



Highly successful year for the European leisure-vehicle industry

Sales of leisure vehicles in the European market exceeded 200,000 in 2018

Stuttgart, 14 January 2019

Leisure vehicle holidaying remains one of the most popular pastimes of Europeans. Sales in the European leisure-vehicle market rose by just under 7 percent last year, with sales of new leisure vehicles breaking the 200,000-unit mark for the first time in over a decade. Sales in almost all national markets rose as well. Further growth is expected for the year ahead.

The European leisure-vehicle market registered an extraordinary level of success in 2018. Relative to the prior year, sales of new leisure vehicles in Europe rose by 6.7 percent, to 202,611 units – the first time since 2007 that sales have broken the 200,000-unit mark. As in past years, Germany was the sales leader, with 71,186 new leisure vehicles sold – a 12.5 percent rise over the prior year. In France, which is the third largest leisure vehicle market in Europe, a robust sales increase of 8.6 percent (32,002 vehicles) was also registered. With 35,743 new leisure vehicles sold, the UK remains the second largest market in Europe – although sales declined by 6.2 percent relative to the prior year. “Uncertainty over the economic repercussions of Brexit appears to be having a dampening effect on consumer demand in Britain,” said Jost Krüger, General Secretary of the European Caravan Federation (ECF). However, sales of new leisure vehicles rose in all national markets, apart from the special case constituted by Britain, and a marginal sales decrease in Switzerland. Sales in Germany and Belgium reached new records. The most impressive rates of sales growth were registered in the key southern-European markets, Italy and Spain, where sales, building on the momentum from the prior year, rose by 17.3 percent and 16.9 percent respectively. The strong sales growth registered in 2017 in the four Scandinavian markets continued there, with growth rates ranging from 6.6 to 10.5 percent.

Two-digit increases in new motor caravan sales in most European markets

The robust growth in sales of new motor caravans was in the two-digit range in most markets, with the exception of Switzerland, where sales declined slightly. Sales growth for new motor caravans amounted to 12.8 percent (124,931 vehicles), a new record. This achievement was mainly attributable to the numerous annual motor-caravan sales records that were broken in various European markets in 2018 – to wit, in Germany, France, Sweden (7,218 units), Spain (4,857 units), Belgium (4,613 units), The Netherlands (1,998 units) and Austria (1,480 units). Germany was once again the sales leader, with 46,859 new motor caravans sold, a 15.5 percent increase over the prior year. Sales growth was also strong in France, the second largest market, where 23,878 new motor caravans were sold, an 11.9 percent rise. The key southern-European markets, Italy and Spain, also registered impressive motor-caravan sales growth amounting to 19.9 and 22.9 percent respectively. Sales of motor caravans were also brisk in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark, where sales increases amounted to 12.7, 14.8, 13.2 and 70.6 percent respectively.

Demand for caravans kept pace with last year's

Demand for caravans was once again high in the European leisure vehicle market in 2018. On the heels of a sizeable increase in sales amounting to more than 7 percent in 2017 – the largest increase in more than three decades – the high rate achieved in the prior year was nearly matched, with 77,680 new vehicles sold. The slight decline of 1.7 percent is mainly attributable to the 11.9 percent decline in sales registered in the UK. With 24,327 new caravans sold, for the first time Germany supplanted the UK as Europe's strongest sales market, registering a robust increase of 7.2 percent. Sales of new caravans in France, which is Europe's third largest market, amounted to 8,124 vehicles, which was on a par with last year's sales.

“We regard 2018 as another highly successful year for the European leisure vehicle industry, given the fact that sales were the best they've been in over a decade. Leisure-vehicle holidaying is a more popular and appealing activity than ever before among Europeans. We are expecting sales to remain just as strong in the coming year, especially when it comes to motor caravans,” said ECF General Secretary Krüger.

This press release contains estimated figures as at 9 January 2019.

For further information about caravanning, please visit our web sites:

www.e-c-f.org or www.caravaning-info.de.

The European Caravan Federation

The European Caravan Federation (ECF), which is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, is an umbrella organization that represents the interests of the national associations of the European leisure vehicle industry. François Feuillet and Jost Krüger are, respectively, president and general secretary of the ECF. Founded in 1964, the ECF is composed of 12 national organizations, each of which represents the interests of the manufacturing arm of the leisure vehicle industry in each of the EU member states. The ECF is the lobbying organization, Brussels, for the European leisure vehicle industry. In this capacity, the ECF lobbies EU legislators on political, economic, and technical matters that are of concern to ECF members. The ECF's head office is located in Zurich, Switzerland.