New car sales increase significantly during August…

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Ford’s Fiesta remained Britain’s best-selling car during August…

New car registrations in Britain soared last month on the eve of

an EU change in law which would ban models not meeting the tougher WLTP emissions test.

Robin Roberts reports…

Thousands of models across Europe were heavily discounted by dealers backed by car makers anxious to clear unsold stock of the NEDC tested models.
This push and the fact some car makers are struggling to build cars which fully meet the WLTP requirements is likely to lead to a shortage of models registered this 68-plate month and possibly for a few months, when sales are traditionally lower in the winter.
Some car makers have planned and prepared better than others but the sheer volume of cars made by some means they have issues with compliance.
Today's figures in the UK went up 23.1%, according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders with 94,094 new cars were registered. It was the highest August figure since the start of the century.
Demand was up across the board, with consumers and fleets boosting year-on-year registrations by 23.3% and 19.7% respectively, while the smaller business sector rose 166.4%, equivalent to an uplift of around 1,500 units against August last year.
Superminis remained the most popular buy, followed by small family and dual purpose cars, with the luxury saloon and city car segments recording the most notable growth, up 120.8% and 39.6%.
Within the figures, the UK's growing range of hybrid, plug-in hybrid and pure electric cars continued to attract buyers, with a record one in 12 people choosing one. Demand surged by a substantial 88.7%, with the sector accounting for 8.0% of the market its highest ever leve as billions of pounds of manufacturer investment help deliver more ultra-low and zero emission models to the market.

August Top Ten

1. Fiesta
2. Golf
3. Polo
4. Kuga

5. BMW 3 Series
6. Leon
7. Jazz
8. Swift
9. Qashqai
10. Sportage

- The number of UK drivers who would consider buying an electric car as their next vehicle has doubled in the last year from 15% to 30%, according to the Britain Under the Bonnet report from Close Brothers Motor Finance.
- A further two fifths (40%) said they would consider buying one in the future, just not as their next vehicle purchase.
- Being environmentally friendly, the cost of running the vehicle and the driving experience were voted the advantages of electric cars.
- Over two thirds of drivers (67%) also say they are now less likely to purchase a diesel car in future, after recent scandals.