

Car-sharing means fewer cars, busier roads in 2030

FRANKFURT, Germany: A boom in car-sharing could slash the number of vehicles on European roads by 80 million by 2030, a study published on Monday predicts.



Photo by Alessio Lin on Unsplash

But roads could become busier even as Europe's fleet of cars falls from 280 to 200 million, consultancy PwC forecasts, as shared vehicles will be used much more frequently than privately-owned ones.

"Within a few years, the present norm under which most people drive their own car will be just one mobility concept among many," PwC auto expert Christoph Stuermer said.

The experts believe up to one in three kilometres travelled on European roads could use some form of car-sharing in future, predicting that services will become just as accessible in the countryside as in cities.



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Increasing numbers of electric and self-driving cars will encourage people to try out car-sharing, PwC expects.

And self-driving cars will make some journeys with no human on board at all, for example on their way to pick up passengers.

Shared vehicles to be replaced more often

Shared vehicles drive around 58,000 kilometres per year, the study found, or roughly the equivalent of a taxi - compared with just 13,200 for a private car.

That means they will have to be replaced more often, likely every 3.9 years rather than the 17.3 seen today.

Higher turnover in the fleet could boost the number of new cars registered in Europe by 33% by 2030, to 24 million units.

"Carmakers and their suppliers will face critical decisions in the coming years," Stuermer warned, as they are forced to invest heavily in new factories and research and development even as margins fall and new competitors arise.



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Those without the critical mass in market share to weather the storm could find themselves squeezed out.

For now, public acceptance has some way to go before the most drastic of the study's visions come true.

Some 54% of Germans would never join a car-sharing scheme, PwC found, compared with 84% of Chinese who would give it a try.

Source: AFP

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