

# Are Speed Pedelecs on Verge of Breakthrough?

label: Sales & Trends



*Speed pedelec buyers are willing to pay as most expensive brand is leading Dutch market; Stromer. – Photo Bike Europe*

**DOETINCHEM, the Netherlands** – It's probably the only segment in the European e-bike market that lagged behind. In particular when comparing its development with the rapidly increasing sales of regular e-bikes as well as e-MTBs. However, in the Netherlands there's now something remarkable taking place with speed pedelecs. So much so that it raises the question whether there's a breakthrough taking place?

Speed pedelec sales kind of lumbered on since the EU type approval regulation came into force on January 1, 2017. Speed pedelecs or speed e-bikes, are in the type-approval either as category L1e-A, powered cycles with a maximum speed of 25 km/h and maximum 1 kW, or as category L1e-B, moped with maximum speed of 45 km/h and maximum 4 kW. However, this changed per January 1, 2018 as on that date the 'old' type approval for speed pedelecs expired meaning that L1e-B **speed pedelecs have to be registered as mopeds (with license plate) and have to be equipped for instance with a**

For a complete, but manageable overview on what the EU's type-approval is all about, see Bike Europe's **Whitepaper on Rules & Regulations on Electric Cycles in the European Union**. It offers guidelines on pressing issues when designing, developing, sourcing, distributing and selling e-bikes, pedelecs and speed pedelecs on the European markets.

## Dealers' hesitant attitude

Probably the changes in regulations resulted in dealers' hesitant attitude towards speed pedelecs. This comes next to the fact that they are also subject to licensing with which many European bicycle dealers have no experience whatsoever. That affected sales which showed only limited growth. Last year, in the Netherlands, that stood at about 8 percent.

## Sales taking off

Such lingering sales is not taking place this year. In the first seven months of 2019 speed pedelec sales in the Netherlands really took off as it grew with a big 63 percent. Total sales amounted to 1,774 speed pedelecs; up 683 units on the 2018 total of the same period of 1,091 units.

## Breakthrough?

Is this to be regarded as a breakthrough? For that the total numbers are still too low and the market too limited. However, what the big sales plus points to is that something is moving now; that dealers are getting familiar with the rules and regulations that apply to this e-bike category. And what also counts for dealers is that speed pedelec buyers are less price oriented; in particular as these electric bikes come with retail prices ranging from over 3,500 to 9,500 euro.

## Stromer leads market

That speed pedelec buyers are willing to pay is evidenced by the fact that the most expensive brand is leading the Dutch market. Stromer dealers managed to sell 913 speed pedelecs in the June – July 2019 period; close to doubling the number it sold during the same period last year. With the over 900 units sold, Stromer is leading the market by far. Runner-up in the sales ranking is Riese & Muller with 343 units sold. R&M as well as all other brands active on the Dutch speed pedelec market (Gazelle, Klever, Accell NL) saw their sales numbers rise double digitally; except for Specialized that saw its sales drop a bit.

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