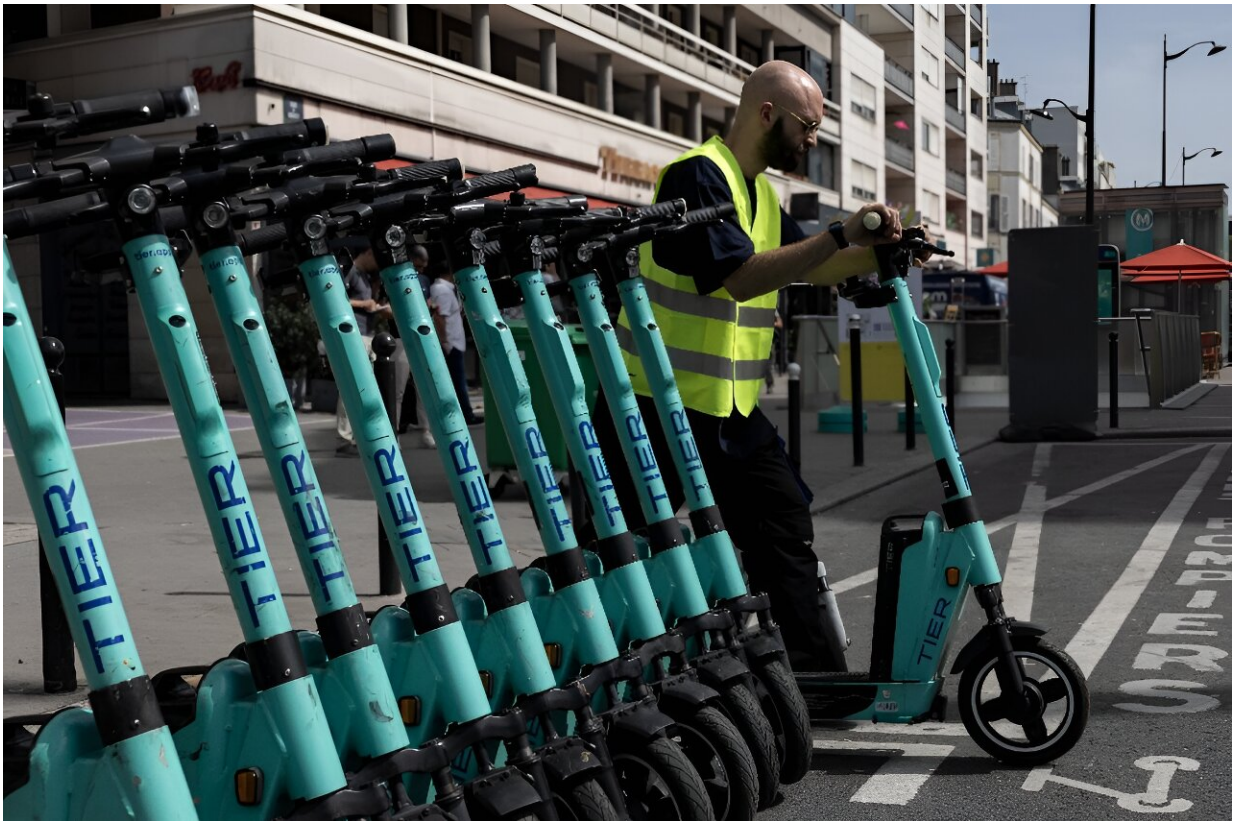


Paris bids adieu to love-or-hate electric scooters

August 28 2023, by Yann SCHREIBER



The ban applies to rental scooters.

Paris will on Friday become the first European capital to ban floating electric scooters from its streets, leaving fans desolate but relieving those who loathed their "nuisance" factor.

Residents voted by almost 90 percent in an April referendum to ban the scooters—celebrated as a win for [direct democracy](#) by mayor Anne Hidalgo even though turnout was just 7.5 percent.

The ban applies to rental scooters which have been offered by several operators since 2018, although people will still be able to whizz through Paris on privately-owned contraptions.

With complaints of users jostling through pedestrians on pavements or dumping their rides awkwardly at intersections, the city's 15,000 two-wheeled machines from providers Tier, Lime and Dott had turned into "nuisances" for many Parisians, Hidalgo said at the time.

But "so many people were sad" at the decision, said Paris-based American influencer Amanda Rollins, 33, who often gets around by scooter—one of 400,000 people to do so in 2022, according to figures from the operators.

"They're just so much fun!" she added, while noting that being able to just pick one up offers "a really reliable way to get home... like a safety net" on nights when the metro closes before the capital's bars.

The day scooters arrived in Paris in 2018 was "like Christmas... it was like Santa came overnight," she recalled, praising their use for tours of the city with friends and their practicality when stopping for a swift Instagram photoshoot.

'Turn of the page'

Paris "is a unique case" said Clement Pette, head of Tier's operations in France. "It's a major turn of the page".

By Friday, the Berlin-based firm had collected 3,000 of its 5,000

scooters, with growing red areas on its application's map showing parking forbidden in more and more of Paris each night as it loaded them into vans.

Only a small zone in central Paris will have scooters available until the wheels finally come off.



A man rides an electric scooter or trottinette past the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral.

Like other operators, Tier's freshly-serviced machines will be heading to other cities where it offers scooter service.

Some Tier machines will remain in Paris' outskirts, with most returning to Germany or Warsaw, while Lime ships them to Lille, London, Copenhagen and German cities and Dott is set to send some as far away as Tel Aviv.

"We've turned the page on scooters" for the whole Paris region, said Xavier Mirailles, Lime's public affairs director.

Instead, like the other operators, Lime is betting on its fleet of 10,000 floating-hire bicycles, against around 5,000 offered by Tier.

Mixed impact

Removing floating scooters from Paris won't mean that they disappear from the capital's streets altogether, as many people have made the jump to owning their own—or more exotic rides like electric monowheels.

"Shared [electric scooters](#) can be a gateway to acquiring a personal scooter," said Anne de Bortoli, a researcher at Montreal-based sustainability lab CIRAIG.

She highlighted that the scooters had begun to make an impact on emissions from Parisian transport in recent years, with second-generation models producing carbon emissions of around 60 grams of CO₂ per kilometer.

That was "more than a personal bike, the metro or suburban trains"—the modes of transport most often replaced by scooter trips—"but it also replaced some taxi rides and trips in personal cars", making for "slight gains in terms of carbon footprint".

"We have to change the way we get around as quickly as possible... scooters allowed people to access this mode of transport, to test it out,

see if it met their needs. It often made people want to switch," de Bortoli said.

While the vehicles may have offered an [environmental impact](#), they also took a toll on users, with 10 riders killed in France in July alone according to government data—the country's heaviest-ever toll.

Announcing the figures earlier this month, road safety chief Florence Guillaume "strongly encouraged" [scooter](#) users to wear helmets, which have been made obligatory in some cities like Italy and Danish capital Copenhagen.

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