

Germany green-lights e-scooters on roads, not pavements

May 17 2019



Germany's decision to authorise electric scooters on streets will probably provoke conflicts with cyclists, Social Democrat politician Anke Rehlinger says

Germany on Friday authorised battery-powered scooters on its streets and cycle paths but banned them from pavements to protect pedestrians as the two-wheeled craze continues to spread across Europe.

Following fierce debate over [road safety](#) and the impact on traffic, the upper house adopted a proposal by Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer

to approve the "electric propulsion vehicles" for road use.

Scheuer was forced to amend his initial suggestion to allow [electric scooters](#) on pavements, after it sparked an outcry from politicians, police unions and insurance groups.

Electrical scooters will only be allowed on pavements in exceptional cases, to be expressly indicated by signs.

E-[scooter](#) users must stick to a speed limit of 20 kilometres (12.4 miles) per hour and be aged 14 years or older.

The decision opens up the market for mobility companies vying to provide electric scooters in Germany's cities with Berlin-based startup Tier and Sweden's Voi up against US firms Lime and Bird, leaders in the fast-growing sector.

Even German car behemoth Volkswagen is eyeing the e-scooter market with plans to incorporate them into its own car-sharing scheme by the end of the year.

The presence of scooters will intensify the battle for space on Germany's streets, where cycling associations have long demanded more and wider bicycle paths.

"Conflicts are inevitable," Social Democrat politician Anke Rehlinger said Thursday, adding that "continuous" effort should be made to define new rules for the e-scooters.

Scheuer labelled them a "genuine additional alternative for cars" in Germany's traffic-choked cities.

Citation: Germany green-lights e-scooters on roads, not pavements (2019, May 17) retrieved 15 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-05-germany-green-lights-e-scooters-roads-pavements.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.