



Caravanning continues to be on a roll in Europe: sales up for new motor caravans and caravans

The European leisure-vehicle industry achieves its best first half-year since 2007

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During the first six months of this year, sales of new motor caravans and caravans rose again in Europe. Between January and June, a total of nearly 132,000 new leisure vehicles were sold in the European market. This represents a 3 percent rise relative to the first half of last year and the strongest sales since 2007. Sales increases were registered in both leisure-vehicle segments and in the majority of national markets. Industry observers are predicting that business will be brisk for the year as a whole.

Leisure-vehicle holidaying is more popular among Europeans than ever before. During the first half of this year, 131,866 new leisure vehicles were sold in Europe – an increase of 3.1 percent over the first two quarters of the prior year. Sales increases were registered in both leisure vehicle segments and in the majority of national markets. Apart from Germany, which with more than 52,000 new leisure vehicles sold constitutes the largest leisure vehicle market in Europe, sales were particularly robust in Spain (up 30.9 percent), Switzerland (up 13.1 percent), Belgium (up 9.0 percent), Denmark (up 10.0 percent), and Austria (up 8.6 percent). In France, which is the second largest leisure vehicle market in Europe, sales amounted to 19,823 units – a decline of 0.6 percent, but nearly on a par with the excellent results of the prior year. Having experienced substantial sales growth last year, sales of new leisure vehicles in Italy, Norway and Sweden declined by 2.0 percent, 12.4 percent and 49.7 percent respectively. The severe drop in Sweden is largely attributable to the introduction of a new tax regime. Owing to weak consumer demand resulting from uncertainty about the economic impact of Brexit, 2018 was one of the most dismal years in the history of the British leisure vehicle market. But despite the Damocles' sword of Brexit currently hanging over the UK, sales in this market (the third

largest leisure vehicle market in Europe) have recovered, registering a 1.5 percent increase for the first half of 2019.

European sales of new motor caravans during the first half of this year were once again robust, and exceeded the record set in the prior year by 2.8 percent, with a total of 84,785 new motor caravans sold. Sales were up in nearly all of Europe's national markets, with the exception of Italy (down 2.4 percent), Norway (down 16.6 percent), and Sweden (down 64 percent). With sales of new motor caravans amounting to 33,370 vehicles and a sales increase of 14.1 percent, Germany remains by far the largest motor caravan market in Europe. France, where 15,683 vehicles were sold, is the second largest market, followed by the UK, where 9,037 vehicles were sold – an increase of 5.7 percent, Brexit notwithstanding. Likewise noteworthy are the brisk sales in Spain (up 28.9 percent), Switzerland (up 19.4 percent), Belgium (up 10.7 percent), and Austria (up 12 percent).

Sales growth is proving to be even more robust in the caravan segment. This evolution is all the more noteworthy given the fact that sales in this segment were down during the first half of 2018. Germany is also the largest market for new caravans. The 17,125 new vehicles sold there represent an impressive rise of 10.3 percent relative to the same period last year. Business was also brisk in Spain (sales up 36.2 percent), Switzerland (sales up 4.7 percent), Belgium (sales up 2.8 percent) and Austria (sales up 3.2 percent). Sales in the pivotal Dutch market, the third largest in Europe, were also up (by 0.8 percent), while France, the fourth largest market, fell just short of its excellent 2018 sales results. In the UK, where 10,094 new caravans were sold during the first half of the year, sales declined for this segment (which tends to react more strongly to fluctuations in the business climate), in light of the economic uncertainty wrought by Brexit. But despite the 2 percent sales drop in Europe's second largest caravan market, overall caravan sales in Europe rose by 3.6 percent for the first half of the year.

“In light of the solid sales growth registered by the European caravanning industry for the first half of this year, it would seem that sales growth in this sector is continuing unabated,” said Jost Krüger, General Secretary of the European Caravan Federation (ECF). “The fact that

Brexit is on the horizon is hurting sales in the UK caravan sector, while a new tax regime in Sweden had a severely negative impact on sales in this sector during the first half of the year. But apart from these hiccups, we remain optimistic and are expecting excellent sales results for the year as a whole. And as for next year, we feel there is additional sales-growth potential," Mr. Krüger predicted.

This press release contains estimated figures as at 8 August 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 in 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.