans sold. Industry advocates say this upward trend reflects a growing shift among consumers and businesses toward electric mobility.

According to Dan Caesar, chief executive of Electric Vehicles UK, the strong performance in June shows a maturing market. He noted that consumers are increasingly drawn to the long-term savings and improved options in the electric vehicle sector.