**UK CAR AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MANUFACTURING** (data for January 2026)

Strictly embargoed until 00:01, Friday 27 February 2026

**Hi-res charts available via Dropbox :** [**https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/89p0tkb446592oy3r2kng/AC2d4Yb\_N6wImZt70GmhCUs?rlkey=5u3kduf0acwc7q9er3u7y8epp&st=6e0c4avd&dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/89p0tkb446592oy3r2kng/AC2d4Yb_N6wImZt70GmhCUs?rlkey=5u3kduf0acwc7q9er3u7y8epp&st=6e0c4avd&dl=0)

**Vehicle production down in January amid weak global markets**

* Vehicle production declines -13.6% in January, with 67,415 cars and commercial vehicles leaving factories.
* Car output falls -8.2% to 65,249 units, while CV volumes drop -68.6% to 2,166 units.
* Car exports decline ‑10.1% to 51,369 units, reflecting weak markets beyond Europe, with domestic demand down just 84 units.

**Friday 27 February, 2026** UK vehicle production fell -13.6% in January, according to the latest figures published today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). Factories produced 67,415 vehicles, comprising 65,249 cars and 2,166 commercial vehicles (CVs), the former declining by -8.2% compared with January last year, while CV output fell for the 10th consecutive month, down -68.6% following a major plant restructuring.

The loss was driven by a decline in exports across both cars and CVs, with shipments down -10.1% and -75.0% respectively, amid weak demand in key global markets. Production for overseas buyers still accounted for the majority (77.8%) of vehicle output, with the EU remaining the largest global market for UK plants, taking 62.5% of car exports and 94.0% of CV shipments.

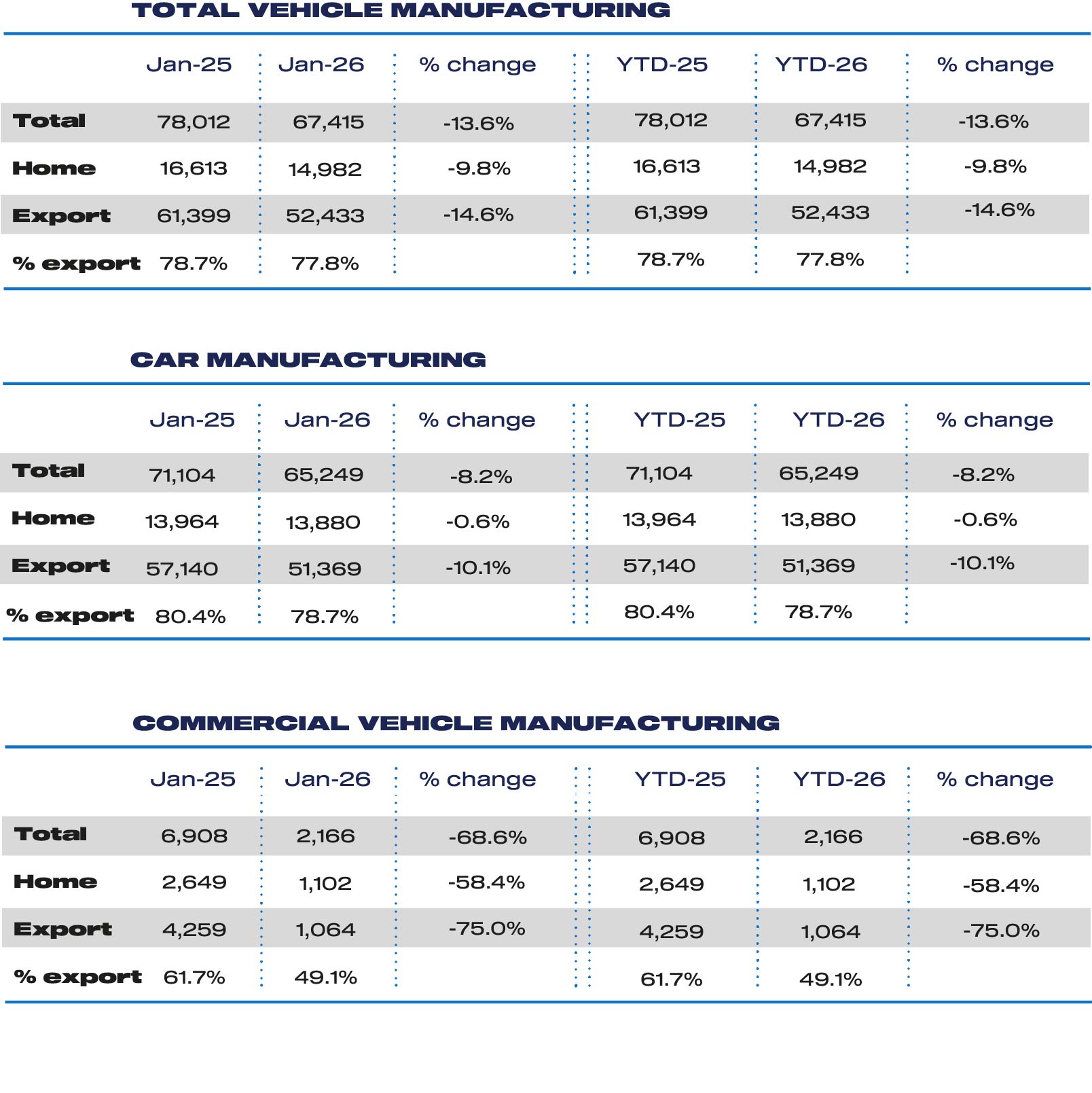
The US remained the second largest importer of UK-built cars with a 14.1% share, followed by Japan (2.7%), China (2.5%) and Turkey (2.4%). While car exports to the EU rose 7.8%, reinforcing the need for free and fair trade and market access across the Channel, shipments to all other top five markets fell by double digits.

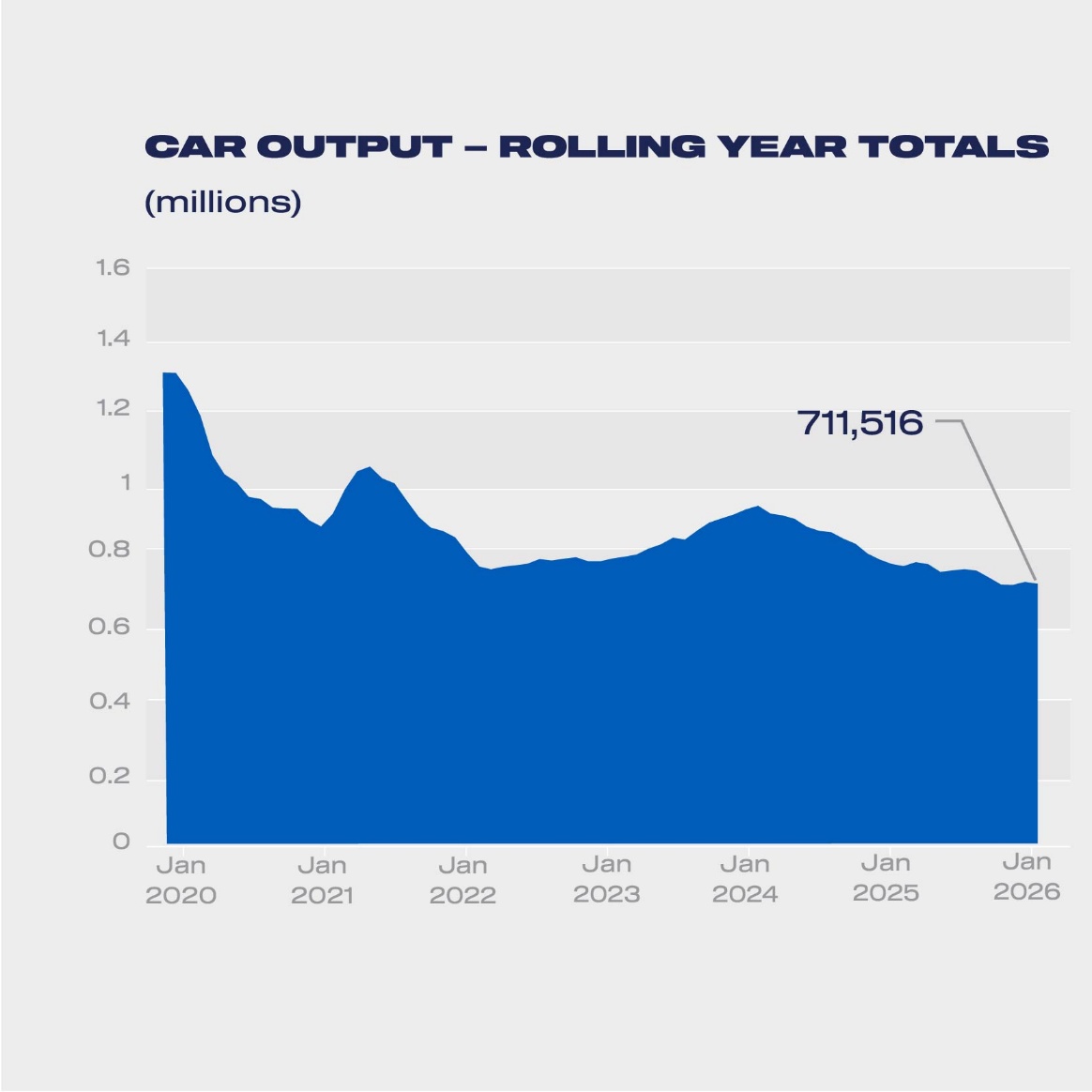
CV production for the UK also fell steeply, by -58.4%, whereas car output for the domestic market was broadly flat, down -0.6% to 13,880 units with just 84 fewer vehicles turned out. Production of battery electric (BEV), plug-in hybrid (PHEV) and hybrid (HEV) cars, meanwhile, fell -10.6% to 26,854 units, although they still accounted for 41.2% of car output.

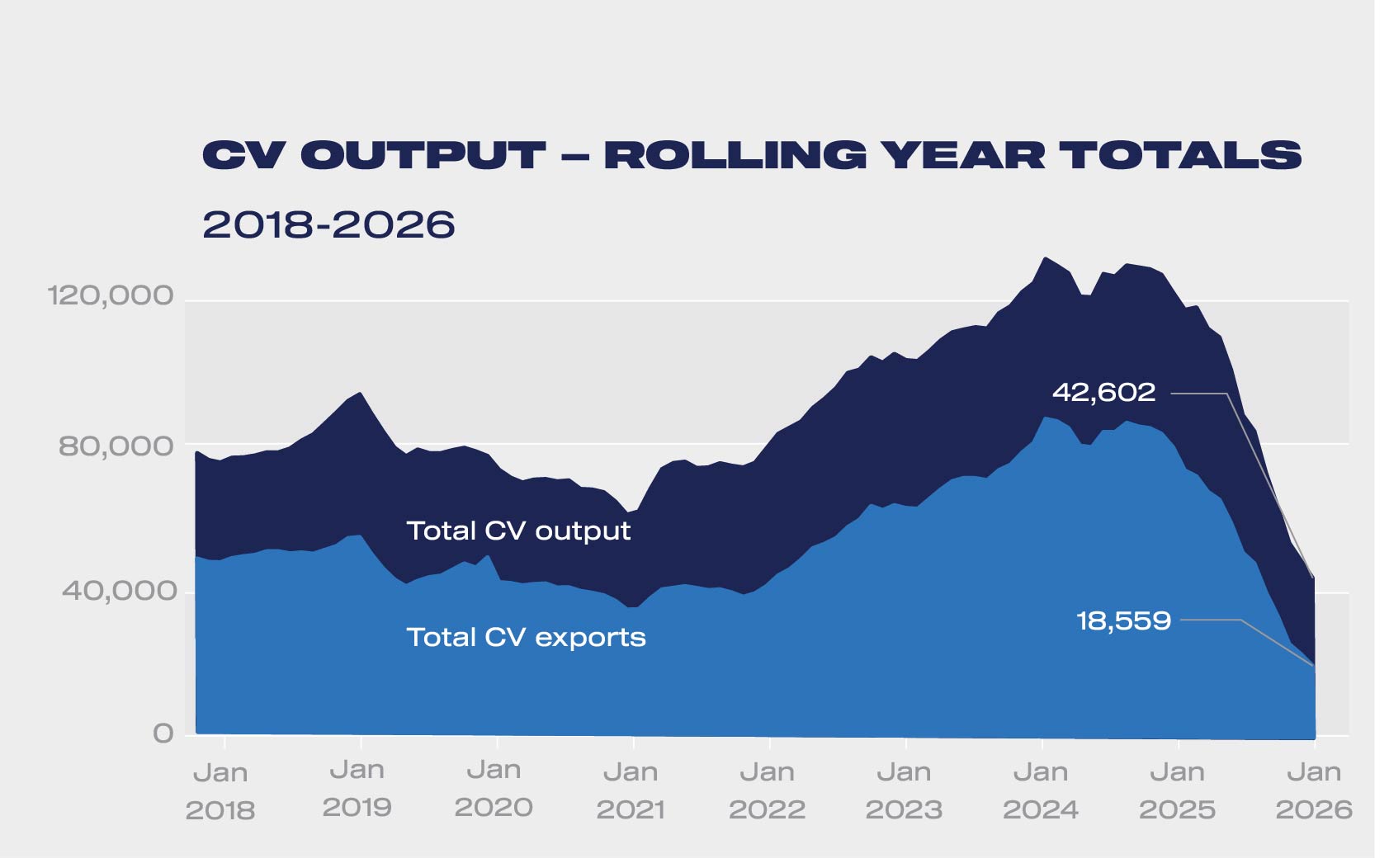
Volumes look set to increase this year as next-generation EV production ramps up in Sunderland and with a further seven new EV models planned for rollout across the UK this year. The latest independent outlook now expects overall car production to rise by more than 10% to some 790,000 units in 2026. Combined car and light CV production is anticipated to reach 824,000 units – with the potential to reach one million by 2027, provided new model launches are on time and the right economic conditions for investment exist.1

Stability in global trading conditions, notably with the EU and US, and the delivery of measures outlined in government’s Industrial and Trade Strategies, remain critical to maintaining competitiveness and unlocking future growth.

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said,** “Weak exports to markets beyond Europe amid soft demand delivered a disappointing start to the year for UK vehicle manufacturing. It reinforces the need for a forward-looking trade agenda that secures existing preferential access – notably with the biggest market on our doorstep given protectionist ‘Made in Europe’ proposals – and builds new ones with markets worldwide. That must be combined with more competitive conditions for UK manufacturing – lower energy costs, a strong and sustainable domestic market, and specific support for our supply chain.”



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**Notes to editors**

The next release will be published on Friday 27 March 2026

1 - Based on independent production outlook produced by AutoAnalysis in November 2025 – cars and light vans only.

**About SMMT and the UK automotive industry**

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) is one of the largest and most influential trade associations, representing the automotive industry in the UK.

The automotive industry is a vital part of the UK economy, integral to growth, the delivery of net zero and the UK as a global trade hub. It contributes £92 billion turnover and £25 billion value added to the UK economy and invested £5 billion in R&D, with 183,000 people employed directly in manufacturing and some 796,000 in total across the wider automotive industry. Many of these automotive manufacturing jobs are outside London and the South-East, with wages that are 8% higher than the UK average. The sector accounts for 13.4% of total UK exports of goods with more than 140 countries importing UK produced vehicles, generating £108 billion of trade in total automotive imports and exports.

The UK manufactures almost every type of vehicle, from cars, to vans, taxis, trucks, buses and coaches, as well as specialist and off-highway vehicles, supported by more than 2,500 component providers and some of the world's most skilled engineers. In addition, the sector has vibrant aftermarket and remanufacturing industries. The automotive industry also supports jobs in other key sectors – including advertising, chemicals, finance, logistics and steel.

More detail on UK Automotive available in SMMT's Motor Industry Facts publication at [www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/](http://www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/)

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