

## French car sales drop 21.7% in first quarter

PARIS: French cars sales fell by 21.7% in the first quarter of 2012, figures from the Committee French Manufacturers (CCFA) showed on Monday (2 April 2012).

Sales fell by 23.5% in March, following drops of 20.7% and 20.2% in February. The sharp drop is in large part explained by strong sales a year earlier boosted to a 10-year high by a French "cash-for-clunkers" scheme that subsidised new car purchases to boost the economy.

A total of 507,089 vehicles were sold in the first quarter of 2012, down from 647,454 in the same period a year earlier. French car manufacturers PSA Peugeot Citroen and Renault, which account for over half of the market, each saw their sales plunge by 30%.

Foreign car makers overall experienced a smaller drop of 9.3%. Top-end manufacturers BMW and Mercedes were unaffected, posting sales increases of 8.4% and 24.2%.

*Source: AFP*