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EUROPE-WIDE E-BIKE STUDY | 23 June 2026

E-bikes in Europe: Usage is booming, but what about knowledge of the rules?

One of Europe's largest e-bike studies reveals discrepancies between market dynamics, knowledge of the rules and perceptions of safety

Executive Summary

The e-bike market is growing at a tremendous pace across Europe. However, one of the most comprehensive European studies, involving 4,041 respondents across nine countries, reveals a significant imbalance: knowledge of regulations and everyday technology is not keeping pace with the rapidly rising sales figures. Rather than highlighting local isolation, this pan-European comparison highlights serious, widespread needs for public education. When it comes to handling the bike's core component – the battery – there is an alarming 44 per cent confidence gap, whilst some rules exist only as widespread myths (such as the compulsory use of helmets, which 25 per cent mistakenly believe to be the case). Ironically, it is in traditional cycling nations that the road is cited significantly less often as a permitted area for e-bikes: in the Netherlands, 55 per cent do not mention the road as a permitted area, compared with 15 per cent in the DACH region.

To strengthen trust in the long term, the study's key conclusion is: "Safety does not have to be expensive". Whilst 36 per cent of respondents would like to see extensive infrastructure development, this conversely means that for almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of respondents, more cost-effective and quicker measures (such as public awareness campaigns, signage and training) are the key to greater safety. At the same time, the way information is sourced is changing: with 58 per cent of users, the manufacturer's website is at least on a par with specialist retailers (54 per cent) and is emerging as the primary digital source of advice. This white paper provides strategic PR approaches to actively bridge these gaps in knowledge and trust.

Note on the data source

A survey of 4,041 adults conducted on behalf of Diamantrad between February 2026 and March 2026. Whilst the survey was carried out in six countries by the market research institute Norstat, the data for the DACH region was collected via an online questionnaire. We are making the complete cross-tables and data sets from the study available in full to interested media representatives.

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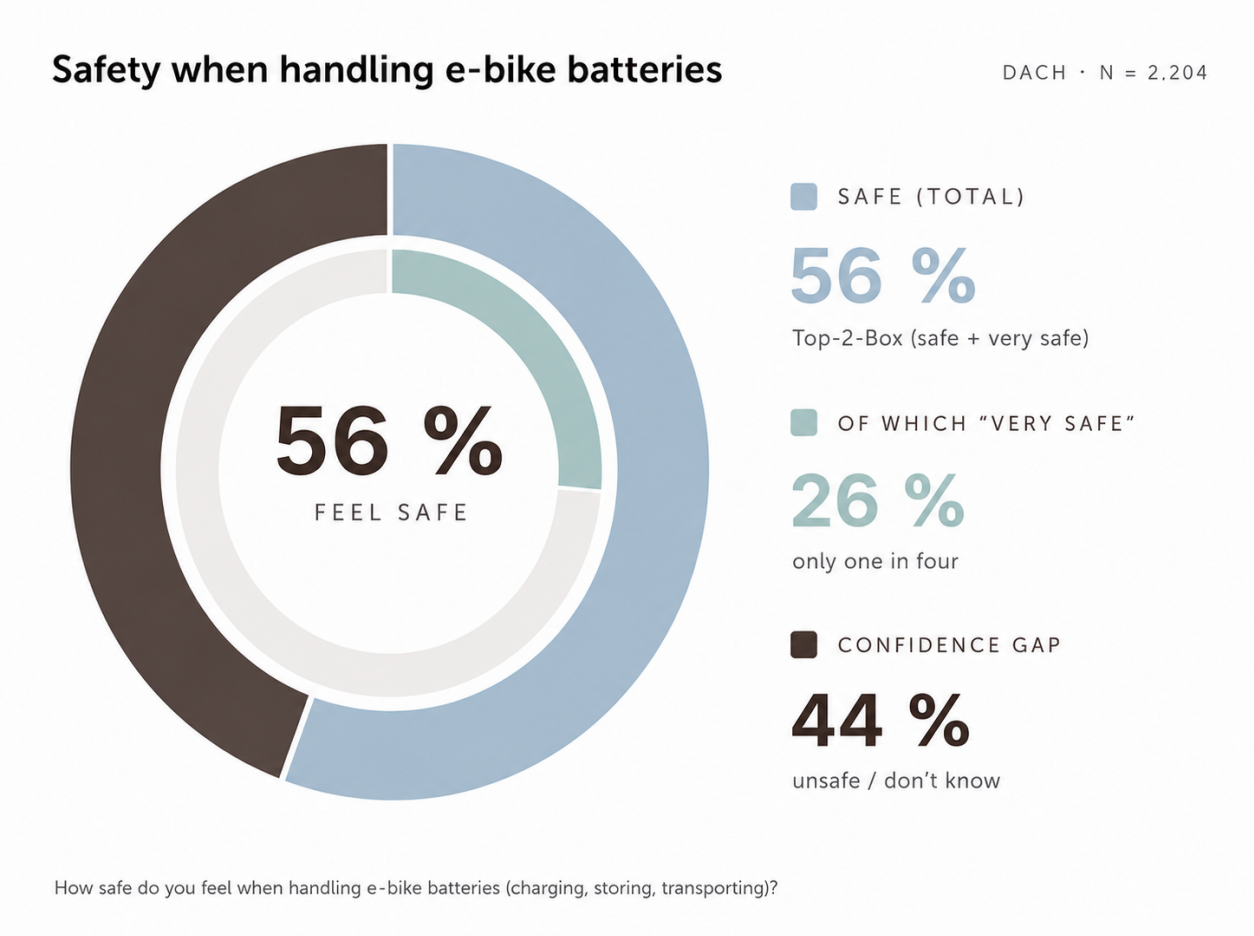
Chapter 1

The trust gap: Why battery handling is becoming a risk for brands



A key and highly significant finding of the survey is the ambivalent attitude of e-bike owners towards the component that makes the mobility transition possible in the first place: the battery.

At first glance, the facts regarding disposal appear encouraging: an impressive 82 per cent of users know that the battery must be disposed of correctly at a recycling centre. However, this theoretical knowledge does not translate into a sense of confidence in everyday practice.

Rather, the study reveals that almost half of all users feel uncertain when handling the battery on a daily basis. Only 56 per cent report feeling confident (and just 26 per cent feel 'very confident'). Conversely, this indicates a significant trust gap of 44 per cent. Almost one in two cyclists feels a certain degree of unease when charging, storing the battery at home or transporting it, or openly admits that they do not know enough about it.

Noteworthy for the cycling industry:

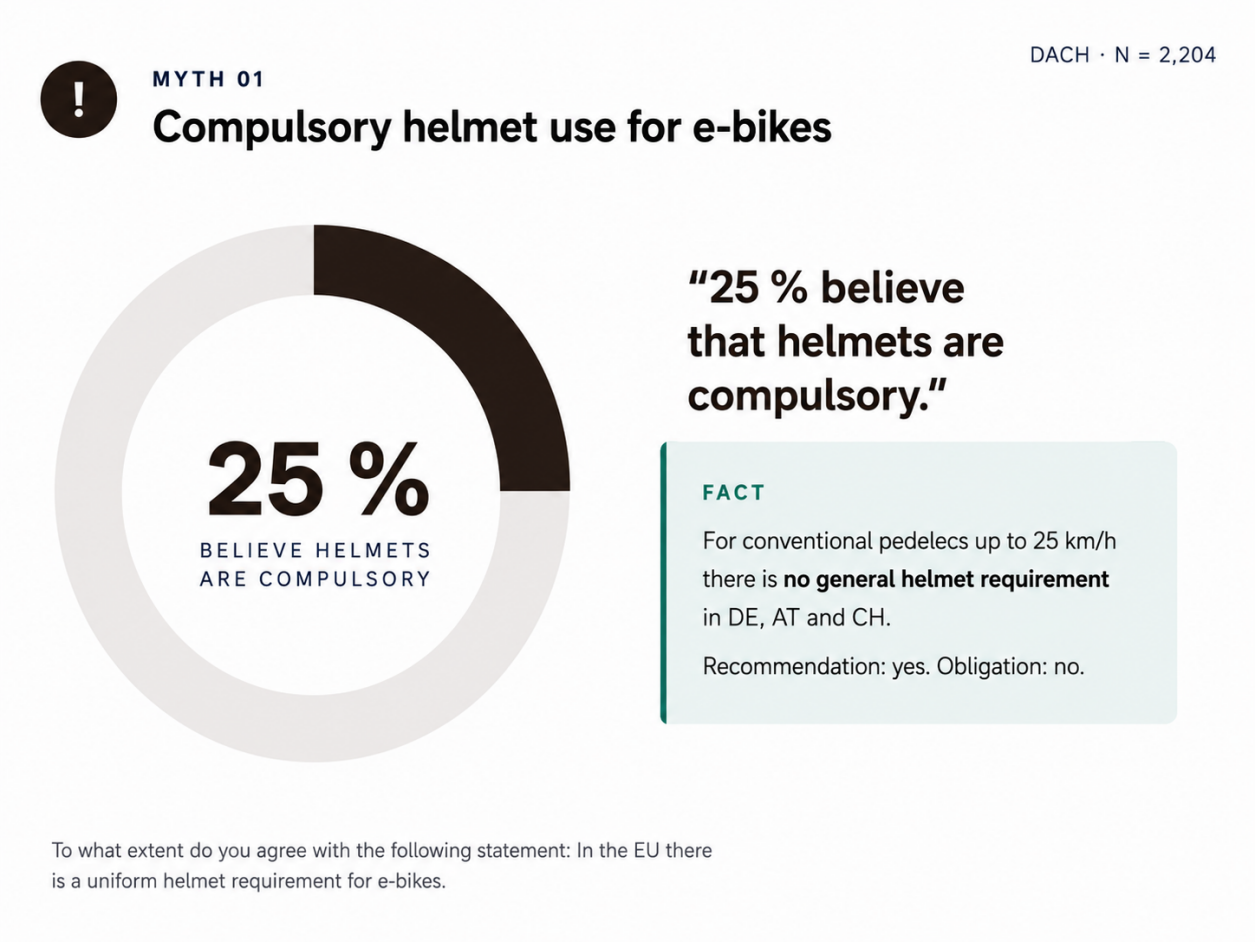
This 'mere' 56 per cent sense of safety must be turned around in communications within specialist retailers. The 44 per cent uncertainty is the real lever for improving the e- bike experience and making it accessible to more people. Brands that, like Diamant, take a proactive approach here, dispel myths and provide easily understandable content formats, will see a massive boost to their reputation.

Chapter 2

Half-truths and myths: the biggest regulatory gaps in Europe

This uncertainty affects not only the hardware, but also, to a significant extent, behaviour in public spaces. Knowledge of e-bike regulations is not keeping pace with the boom in the slightest. This is particularly evident in two widespread misconceptions:

The myth of compulsory helmet use:



The recurring public debates about compulsory helmet use shape the perception of cyclists. This leads to persistent misconceptions: a quarter (25 per cent) of those surveyed in Germany, Austria and Switzerland mistakenly believe that there is already a legal requirement to wear a helmet when riding standard pedelecs travelling at speeds of up to 25 km/h. Regardless of the actual legal situation, as a manufacturer we strongly recommend wearing a helmet on every ride. Nevertheless, this example shows that debates about potential regulations can themselves have a normative effect, and this can also act as a deterrent in other cases.

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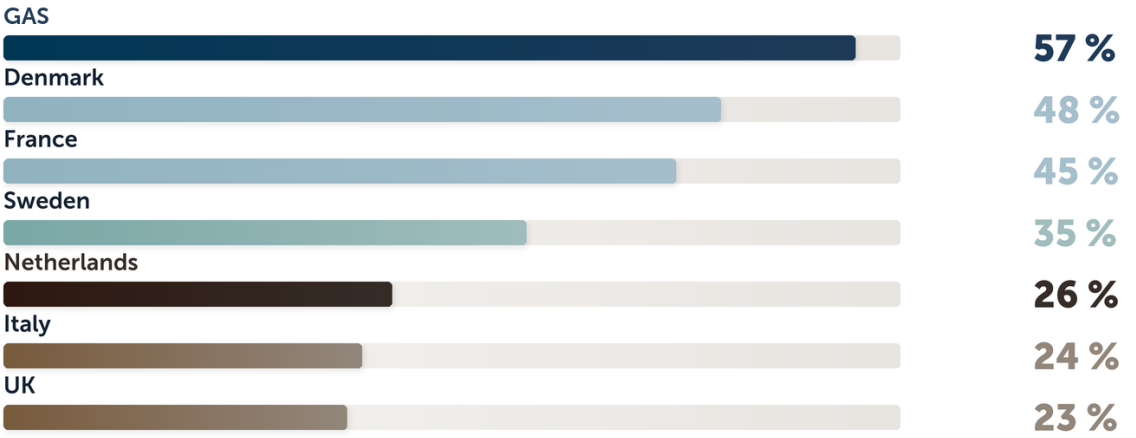
Uncertainty regarding the use of cycle paths

ROUTE USE BY COUNTRY

GAS + 6 countries · N = 4.041

Forest tracks remain the knowledge gap

Share of respondents who name wide forest tracks as an allowed e-bike area



DELTA
34 PP

There is a 34-point gap between GAS and the UK.
Only in GAS does a majority name wide forest tracks as an allowed e-bike area.

QUESTION:
In which areas are e-bikes generally permitted to ride under road traffic regulations?

The legal situation in everyday life is at least as critical: only 85 per cent of respondents in Germany, Austria and Switzerland believe that e-bikes are generally permitted on cycle paths. Only 57 per cent believe that they are generally permitted on wide forest tracks. In countries where e-bike use is less widespread, such as Italy and the UK, these figures are even lower: only 66 per cent and 51 per cent respectively believe that e-bikes are generally permitted on cycle paths. Across Europe, just over a third believe that e-bikes are permitted on wide forest tracks, whilst in the UK the figure is only 23 per cent.

This is a very clear example of the negative impact of myths and assumptions arising from the fact that we still very much perceive e-bikes as motorised vehicles. It also leads to uncertainty when, in conflict situations, other people do not correctly understand these rules either and react inappropriately to e-bikes.

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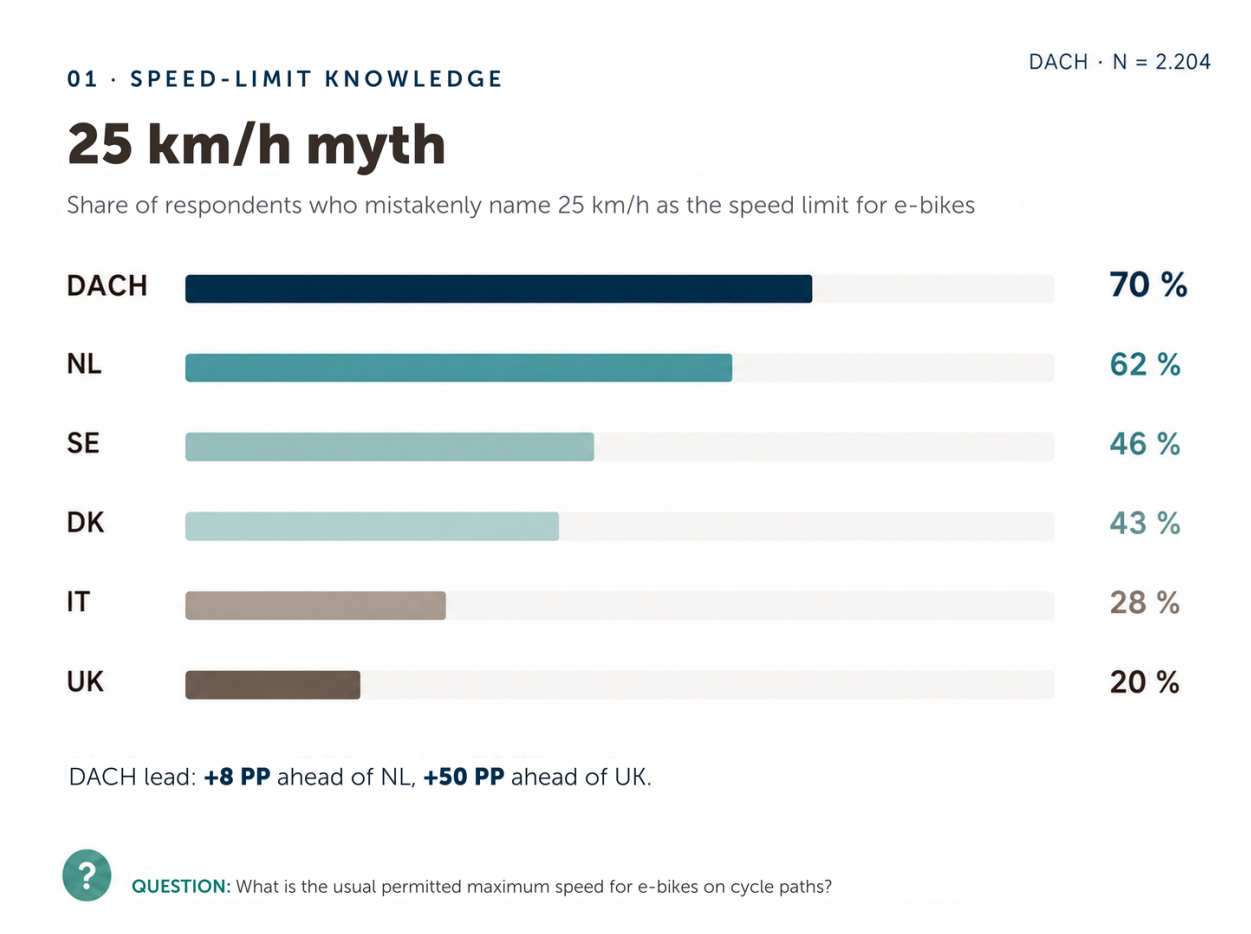
Chapter 3

Country comparison: Confusion over speed limits and compulsory insurance

A direct look at individual countries or regions reveals surprising findings that refute common preconceptions. In terms of knowledge of the rules and perceived safety , Germany and the DACH countries perform significantly better overall than their reputation suggests, whilst established ‘cycling nations’ such as the Netherlands (NL) and Denmark (DK) reveal clear weaknesses.



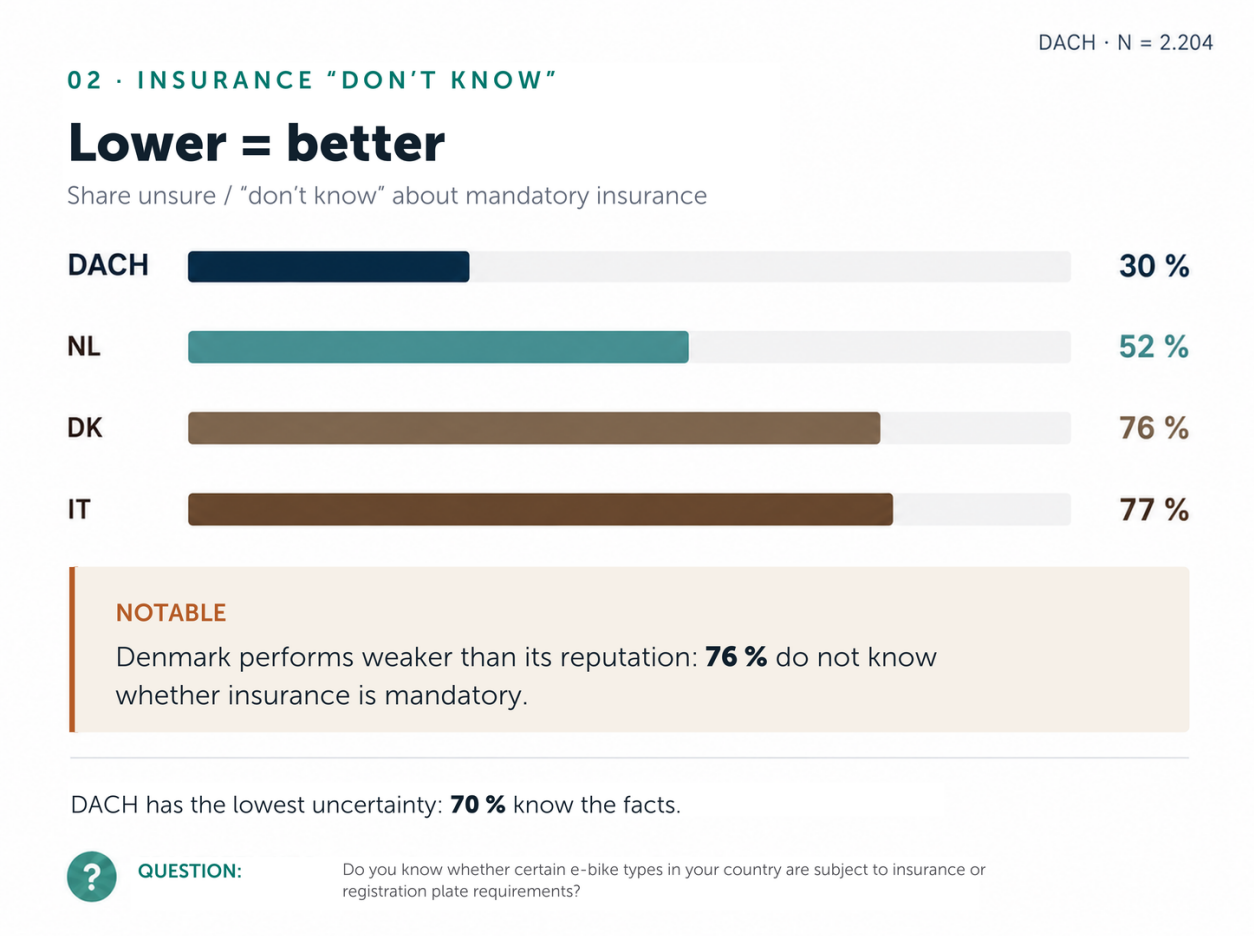
This also highlights the widespread confusion between speed limits and motor assistance limits: for the general public, it is a complete mystery. It is only the motor assistance that ceases at 25 km/h (pedelecs) or 45 km/h (S-pedelecs). However, because the figure 25 is so strongly associated with e-bikes, this has led to the perception in some countries that it actually constitutes a speed limit. Across Europe, only 10 per cent of all respondents correctly state that there is, in fact, no general speed limit.

In our study, we found that respondents from countries with high e-bike usage, such as Germany and the Netherlands, are much more likely to equate the speed limit with the level of assistance. Around two-thirds of respondents in these countries identify 25 km/h as the speed limit. Only around 10 per cent say they do not know. In countries such as Italy and the UK,

where e-bikes still account for a significantly smaller share of the overall market, the figure of 25 km/h is much less prominent. Instead, over 40 per cent say they do not know.

More e-bikes therefore lead to more half-knowledge, but not automatically to greater knowledge. Manufacturers, retailers and society must actively address this knowledge gap.

Knowledge of compulsory insurance



In the DACH region, confidence in one's own knowledge of insurance or number plate requirements is the highest in Europe at 30 per cent (70 per cent say they are well informed, according to their own statements). In the Netherlands, uncertainty stands at 52 per cent; in Italy at 77 per cent; and in Denmark – often dubbed a cycling paradise – 76 per cent of riders are not entirely sure how insurance requirements are regulated. The greater range of insurance products available for e-bikes, particularly in the German market, appears to play a major role here.

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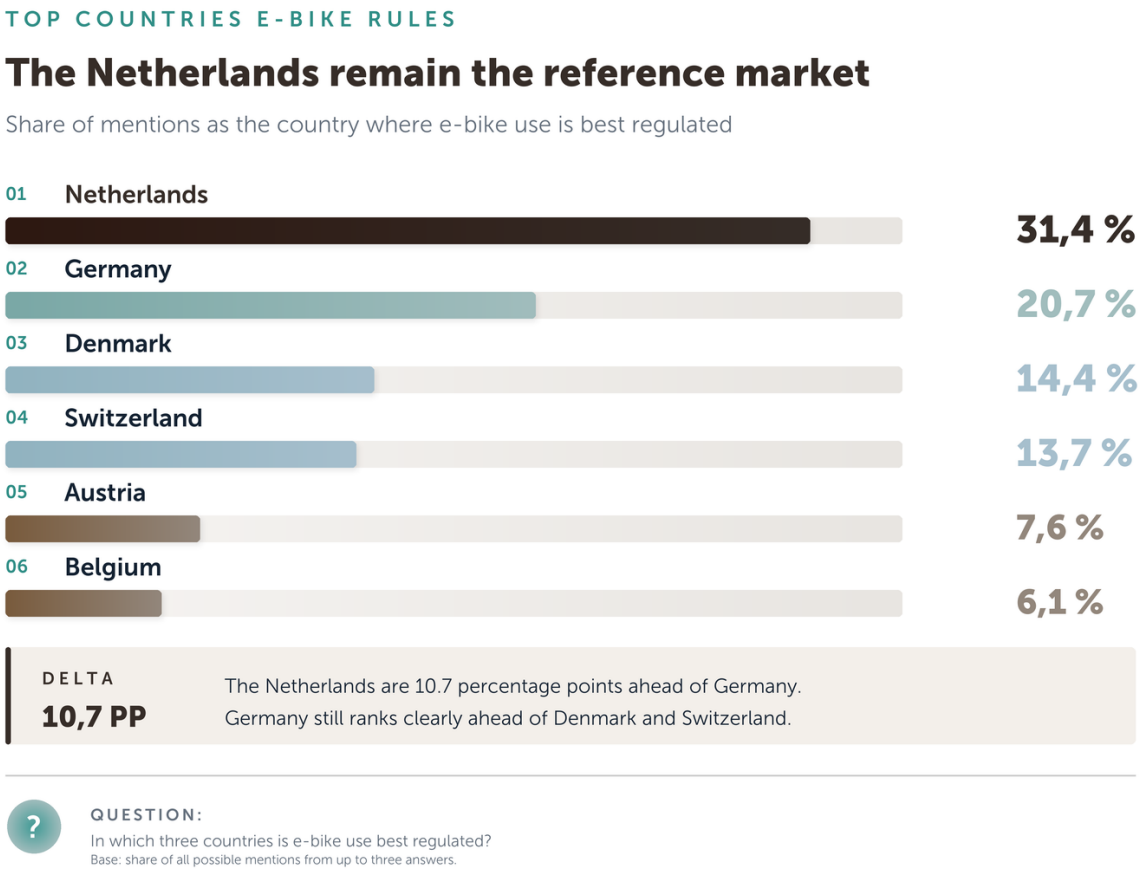
Chapter 4

Which country is Europe's top e-bike nation?



Respondents were asked to name the three countries where the use of e-bikes is best organised. Whilst respondents in each country rated their own country more highly than the average, it came as no surprise that the Netherlands was the most frequently mentioned country across Europe: for 31.4 per cent of all participants, the Netherlands is a top e-bike nation.

Germany, however, is already in second place with 20.7 per cent of all mentions: from the public's perspective, the Federal Republic appears to be better than its reputation suggests. Denmark, a traditional cycling nation, is in third place, just ahead of Switzerland – the Swiss Confederation demonstrates here how a very strong e-bike culture has developed almost unnoticed. It therefore deserves more attention from politicians and society than it has received so far when benchmarks and best practices are being identified.

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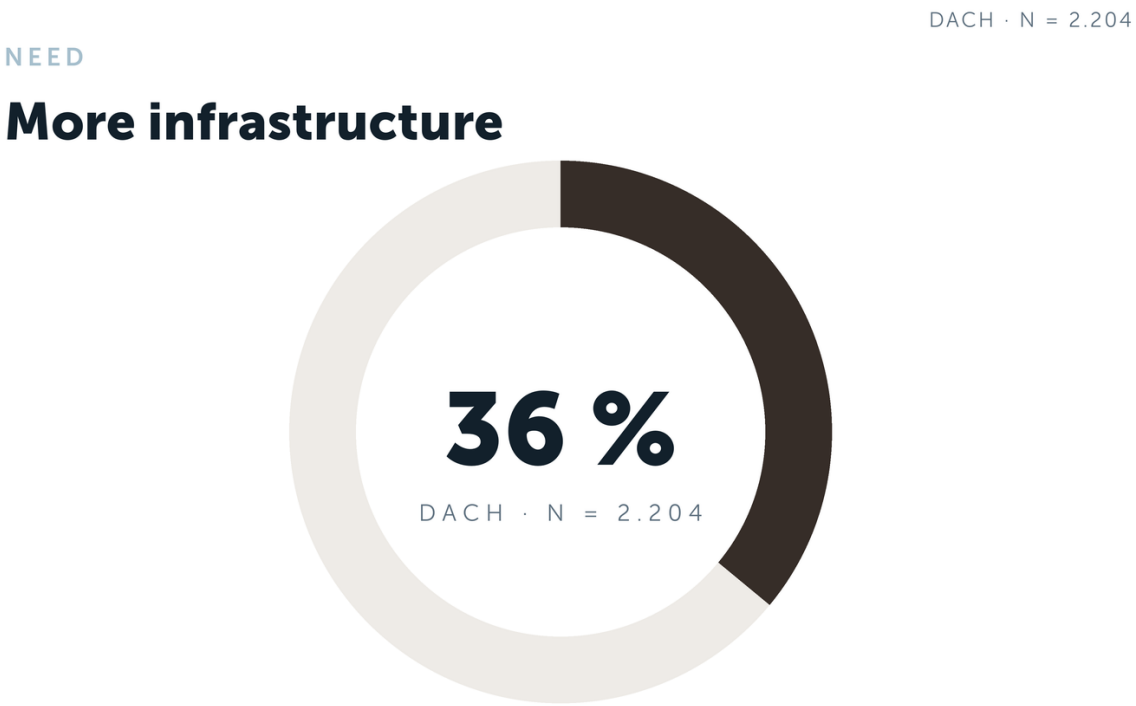
Chapter 5

Safety doesn't have to be expensive: cost-effective measures outweigh billions spent on infrastructure



Question: Which concrete measures would help you feel safer when using e-bikes?

Politically, the debate on improving safety for cyclists almost always culminates in calls for expensive, new infrastructure. However, the survey results paint a far more nuanced picture, which presents an enormous opportunity for manufacturers and local authorities: safety need not be expensive.

In this study, respondents were asked to select what they considered to be the most important option for improving their safety. Whilst 36 per cent of respondents stated that better infrastructure would help them feel safer – more than for any other option – Conversely, this nevertheless means that for a clear majority of 64 per cent, far cheaper, quicker to implement and more direct measures are the solution to their sense of safety. Users would like clear safety information (20 per cent), better signage (16 per cent) and regular maintenance and training programmes (11 per cent each).

It is worth noting that:

We do not have to wait for local authorities to build new cycle paths. Almost two-thirds of users can be given a sense of safety through proactive education, ‘how-to’ guides, clearly visible signs and simple training sessions, either directly at the point of sale or online. This places a significant responsibility on manufacturers and specialist retailers themselves, as there is enormous potential for most stakeholders to catch up in this area.

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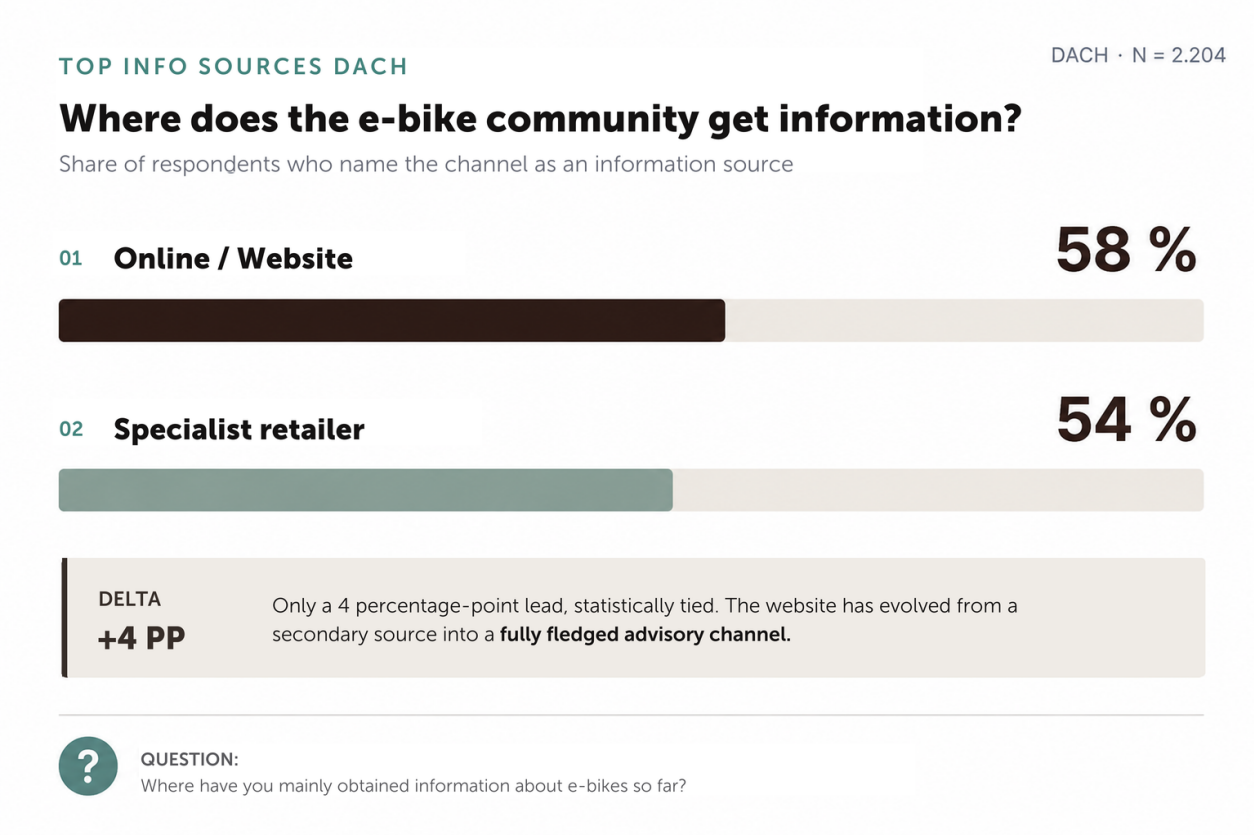
Chapter 6

The new channel strategy: the website is almost as important as specialist retailers



A significant shift is evident in how information is gathered prior to purchase. Brick-and-mortar specialist retailers, for decades the undisputed kings of advice, have lost their monopoly, at least in the DACH region.

The results for the DACH market show that online sources (a top source of information for 58 per cent of respondents) and specialist retailers (54 per cent) are almost equally relevant. Our study cannot explain in detail the specific roles played by each channel, but the figures suggest that most respondents use several channels in parallel. Brands and retailers will therefore be successful if they ensure that the purchasing process flows seamlessly, that manufacturers and sales advisers share consistent information, and that the roles within the process are clearly defined.

It is also noteworthy that only 7.4 per cent of respondents cite ‘social media’ as a main source of information. Just under 58 per cent cite the website, and 28 per cent cite friends and family.

Conclusion

Education as a strategic competitive advantage

This study draws an unambiguous conclusion: the European e-bike boom rests on a solid demographic foundation, but shows serious shortcomings in terms of user safety and knowledge of the regulations. Whilst the affluent 45+ age group is driving the market across national borders, their knowledge of day-to-day use lags behind. This is particularly evident when it comes to the sensitive issue of batteries and road traffic regulations. Even the surprisingly strong results in the DACH region should not obscure the fact that there is still a massive need to catch up there too.

For manufacturers, specialist retailers and communications managers, this leads to clear strategic conclusions:

View knowledge gaps as an opportunity: the 44 per cent confidence gap regarding battery handling and persistent legal myths are not insurmountable hurdles, but direct opportunities for proactive communication. Those who provide clarification in this area ultimately support the transport transition as well.

"Soft measures" trump infrastructure waiting times: the vast majority (64%) do not define security solely in terms of lengthy, multi-billion infrastructure projects. Cost-effective and quickly implementable measures such as transparent how-to guides, clear signage and practical training are the more direct route to customer trust.

The rise of the digital advisor: The ever-increasing importance of manufacturers' websites, which inevitably means they must be viewed not merely as product catalogues, but as advisory channels that are networked with and coordinated alongside specialist retailers.

In summary, it can be said that anyone wishing to dominate the European e-bike market in future must not merely sell hardware, but must also provide reassurance, guidance and knowledge. Manufacturers who embrace this role as active, reliable sources of information across all channels will transform the current uncertainty among users into their greatest and most sustainable competitive advantage.

About Diamant

DIAMANT is a brand with a long history and tradition in the development of innovative bicycles. Since 1885, DIAMANT has been developing bicycles to meet a variety of needs. Today, DIAMANT stands for freedom, adventure and an active lifestyle on two wheels. The brand offers a wide range of e-bikes, Trekking® bikes, city bikes and more, suitable for both everyday use and leisurely or sporty rides. DIAMANT uses materials to the best of its knowledge and combines this with innovative technology to provide the best possible experience for its riders. On Trustpilot, riders rate DIAMANT as one of the best German bicycle manufacturers. The bikes have also won numerous design awards, such as the iF Design Award and the Design and Innovation Award (DI.A).

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