

World Manufacturing Production in May 2021

After more than a year of COVID-19 related disruptions, global manufacturing production is on the path of recovery since the beginning of 2021. In May 2021, manufacturing production continued increasing for all country groups in yearly comparison, similar to the previous month, but at a decreasing rate. It remains to be seen if sustainable output growth can be achieved soon, considering new coronavirus variants threatening economic prospects in many parts of the world.

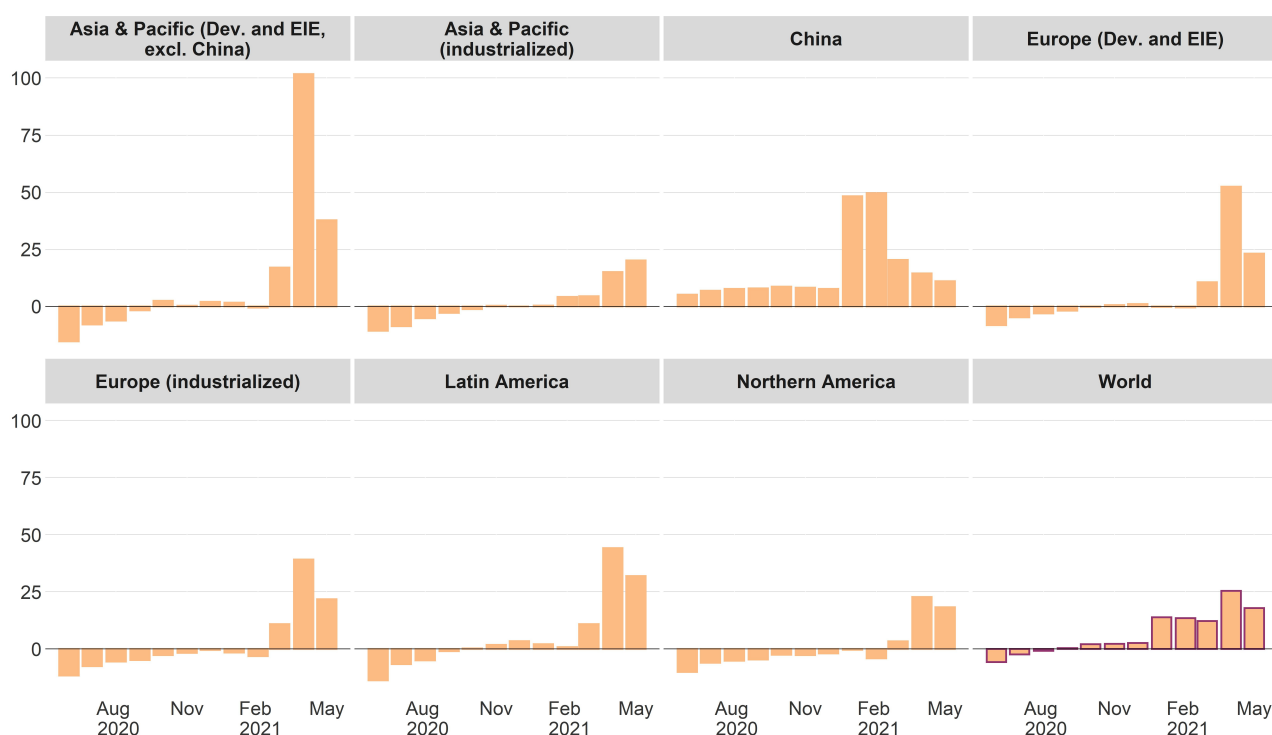


Figure 1: Growth of manufacturing output for selected country groups, percentage change compared to the same month of the previous year

The gradual recovery of global manufacturing production (Figure 1) led to a year-over-year output growth of 17.9 per cent in May 2021, following two-digit increases since January 2021. China exceeded its production level from the previous year by 11.1 per cent, while industrialized economies recorded a growth of 20.1 per cent. Output in developing and emerging industrial economies (Dev. and EIE) excluding China increased by 35.2 per cent in year-over-year comparison, after a noticeable growth of 74.4 per cent in the preceding month, mainly attributable to the ongoing recovery in India. Moreover, all regions reported two-digit year-over-year growth rates, with further boosts expected in the upcoming months due to the phasing down of containment measures and the effect of a low comparison base from the dampened production levels of the previous year.

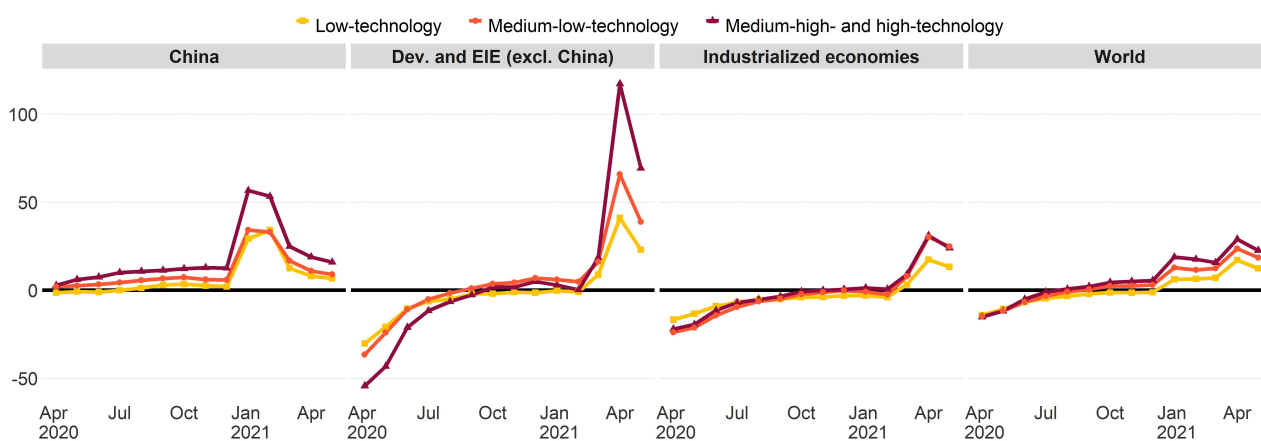


Figure 2: Growth rates of manufacturing production grouped by technological intensity for selected country groups

Data on industries grouped by technological intensity (Figure 2) reveal that medium-high and high-technology industries continue to recover faster from the crisis than industries with lower technological intensity. Many of the medium-high- and high-technology industries that play a major role in global manufacturing, such as motor vehicles, basic pharmaceuticals or computer, electronic and optical products, have registered considerable annual growth rates for several months (Figure 3). Output of motor vehicles recorded high year-over-year growth rates over the last two months, after a considerable negative trend already since pre-pandemic times.

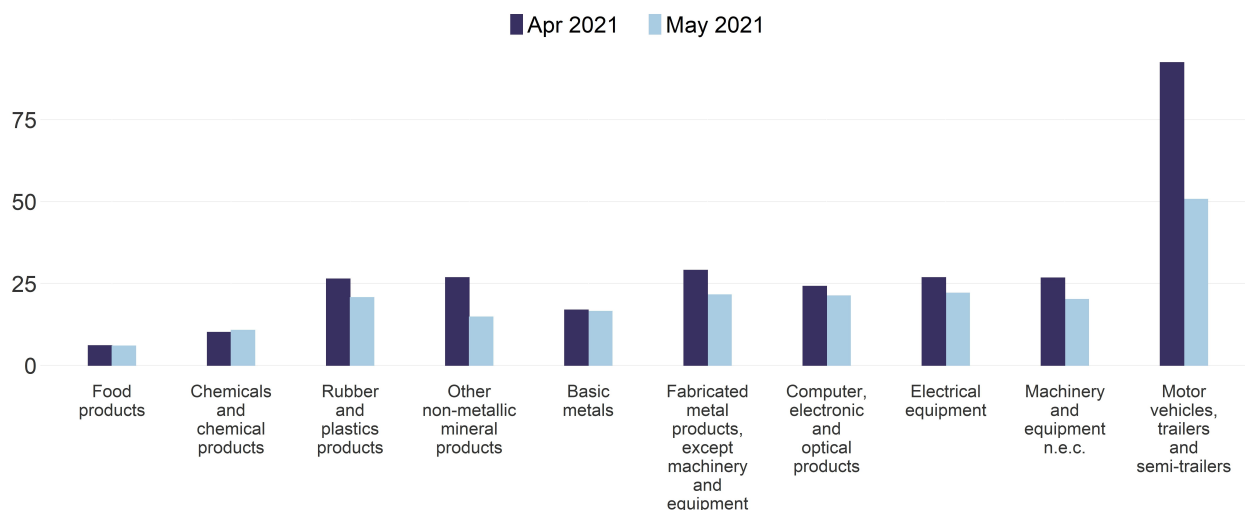


Figure 3: Estimated global growth by industry, percentage change compared to the same month of the previous year

Methodological note: Preliminary index numbers of industrial production (base 2015) are derived from national statistical sources. UNIDO conducts seasonal adjustment where necessary and appropriate. The most recent [monthly](#) and [quarterly](#) data are available on the UNIDO Statistics data portal. The detailed data according to country groups used in this overview can be downloaded [here](#). Country coverage for this monthly report is limited due to data availability, with the aggregate of world manufacturing output including around 50 countries and a share of approximately 80 per cent of global manufacturing output. Information on the methodology of index numbers can be found in a [methodological document](#) as well as in a [document on seasonal adjustment](#).