

ALL EYES ON THE EU FOR FUTURE CYCLING MARKETS, SAY INDUSTRY INSIDERS



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There's been no lack of upbeat news for the European cycling industry this autumn: The use of bike sharing in Paris broke records exceeding 165,000 daily rides; a similar service in Bilbao – Bilbalobizi – crossed the milestone of 1,000,000 rides in mere six months; e-Bike production in Sweden went up five-fold from 2,000 in 2017 to 10,000 in 2018; Company bicycle leasing saw explosive growth in Belgium, up from close to none still two years ago to 40,000 units leased today; Twice as many Belgians cycle to work today compared to five years ago; the e-Cargo bike market skyrocketed in Germany with 39,200 units sold in 2018, outselling electric cars and representing a 80% annual market growth; just to mention a few.

These results may hint why UK bike and parts exports are up a whopping 52% to the Netherlands year-on-year, and indeed up 25% into China where many bikes are manufactured and shipped back to the EU. Reporting figures from most of the world's global bike makers show that Europe is the world's hottest bike market, driven in part by e-Bike sales, but also by a confidence that is leading to product and supply chain investment.

This global interest also shows why the UK bike industry is unlikely to disentangle itself from the EU no

matter how Brexit works out – the largest and fastest growing cycling region is going to remain just across the Channel, both as a source and a market.

That is also why bike companies are investing more and more time and resources in tracking the much wider policies of the EU and EU member governments, because those are seen to be the key drivers for market growth in the next ten years. The names that are signed up to Cycling Industries Europe in its first year of existence don't just include the brands under the Accell, PON and Cycleurope stables, they include all the largest international bike sharing companies, parts giants Shimano and SRAM, cargo bike makers, consultancies and innovators keen to influence and track market movements internationally.

So, what are we seeing as the big opportunities?

Seven years ago, the new Juncker Commission arrived in Brussels and was told by the Member States to concentrate on "jobs, jobs, jobs". Now all eyes are on a new European Commission leadership and its two top priorities focusing on addressing climate change and making the EU fit for digitalisation, both of which can have a big impact on our market.

President-elect Ursula von der

Leyen wants Europe to become the world's first climate-neutral continent: "This is also a long-term economic imperative: those who act first and fastest will be the ones who grasp the opportunities from the ecological transition. I want Europe to be the front-runner. I want Europe to be the exporter of knowledge, technologies and best practice".

This presents huge opportunities for the cycling industries if we can prove that our products are adapted for the new markets and that investment in infrastructure continues to flow in the main EU markets. What we do for cycling in the EU will be the test case for the world.

Positioning bikes and e-Bikes as transport, not just leisure, is number one on our list. Transport accounts for 30% of all CO₂ emissions in the EU and is the main cause of air pollution in cities. Road transport is responsible for 70% of all greenhouse gas emissions of the sector, largely caused by 1.2 billion cars moving single occupants to and from work. As part of its efforts to reduce CO₂ emissions, the EU plans to cut transport emissions 60% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels in accordance with the Paris Agreement. Electric mobility is one of the key instruments for change and we are fighting in every forum available to



the bike industry to maintain the electrically assisted bike as the number one choice of EU consumers, even if the car industry and new entrants like scooters are also fighting for that political recognition.

Also supporting city, governments and EU investments in public transport will be the so called “first and last mile” opportunity for cycling. Shared mobility systems such as bike sharing have the ability to fill the first and last mile gap from transit hubs, together with e-Bikes for longer distances. Cargo bikes provide an excellent alternative to diesel vans helping to reduce emissions, congestion and make city centres car-free and we are working with EU research funds to develop this market in 14 countries.

Emerging from the EU digital agenda are big plans to reduce car use by connected mobility purchased through App-based ticketing and routing systems. Mobility as a Service (MaaS) could encourage commuters to choose from a mix of bikeshare, folding bikes and scooters with electric buses integrated with other forms of public transport. Some interesting pilots are underway, residential properties are offered MaaS as a daily mobility provider in Sweden, making the need for building parking slots for cars obsolete. And in

Finland, company car benefit is replaced by work tickets linked to MaaS. In Munich, a new housing development created an e-mobility service for residents to rent electric vehicles for their day-to-day travel needs. MaaS can be a real game changer, but our bikes have to be connected and visible in the MaaS services, which means investment in

“THE E-CARGO MARKET SKYROCKETED IN GERMANY, EVEN OUTSELLING ELECTRIC CARS.”

international digital standards for connected cycling and fighting for our visibility within the systems on offer.

Cycling is entering policy-making agendas as a clean, sustainable, connected, smart mobility option helping Europe and the world to tackle some of the fiercest unrepresented challenges we are facing from climate emergency, air and noise pollution, to traffic congestion and obesity caused by inactivity.

Collaboration and joint action at European and international level is key to success in many of these areas.

Alliances are currently being built between the cycling industry and key stakeholders to strengthen our influence and advocacy power to place modal shift in transport modes high on the political agenda and contribute to EU legislation and spending programmes.

Every company that joins Cycling Industries Europe is another source of expertise and influence for our lobby work in all the EU countries, plus the surrounding countries and markets that reflect EU influence. Being able to bring together companies with suppliers, customers, experts and academics means that all the different bits of the industry are learning off each other and strengthening our influence.

Our CIE Expert Group on Bike Share has kicked off with eight leading operators and suppliers working to drive the sector forward. This month we are launching an Expert Group for Cargo Bikes and Cycle Logistics, followed by an Expert Group on Connected and Smart Cycling before the year ends.

If you are interested in joining the Expert Groups, or to learn more about Cycling Industries Europe feel free to contact Lauha, or go to cyclingindustries.com for more information. ●