

European recreational vehicle sales take a nosedive

Sales down 18.5 percent for 2009.

Frankfurt, 15 February 2010

Both caravan and motor caravan sales dropped sharply in all European markets over the course of 2009. Caravan sales were down 16.9 percent, while motor caravan sales were off 20.5 percent.

This sales decline is largely attributable to the current economic crisis, which has devastated all of Europe's recreational vehicle markets, some of which are afflicted by economic problems of their own at the national or regional level. Specifically, the recreational vehicle markets in Norway, Sweden and Great Britain have been severely hurt by euro exchange rates, while Italy and Spain have been hit by economic and political events that have also contributed to the poor performance of the recreational vehicle sector in these countries. Sales in all five of these markets were particularly weak. The virtual disappearance of loans for new vehicles also took a heavy toll, forcing dealers to sell off their inventories and in some cases making it impossible to give trade-in customers what they wanted.

Brighter prospects for the coming year

The European recreational vehicle industry is well aware of the fact that the current economic crisis will continue to depress sales in the coming year as well. Nonetheless, all concerned are hoping that the dismal performance of last year will not be repeated this year, and that sales will be more robust than in 2009.

In view of the continuing economic downturn, sales declines on the order of five percent are anticipated for 2010, with some countries such as France projecting a slight sales increase relative to last year. Industry actors are by

and large convinced, however, that recreational vehicle production will pick up steam this year in response to the lower sales declines that are expected.

For further information visit www.e-c-f.com.