



2019 – an excellent year for the European caravanning industry

Sales of motor caravans and caravans rose more than 4 percent for the year

Stuttgart, 13 January 2020

Caravanning holidays remain one of the most popular pastimes of Europeans. The European caravanning industry registered sales growth amounting to more than 4 percent in 2019. The more than 210,000 new motor caravans and caravans sold over the course of the year represent the second-best result in the industry's history. Sales in almost all national markets were up as well, and further sales growth is expected for the coming year.

This past year was the second most successful in the history of the European caravanning industry. With 210,315 new motor caravans and caravans sold in 2019, this is the first time since 1980 that European caravanning industry sales have exceeded the 210,000 mark. This represents a 4.1 percent rise relative to the prior year. As in past years, Germany was the sales leader in Europe. With 80,863 newly registered vehicles, the German caravanning sector not only registered robust sales growth amounting to 13.6 percent, but also had the third best year in its history. Sales records were also set in Switzerland, Belgium and Austria, where sales of new motor caravans and caravans reached 6,927, 6,276 and 2,681 units respectively. Spain registered a whopping sales growth rate of 25.3 percent, with 8,376 vehicles sold – this market's strongest showing since 2007. Sales were also up in The Netherlands, Denmark, and Finland, by 5.9 percent, 12.4 percent and 11.4 percent respectively.

Although sales were extremely brisk in the medium sized motor caravan and caravan markets, they were stagnant in the largest ones, namely France and the UK, where sales of new vehicles amounted to 31,496 and 33,741 units respectively. The shadow cast by Brexit was one reason for the nearly 4.1 percent sales decline in the UK, whereas France achieved results nearly on a par with its excellent showing last year (sales off 1.6 percent). Sales in 2019 declined substantially in Norway and Sweden, following a number of years of exceptionally strong sales growth. "In Sweden, a significantly higher tax on newly registered motor caravans came into force in mid-2018, which is why many consumers decided to purchase a new motor caravan

earlier than they might otherwise have done. But this reduced the number of such purchases made in Sweden in 2019 – in all likelihood a situation that will right itself going forward,” notes Jost Krüger, General Secretary of the European Caravan Federation (ECF).

Record sales of new motor caravans

Apart from Sweden, Norway and Italy, where sales of new motor caravans were down by 42.4 percent, 13.8 percent and 2.7 percent respectively, sales of new motor caravans rose throughout Europe, and in most markets in the double digits. Overall, sales of new motor caravans rose by 5.5 percent in Europe, to 131,956 vehicles – an all-time record. This is the fourth consecutive year in which the previous year’s sales record for motor caravans was topped; and overall, sales of these vehicles have nearly doubled since 2010. This development is attributable to the numerous instances of record sales in European caravanning markets, particularly in Germany, where sales rose by 15.1 percent to 53,922 vehicles – making Germany the sales leader on the European continent. Record sales were also achieved in Spain, with 5,977 vehicles sold for an increase of nearly 25 percent; Belgium, with 5,062 vehicles sold (and where sales exceeded 5,000 motor caravans for the first time); The Netherlands, where 2,097 vehicles were sold despite Holland being mainly a caravan market; and Austria, with 1,699 vehicles sold. Of particular significance for the European caravanning industry is the sales growth achieved in France and the UK, Europe’s second and third largest markets respectively. The British market grew by 4.5 percent with 15,349 units sold, while the French market ended the year close to the good prior year’s level with 23,768 vehicles sold (down 0.5 percent).

Demand for caravans in Europe continues to rise

The popularity of caravans among Europeans remains high. Following a slight dip in 2018, sales of new caravans rose by 1.7 percent in 2019 to 78,359 new caravans. In Germany, the sales leader in this segment as well, a total of 26,941 caravans rolled out of dealer showrooms – a robust 10.7 increase over the prior year. The UK, Europe’s second largest caravan market (18,392 vehicles sold), took another substantial sales hit in 2019 amounting to -10.2 percent. “Uncertainty concerning the ramifications of Brexit appears to be having a dampening effect on consumer demand, which hits caravan sales in particular, since this segment tends to be

particularly vulnerable to a softening economy,” Mr. Krüger noted. In France, the third largest caravan market in Europe, sales were off by 4.9 percent relative to the prior year (7,728 vehicles sold). However, sales growth amounting to 6.1 percent (7,034 caravans sold) in the pivotal Dutch market was a welcome development, and sales of new caravans sold there exceeded 7,000 units for the first time since 2012. Likewise noteworthy was the whopping 31.2 percent sales growth registered in Spain and the substantial 8.2 percent sales increase in the Danish market.

“Given the fact that our industry had the second-best sales year in its history, it is fair to say that 2019 was an extraordinarily successful year for the sector. Going on holiday in a caravan or motor caravan has hardly ever been so popular – despite the sales declines we are seeing in a handful of markets owing to special circumstances or one-off effects. And so we are confident that we’ll be seeing further sales growth in the coming year, particularly in the motor caravan segment. It’s highly likely, we feel, that sales of new motor caravans and caravans will exceed the number of 220,000 in 2020,” Mr. Krüger noted. This also means that the all-time record back in 1980 might well be within reach.

This press release contains estimated figures as at 10 January 2020.

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

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

The European Caravan Federation

The European Caravan Federation (ECF) is an umbrella organization that represents the interests of the national associations of the European caravanning 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 caravanning industry in each of the EU member states. The ECF is the lobbying organization in Brussels for the European caravanning 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.