

The European leisure vehicle market: back on an even keel

Manufacturers, dealers and suppliers optimistic for 2010

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The European leisure vehicle market got back on an even keel during the first months of this year (January-April 2010). With sales of approximately 26,950 motor caravans (a 0.6 percent increase) and approximately 30,500 caravans (a 2 percent decrease), only about 470 fewer leisure vehicles were sold in Europe than during the first four months of 2009. Thus, as leisure vehicle manufacturers, dealers and suppliers had anticipated at the beginning of the year, the downward trend appears to be over and done with.

Motor caravan sales in France, which is Europe's largest market in this segment, rose 11.2 percent in the first four months of the year to 7,536 vehicles. Sales were also robust in Scandinavia, where motor caravan sales rose 28.6 percent in Sweden (891 vehicles) and even 31.8 percent in Norway (551 vehicles), in both cases compared to the same period of 2009.

Caravan sales in Great Britain outperformed all other European markets during the first four months of the year, with approximately 8,970 new caravans rolling out of dealer showrooms, for a 9.4 percent increase over the same period of 2009.

“Although we're sure to see some more repercussions of the crisis during the remainder of this year, we feel that the problems we faced last year are now behind us,” said Hans-Karl Sternberg, general secretary of the European Caravan Federation (ECF). Last year, sales in the European leisure vehicle market were down 18.2 percent.

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