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# **Electric mobility in Malta**



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## Electric mobility in Malta

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*In 2017, the greenhouse gases in Malta amounted to a substantial 2,155 kilotonnes. Energy industries and transport activities were the two largest contributors, with the latter accounting for 30 per cent of the total. This led the Government to reassert its drive towards more sustainable transport.*

Since back in 2013, the electrification of Maltese transport became one of the pillars of transport policy, with the launch of two major initiatives:

- The first is the Malta National Electromobility Action Plan (MNEAP). The Action Plan's goal is the use of electromobility to reach energy, climate and air quality policy targets. It aims to implement a gradual and phased policy for the electrification of transport, addressing both private and public mobility. It aims to reduce the negative transport-environmental-externalities for the benefit of all residents, especially those living in urban cores.
- The second initiative is the Malta National Electromobility Platform (MNEP), a joint initiative between the Ministry for Transport and Infrastructure and Transport Malta. The platform's aim is to achieve and implement the objectives of the Electromobility Action Plan. The MNEP oversees the implementation through various projects and initiatives to expand electrification of transport. MNEP is one of the main architects that introduced electromobility in Malta and has seen its expansion since.

The Ministry for Transport and Infrastructure together with Transport Malta have pooled their resources to come up with a comprehensive plan of action, to put land transport in Malta on track to environmental sustainability while addressing a number of EU obligations that Malta must fulfil under the 2020 Climate Change and Energy Package.

Since the start of its operations in 2015, Malta Public Transport has overhauled the existing fleet with more than 250 brand new buses fitted with the latest Euro 6 engines, making it among the youngest and cleanest public transport fleets in Europe.

Battery Electric Vehicles are 51% more efficient than conventional fuel cars and emit no tail-pipe exhaust. The more Battery Electric Vehicles on the roads, the cleaner the air we breathe. In this respect, the Government, during the past years, promoted and

supported the uptake of electric cars through a series of measures, one of which is a substantial grant for those individuals and companies who want to scrap their current car and purchase a Battery Electric Vehicle.

To date, the Government has launched and installed a National Electric Car Charging Network that provides Battery Electric Vehicle users with the possibility to charge their car using publicly accessible car charging points, placed in specific and prominent parking spaces across Malta and Gozo. There is presently a total of 102 publicly available charging points, with an extension to the network being discussed.



*Malta's first fully electric bus. Photo by Times of Malta*

Since the launch of the Action Plan, Transport Malta launched several other schemes to further incentivise the purchase of greener vehicles. These include schemes for the purchase of Electric bikes, motorbikes, mopeds, and quads. Another measure targeted new car importers who would like to upgrade their garage by servicing electric vehicles while training their staff for the new technology.

Besides private transport, the MNEP also supports the introduction of electromobility for commercial transport purposes, like urban goods delivery vehicles, local public transport, and two-wheeled vehicles. In addition, Transport Malta has in recent years issued a concession for a car sharing fleet which is offering an A-to-B service utilizing a fully electric fleet of vehicles. Using shared electric vehicles can help the public familiarize themselves with the technology. This is one way of easing electric vehicles into the local transport culture through first-hand experience.

As a result of the various measures undertaken, Malta currently has the following number of vehicles per category on its roads:

- 166 L7E Category electric vehicles;
- 1,364 M1 Category electric vehicles;
- 62 M1 Category electric vehicles;
- 2,273 M1 Category hybrid vehicles; and
- 120 N1 Category electric vehicles

Last June 2020, Malta Public Transport launched Malta's first fully electric bus in conjunction with Transport Malta and TAM-Europe. The Vero 9 model will operate on a trial basis to test the performance of the 100% electric engine on Maltese roads. The pilot project will gauge the efficiency and adaptability of the vehicle in real-life local conditions, considering the unique road topography of Malta such as relatively short distances between bus stops and hilly terrain. Malta Public Transport will work together with the manufacturers on the incremental development of the bus to meet the expected environmental standards and customer experience.

As indicated in the Action Plan, the Government is also looking closely at the use of electricity in other transport modes, including waterborne transport and related maritime infrastructure. This is in line with the latest proposal for an EU Directive on Clean Power for Transport, where specific and mandatory targets are being negotiated between the EU Commission and the Member States.

One way to address the current transport and environment problems is by deploying on-the-market-technologies which have been tried and tested and which can be implemented in the Maltese context. The objective is to bring over to Malta the very latest cutting-edge technology in electromobility, keeping abreast with the major EU Member States, that are at the forefront of technology and innovation. In turn, this will expose the automotive and IT sector to another niche of specialization, contributing directly towards the Green Economy and the creation of Green Jobs.

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*eBussed project supports regions in the transition towards low-carbon mobility and more efficient public transport in Europe by promoting the use of e-buses.*