



Motorcycle leisure, tourism, sports and related activities

This document is one of a series of papers which are part of ACEM's position on "Sustainable Mobility". It is important to bear in mind that this is not a "stand-alone" but rather part of a wider set of documents that underpin the motorcycle industry's vision on sustainable mobility at the horizon 2030+.

The motorcycle leisure sector - freedom on two wheels

Leisure can be defined as "a quality of experience or as free time. Free time is time spent away from business, work, job hunting, domestic chores, education, as well as necessary activities such as eating and sleeping"¹. Leisure activities not only serve for pure pleasure but are a counterbalance to everyday working life. A balanced life is important to maintain personal performance and free time activities are of special importance to preserve physical and mental fitness.

Leisure mobility accounts for more than 50% of the yearly distance travelled by people in developed countries² and motorcycles are used for leisure and tourism purposes about 70% of the time³. In this context, motorcycles are typically used for short trips on the weekend to visit scenic places or long-

1 Kelly, John (1996) Leisure, 3rd edition. Boston and London: Allyn and Bacon

2 Grubbe, Magnus and Otto, Siegmund (2011) Impacts and special drivers of Leisure Mobility; Institute for Ecological Economic Research (IÖW)

3 Mot France / KANTAR-TNS (2019), Enquête parc auto 2018, volume 2RM, juin 2019

distance travelling (touring) on holidays. They are also used to get to motorcycle sport events, dedicated fairs, brand-specific events or just for meeting up with friends and like-minded people. Due to their versatility, motorcycles are also used on a daily basis to commute to and around urban centers often prone to dense or heavy traffic.

Motorcycling requires effort to maintain balance, shift, brake, control the clutch, battle headwinds, etc. This ultimately strengthens muscles and supports mental health. As it is a constant resistance exercise, riding a motorcycle also burns calories⁴.

However, people do not only use their motorcycles just for the pure pleasure of riding, but some may also be fascinated by the technology, or simply love to maintain, repair and customize them. This, in addition to the other key aspect of our vehicles' use, going from point A to point B in an efficient, reliable, safe and affordable manner.

Leisure and motorcycle tourism

Motorcycling is to a large extent an important form of tourism, focusing on the pleasure of riding. Many people use their motorcycle for short rides in the evening or on weekends to relax, or simply to enjoy the adventure. Motorcycle day-rides can be taken at any time and can help escape from the routine of everyday life and find pleasure in the joy of riding.



Many spend most of their holidays on motorcycle tours or long-distance travel. To a large extent, the route becomes the destination. This has led to the development of dedicated Infrastructure to support motorcycle tourism, which is already very well established in major European countries. Motorcycle riders have been an important customer segment, for many years, at numerous European tourist sites. A significant number of restaurants and hotels in scenic areas make most of their money from

⁴ Burr, Jamie F.; Jamnik Veronica and Gledhill Norman (2010) A cross-sectional examination of the physical fitness and selected health attributes of recreational all-terrain vehicle riders and off-road motorcyclists

motorcyclists. "Bikers Welcome" signs can be found at many hotels and restaurants close to popular tourist attractions across Europe.

Research on the economic impact of motorcycle tourism at local level has been limited but a study in the US has shown that most motorcycle tourists spend more than US\$ 100 per day when visiting and touring an area. In Europe, a recent study by Oxford Economics estimated that in 2019, spending by spectators at motorcycle events alone, have stimulated a €376 million gross value-added contribution to European GDP. All in all, motorcycling tourism, sports and leisure related activities have been a lucrative market in rural areas as motorcyclists enjoy making the most of all the nature, character and amenities of the places they visit when they get off the beaten track⁵:

The social and economic significance of motorcycle sports

There is a broad range of sports involving motorcycles, which vary according to the discipline, the competitive level and the kind of vehicle driven. Major disciplines are road racing with its very popular MotoGP, Moto2, Moto3 World Championship series, as well as a wide range of off-road racing with various competition formats ranging from trial to motocross and enduro, to name just a few of the most popular ones.

The most famous motorcycle sporting event and the one that attracts most spectators in Europe is the MotoGP (Motorcycle Grand Prix), the premier championship of motorcycle road racing. Another much appreciated discipline is the Superbike World Championship (WSBK), a motorsport road racing series for modified production motorcycles.



⁵ D. Sykes, K. Gibson Kelly, (2015), Motorcycle drive tourism leading to rural tourism opportunities; Kaplan University

These motorcycle races attract hundreds of thousands of tourists and spectators as well as millions of fans worldwide. An estimated 5 million spectators attended major motorcycle sporting events across the EU-27 and the UK in 2019. Moto GP alone attracted 1.8 million spectators to its 12 European races in the 2019 season and the 13 WSBK races were followed by an audience of over 650,000.

Spectators at major motorcycle races, coming from all over the EU, spend an average of €250 on tickets, merchandising, food, travel and accommodation when attending an event⁶. This spending stimulates economic activity in the tourism sectors and their supply chain and plays an important role in local economies.

While attending motorsport events is true entertainment for many, motorsport as such remains the environment for R&D of future technologies. In that context, the use of carbon-neutral fuels in motorsports will not only showcase carbon-neutral mobility with internal combustion engines but will also stimulate the further development of carbon-neutral fuels for a wider application in road transport.

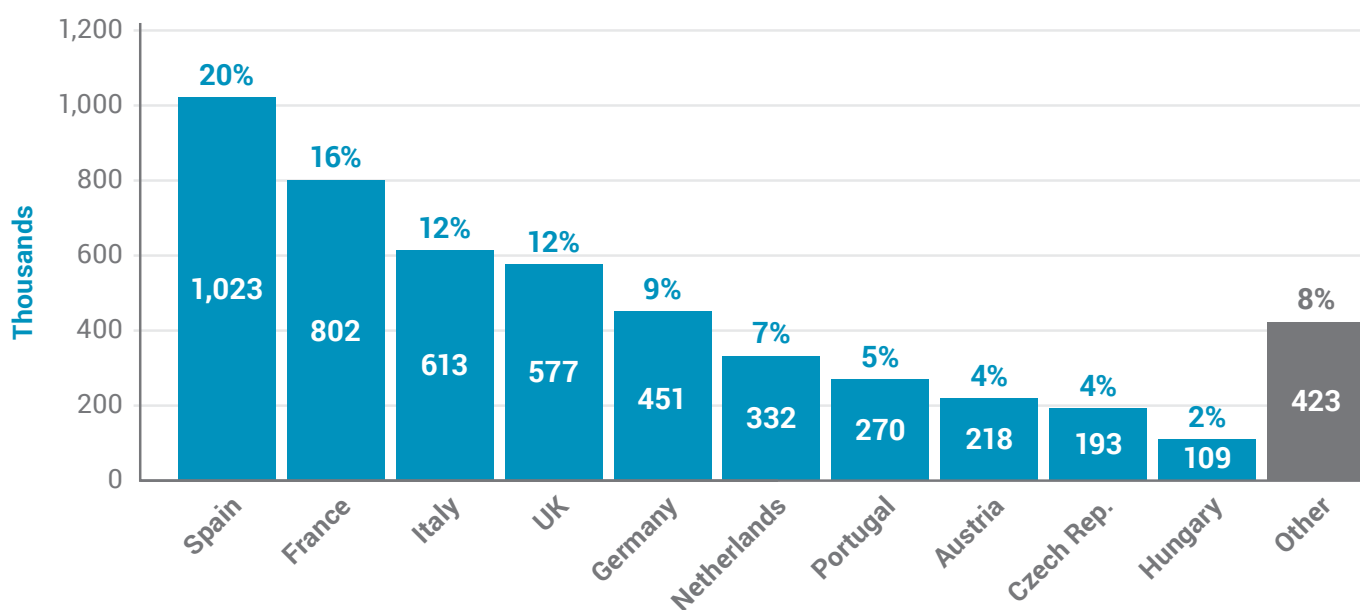


Figure 1 - Estimated race attendance in 2019

Source: Oxford Economics. The Economic Importance of Motorcycles to Europe (2021)

Motorcycle events and trade fairs

Motorcycle events all over Europe attract motorcycling fans for ride-outs, shows, live music or just to share the common culture, lifestyle and love of motorcycles throughout the year. These events are mostly organized by motorcycle clubs, independent event organizers or OEMs. An increasing number of visitors and participants indicate the importance of these events as they provide an excellent opportunity to celebrate the culture of motorcycle enthusiasts.

⁶ Oxford Economics (2021), The Economic Importance of Motorcycles to Europe

Among those, OEM organized events are of specific importance to the motorcycle sector in Europe. These brand-sponsored events include promoting new vehicle models and selling merchandising. They attract riders from all over Europe, many of them riding hundreds of kilometres to attend these events and stay overnight (camping etc.) to enjoy a community of likeminded people.

There are also 20 motorcycle trade fairs across the EU-27 and UK which alone attracted 1.9 million visitors in 2019 with the most famous international exhibitions being the EICMA Motorcycle Show in Milan, and the INTERMOT Motorcycle Fair in Cologne. Both shows attract over 500,000 visitors per year⁷.



These events are an opportunity for motorcycle brands to showcase their vehicle innovations, reach out to potential new customers and drive sales. The events facilitate economic activity as they bring together manufacturers and industry professionals, media and potential customers.

A key feature of all these events is that they attract large numbers of international visitors whose spending is of great importance to local communities.

Sports and promotional events combined are estimated to support about 38,000 jobs across the EU and the UK, as well as €2.1 billion in terms of GDP and €1.2 billion in tax revenue.

⁷ Oxford Economics (2021), The Economic Importance of Motorcycles to Europe



The EICMA Motorcycle Show is held annually in Milan and draws thousands of visitors and more than 1,200 exhibiting brands. The show is frequently used by manufacturers to debut new models.



INTERMOT is a biennial trade show for motorcycle manufacturers held in Cologne. This fair attracts more than 1.000 exhibitors and thousands of visitors.

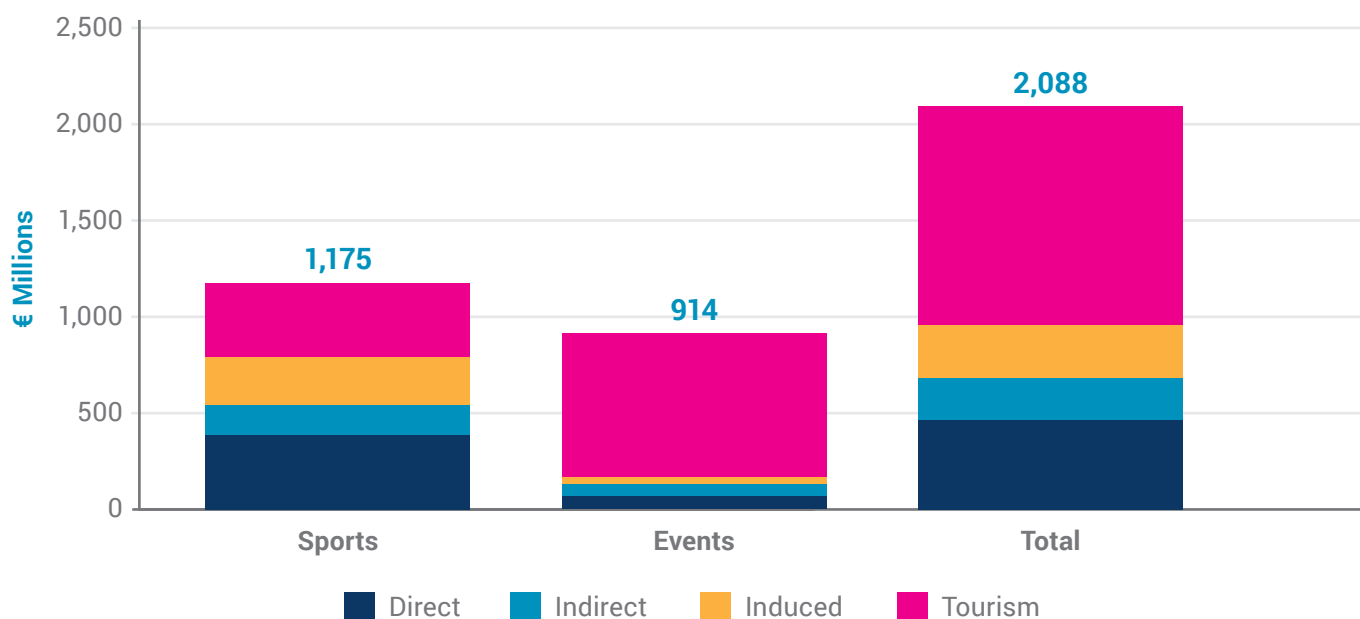


Figure 2 - The total contribution to GDP supported by motorcycle sports and events in the EU-27 and UK in 2019

Source: Oxford Economics. The Economic Importance of Motorcycles to Europe (2021)

Motorcycle clubs and social cohesion

Motorcycle clubs and riding clubs can be found all over the world, with different levels of involvement from their members. Clubs are often organized around a specific brand or a type of riding (e.g. cruising, solo riding, touring). The main purpose of riding clubs is to allow their members to meet up and enjoy riding motorcycles together. Members often share a common lifestyle, culture and love of their vehicles. Being member of a motorcycle club means being part of a family.

In this context, motorcycles serve as a medium for strengthening social cohesion. Motorcyclists are a very heterogeneous group, from a wide range of social backgrounds. In many cases they are very individualistic people. Nevertheless, partly historically, they have a strong group identity.

There is also a strong cohesion across generations and nations, which manifests itself not only in established associations (e.g. motorcycle clubs, carpools, motorcycle tribal tables, forums and groups on social media), but also in joint events with high numbers of participants. For the same reason, so-called motorcycle meeting points, usually in scenic locations, are frequently organized. Motorized two-wheelers thus strengthen social cohesion beyond national borders.

In addition, the cultural value of historical motorcycles is of importance as can be found in the variety of small and larger motorcycle museums. Furthermore, motorcycle design and customizing itself has become an object of art and culture.



In 1998, "The Art of the Motorcycle" exhibition at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York attracted more than 300,000 visitors, the largest number of visitors at the museum⁸. Due to the great success, exhibitions in Bilbao, Chicago and Las Vegas followed, reaching a total number of more than 2,000,000.

⁸ <https://www.guggenheim.org/exhibition/the-art-of-the-motorcycle>

Looking ahead

Together with commuting and day-to-day mobility, especially in dense urban and peri-urban environments, leisure motorcycling, tourism, sports and related activities make a valuable contribution to economic growth, employment and social inclusion, particularly in local communities. They are also activities that are enjoyed every year by millions of people across Europe.

At the same time, there is no doubt that, like any other form of human activity, they have an impact on the environment. ACEM members are committed to dedicating financial and technical resources to work to address the challenges posed by climate change, pollution at local level, excessive sound emissions and road safety issues.

These four areas are at the core of ACEM members' actions, which work together to ensure that powered two-wheelers better respond to the current but also future needs of citizens, in a European Union committed to becoming more sustainable over the next decades.



More information

To learn more about ACEM activities in other related policy areas, please see:



Vision 2030+ - The motorcycle industry's vision towards sustainable mobility in Europe 2021



Riding in a 21st century environment - The motorcycle industry's commitment to the environment. 2021



Safe Ride to the Future 2.0 2020



The importance of motorcycles to Europe 2021

About ACEM

The European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers (ACEM) represents manufacturers of mopeds, motorcycles, three-wheelers and quadricycles (L-category vehicles) in Europe.

ACEM members include 18 manufacturing companies: BMW Motorrad, Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP), Ducati Motor holding, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Kymco, MV Agusta, Peugeot Motorcycles, Piaggio, Polaris Industries, Qooder, Royal Enfield, Suzuki, Triumph Motorcycles, Yamaha and Zero Motorcycles.

ACEM also represents 20 motorcycle industry associations in 17 different European countries. About 389,000 jobs depend on the L-category industry in Europe. There are more than 39 million motorcycles and scooters on Europe's roads (2019 estimate).

To find out more about ACEM please visit www.acem.eu