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**Global Energy
Crisis – Europe's
Strategies for
Maintaining
Stability**

Wojciech Skrobiś

Chargé d'Affaires a.i. at the Embassy of the
Republic of Poland in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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WORD OF THE EDITOR



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e-mail of the editorial board:

info@energetskiportal.rs

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EDITORIAL BOARD

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Dear readers,

Editorial work sometimes feels like assembling a mosaic – with each issue, we strive to bring together the best pieces we have. This time, however, something different happened: the pieces seemed to fall into place on their own, forming a coherent picture. That is why the issue before you stands out for its depth of information and insight.

We had the pleasure of hosting Tine van der Straten, the newly appointed Director of WindEurope, who is taking the helm of the European wind energy association at a time when the sector must significantly accelerate the deployment of new capacities, strengthen supply chains, and support the electrification of industry.

Electromobility was a particular source of inspiration, so we spoke with experts from Serbia, Slovenia, and Croatia. They shared valuable perspectives on the development of e-mobility, the state of infrastructure, and long-term plans in their respective countries.

We also spoke with Wojciech Skrobiś, Chargé d’Affaires at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who introduced us to Poland’s strategies for phasing out coal, increasing the share of renewable energy, as well as current green projects and useful insights for countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the entire world, to varying degrees, feels the impact of geopolitical instability in the Middle East, this issue also brings an overview of key strategies for addressing the emerging crisis – particularly those already being implemented by developed European countries.

You will also learn what the Program for the Implementation of the Energy Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2026–2028 entails – both in terms of increasing renewable energy capacities and addressing energy poverty.

We introduce a completely new term – petromasculinity – explained by linguist Jovana Vurdelja in our Opinion section.

Additionally, we bring you two inspiring articles about Čelarevo, a baroque gem of Serbia, along with many other insightful and engaging stories.

I wish you an enjoyable read and hope that in this issue you will find inspiration, new knowledge, and a reason for optimism.

Nevena Đukić
Nevena Đukić
editor-in-chief

IN THIS ISSUE...



INTERVIEW 6

WOJCIECH SKROBIŚ, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bosnia and Herzegovina

POLAND'S ENERGY TRANSITION: SUBSIDIES AND PROGRAMS ACCELERATE INVESTMENTS IN RENEWABLES

Poland has been rapidly developing its renewable energy sector. A country long reliant on coal is increasingly investing in modernizing its power grid and integrating clean energy sources.

INTERVIEW 12

TINE VAN DER STRATEN, CEO of WindEurope

KEY PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE WIND INDUSTRY

INTERVIEW 16

DARKO ZELJKOVIĆ, eMobility Business Developer Southeast Europe in Schneider Electric

E-MOBILITY DEMANDS A SYNERGY OF TECHNOLOGY, REGULATIONS, AND INVESTMENTS

Electric mobility is no longer just a trend. It's an irreversible shift transforming how we move and consume energy.



INTERVIEW 18

BORIS ĆOROVIĆ, Secretary General of the Serbian Association of Importers of Vehicles and Parts

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN SERBIA: STEADY GROWTH WITH A SLOW TRANSITION

From record growth in new-vehicle sales and the increasingly dominant SUV segment, to challenges in developing electric-vehicle infrastructure and the inevitable transition toward sustainable mobility, this interview provides a realistic picture of a sector at a turning point between traditional powertrains and a future based on electrification and new technologies.

PRESENTING 22

ABB

ABB IS DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE THAT ACCELERATES THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY



FOKUS 24

GLOBAL ENERGY CRISIS – EUROPE'S STRATEGIES FOR MAINTAINING STABILITY

After a period of relative stability, the economy and energy sector are once again facing serious challenges due to geopolitical instability in the Middle East, which intensified further at the beginning of this year.

INTERVIEW 30

ZORANA ĐORIĆ, Director of the company "Vozim na struju"

HOW TO SMARTLY START THE TRANSITION TO AN EV FLEET

PRESENTING 32

STOČAR LSB

WHAT A NEW-GENERATION FARM LOOKS LIKE IN SERBIA



EVENT 36

SET TREBINJE 2026

ENERGY TRANSITION OF THE REGION IN FOCUS AT THE TREBINJE ENERGY SUMMIT 2026

Trebinje has become a meeting place for visions of the future of energy, from renewable sources and digitalization to new market models and technological advancements.



PRESENTING 40

VOLVO TRUCKS

GAS AND HYDROGEN AS THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

At a time when the transport industry is facing increasingly strict climate targets and growing pressure for decarbonization, Volvo Trucks is positioning itself as one of the leaders in the transition toward sustainable solutions.

CURRENT TOPIC 42

WHAT DOES THE ENERGY SECTOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD 2026–2028 BRING?

PRESENTING 46

CEEFOR

DESIGNING A SOLAR POWER PLANT – MORE THAN JUST PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

From documentation and permits, through structural assessments and grid connection, to equipment selection and economic feasibility, each step requires careful planning depending on the type of power plant.



 **HIGHLIGHTS** 50
ACCORDING TO THE OPINION
OF THE EDITOR

 **MIX PRESS** 52
NEWS FROM THE COUNTRY
AND THE WORLD


 **PRESENTING** 58

CHARGE&GO
FROM NIŠ TO SUBOTICA:
CHARGE&GO CONNECTS SERBIA
WITH A NETWORK OF FAST EV
CHARGERS
Recognized as a pioneer of e-mobility in
Serbia, Charge&GO is continually expanding
its charging station network to provide EV
drivers with faster, safer, and more accessible
mobility across the country.



 **INTERVIEW** 60
IGNAC ZAVRŠNIK, President of the
e-Mobility Slovenia Association (DeMS)
E-MOBILITY IN SLOVENIA: HOME
CHARGING AS THE KEY TO
INCLUSIVE E-MOBILITY




 **OPINION** 64
JOVANA VURDELJA, PhD in
**Philological Sciences with a focus on
ecolinguistics and climate change
communication**
**PETROMASCULINITY – DEFENDING
THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY AS AN
EXPRESSION OF MALE IDENTITY**
From a linguistic perspective, communication
about climate change occasionally sees
the emergence of new words, terms, and
expressions that can serve as diagnostic
tools for identifying and revealing the
dominant ideologies, attitudes, and values
that shape and influence our understanding
of changes in the climate system.




 **INTERVIEW** 68


DAVOR KAROLJ, Director of the
**Croatian National E-Mobility
Association**
THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORT IN
CROATIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE
OF THE HUEM ASSOCIATION
The country of a thousand islands is
increasingly positioning itself as a regional
leader in transport electrification, with
professional and independent organizations
playing a significant role in this process.


 **EVENT** 73
2026 EUROPEAN GRIDS SUMMIT
GRIDS AS THE BACKBONE OF
EUROPE'S ENERGY FUTURE

 **PEOPLE AND CHALLENGES** 76
MILICA BRANKOVIĆ, Editor of the
portal *dovrha.rs*
"DRY, BUT CLEAN" – BETWEEN
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND
SOCIAL CRITIQUE


 **ECO-INNOVATIONS** 78
REGENERATION: TAILINGS THAT
HAVE BECOME A RESOURCE FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
In a place where the law ceases to operate
and responsibility remains buried beneath
mining waste, a story emerges about the
convergence of industry and nature.




 **PEOPLE AND CHALLENGES** 81
RKS KOMPOZITI D.O.O
PLASTIC WASTE FROM
VOJVODINA'S FIELDS
TRANSFORMED INTO NEW VALUE

 **PEOPLE AND CHALLENGES** 82
PASTIR CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION
THE BAROQUE PEARL OF
VOJVODINA REVIVED THROUGH
TRADITION AND NATURE



 **ECO-INNOVATIONS** 84
WHEN POLLEN IS NOT NUTRITIOUS
ENOUGH: OXFORD TEAM DEVELOPS
A NEW SUPPLEMENT FOR BEES
bees do not face food shortages only
when flowers are absent. Problems arise
even when pollen is available but does not
contain all the nutrients necessary for brood
development. In this gap between quantity
and insufficient nutritional quality, a solution
has emerged from researchers at the
University of Oxford.



 **PEOPLE AND CHALLENGES** 86
**STUDENTS OF THE MECHANICAL
SCHOOL IN TUZLA**
THE YOUTH FOR CLEAN ENERGY
SECTION DRIVES INNOVATION IN
TUZLA
Through the school section Youth for Clean
Energy, which was established relatively
recently, they are developing ideas and
solutions that reduce environmental pollution.

 **DISCOVER MORE** 88
TRANSPORT AS CLIMATE POLICY:
HOW EUROPEAN CITIES ARE
CHANGING PEOPLE'S HABITS

POLAND'S ENERGY TRANSITION: SUBSIDIES AND PROGRAMS ACCELERATE INVESTMENTS IN RENEWABLES





Wojciech Skrobiś

Chargé d'Affaires a.i. at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In recent years, Poland has been rapidly developing its renewable energy sector. A country long reliant on coal is increasingly investing in modernizing its power grid and integrating clean energy sources. An overview of the country's current energy landscape, its key challenges, and other important developments in the energy sector was provided by Wojciech Skrobiś, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Q: Poland has for many years been one of the European countries most dependent on coal. What does the transformation of its energy sector look like today, and what are the key steps in the transition toward cleaner energy sources?

A: Poland has been implementing measures aimed at the gradual phase-out of coal for many years, although this remains a challenging process due to the significance of the mining sector and the scale of employment it provides. Production is maintained in mines where it remains economically viable (primarily focusing on lignite), while unprofitable mines are being gradually closed. For the past two decades, the share of clean energy sources in Poland's energy mix (including hydropower, wind, and geothermal energy) has

been steadily increasing. This process has been supported by state funds and European Union financing. It is based on both large-scale projects (such as wind farms) and support for prosumers. Poland's energy transition is increasingly shifting its focus from energy generation itself toward areas traditionally managed by engineers and system operators—namely, energy infrastructure and grid development. The most significant challenge the Polish government faces is the construction of a nuclear power plant. Poland first began building a nuclear power plant in the 1980s, but construction was halted following the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. Today, however, in cooperation with the United States, a new plant is being developed in the north of the country, based on the safest available technologies.

Q: In recent years, Poland has recorded dynamic growth in solar and wind power. What has contributed most to

this growth, and what are the plans moving forward?

A: In recent years, the dynamic expansion of solar and wind energy in Poland has primarily been driven by regulatory changes, such as the liberalization of the 10H rule (minimum distance from residential buildings equal to 10 times the height of the wind turbine), which has increased the availability of sites for investment and unlocked the development of large-scale projects exceeding 30 MW. At the same time, declining technology costs and improved economic viability of renewable energy sources have made wind power one of the most cost-competitive sources in the country. Meanwhile, photovoltaics—particularly large-scale solar farms—have begun to dominate newly connected capacities,

Poland has been implementing measures aimed at the gradual phase-out of coal for many years, although this remains a challenging process due to the significance of the mining sector and the scale of employment it provides



surpassing the previously leading segment of prosumer micro-installations. The development of photovoltaic systems has also been supported by public programs such as “My Electricity” (Mój Prąd), tax incentives, and the European Union’s climate targets, all of which have stimulated demand for renewable energy investments. Significant support has also been provided through national and local funding mechanisms, including state budget allocations and EU funds. A particular challenge has been the adoption of regulations enabling electricity generation by individual consumers (prosumers). At the same time, ensuring the power system’s resilience is becoming increasingly challenging, as the grid must be strengthened to prevent energy losses and accommodate growing renewable capacity. For renewable energy to continue developing, financing must go hand in hand with an adequate legislative framework. Paradoxically,

drafting and adopting high-quality regulations is often the more difficult part of the process. Renewable energy projects are economically viable, making investment capital relatively accessible; however, the legislative process frequently encounters resistance from various interest groups that perceive renewables as a threat.

In the coming years, Poland plans to expand its wind energy capacity further, aiming to reach approximately 16 GW by 2030, in line with its National Energy and Climate Plan. This includes both onshore and offshore wind projects. In the solar sector, projections indicate growth in installed capacity to 27–30 GW by the end of 2026, and up to 33–35 GW by 2027, with an increasing share of large-scale solar farms and a shift in market structure toward projects exceeding 1 MW.

Q: One of Poland’s most ambitious energy projects is the development of



offshore wind farms in the Baltic Sea. What is the potential of this sector, and what role will it play in Poland's energy mix?

A: In addition to its tourism potential, reflected in its beautiful sandy beaches, Poland's maritime area represents a vast reservoir of energy. Following the example of other Baltic countries, Poland aims to harness wind energy. With more than 500 km



of coastline, many areas are particularly well-suited for wind power development. The offshore wind sector in the Baltic Sea holds significant, strategically important potential for Poland, both in terms of available wind resources and in its future role in the country's energy mix. Its technical potential is estimated to be among the highest in the region. According to analyses by the Supreme Audit Office, Poland's offshore wind potential could reach approximately 28 GW by 2050, accounting for more than one-third of the Baltic Sea's total potential. Currently, offshore wind farms do not yet contribute to Poland's energy generation, as they have not been commissioned. According to data from the Polish Power Grid Company (PSE), as of the end of February 2025, the total installed wind capacity in Poland amounted to 10.85 GW, all of which comes from onshore wind farms, with no offshore capacity yet connected to the system. The first offshore wind projects—Baltic Power (2026) and Baltica 2 (2027)—are expected to contribute to the energy mix with a combined capacity of approximately 2.7 GW. However, their generation will only be reflected in the system once these projects become operational.

Q: Energy security has become one of the key topics in Europe. How is Poland currently approaching the diversification of energy sources and the reduction of dependence on fossil fuels?

A: The priority of all Polish governments since 1989 has been to achieve independence from fossil fuels imported from Russia (natural gas and oil). This process was successfully completed recently. Poland has fully phased out imports of Russian gas and coal, replacing them with supplies from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Norway, and the United States. The national energy strategy foresees further reductions in fossil

fuel use through the development of renewable energy sources, nuclear power, and the modernization of energy transmission infrastructure. This is not only a matter of energy security but also of political security. The next step is to reduce the share of fossil fuels in the energy mix. The share of coal in energy production is declining, while the importance of renewables continues to grow—reaching 29.4 percent of the electricity mix in 2024. Support programs for investors (including individual investors), an appropriate legislative framework, and the development of core infrastructure for energy transmission and storage are enabling the gradual phase-out of fossil fuels. It should also be noted that, alongside energy production, Poland is making significant investments in reducing energy consumption. Efforts have been made to thermally modernize public buildings, alongside support programs for citizens wishing to upgrade their homes and apartments. These measures are complemented by legislation that promotes energy-efficient technologies, ensuring that publicly funded investments are increasingly green.

Q: The European Union, through the Green Agenda, supports the energy transition of the Western Balkan countries. In what ways does Poland participate in these initiatives?

A: Firstly, these projects are financed from the European Union budget, to which Poland contributes annually. Therefore, Poland—through the EU budget—co-finances projects that support the energy transition in the Western Balkan countries. Secondly, Polish experts have participated in drafting the Sofia Declaration and remain available to their counterparts in the Western Balkans to share their knowledge and experience. It is important that different solutions are properly adapted to each country's specific energy mix,



Poland is making significant investments in reducing energy consumption. Efforts have been made to thermally modernize public buildings, alongside support programs for citizens wishing to upgrade their homes and apartments

production structure, and other national particularities.

Poland, which has invested significant efforts over the past 20 years in moving away from fossil fuels, has accumulated valuable experience that can benefit others. Given that it once had a substantial share of fossil fuels in its own energy mix, Poland's experience is highly applicable. It can be particularly useful for partners in the Western Balkans.

Q: Do you see room for more concrete cooperation between Poland and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the fields of renewable energy, energy efficiency, or new energy technologies?

A: Two key aspects are essential for such cooperation to materialize. First, political will is needed to implement changes in this field. When thinking about green energy, we often envision investments in solar farms or wind turbines. However, before such projects can be realized, it is necessary to adopt and implement an appropriate legislative framework. Poland is ready to present its solutions, highlight the challenges it has faced (including frequent resistance from local communities), and explain how these challenges were addressed. Without a solid legislative foundation, it is not possible to launch support programs



and other measures. Second, Poland offers a range of technologies that may be of interest to partners in the Western Balkans. We are ready to present them, which we already do through participation in trade fairs and seminars. Our solutions are often smaller in scale and better adapted to the realities of countries whose energy sectors have been—or still are—based on both hard coal and lignite. This potential is certainly worth exploring.

Additionally, the Embassy's staff remain at your disposal to assist in establishing contacts with relevant institutions in Poland.

Q: Poland is also developing digital solutions for the energy sector, such as smart grids and energy management systems. To what extent is digitalization changing the way we produce and consume energy?

A: The entire model of energy production and consumption is



undergoing transformation. The traditional linear flow—from power plant to the consumer’s socket—no longer applies. Today, we have producers on both ends: consumers generate energy during the day, for example, through rooftop solar panels, while at night they draw electricity from the grid. For transmission networks, this creates periods of overload, challenges in managing surplus generation during sunny or windy conditions, and

a simultaneous need to redirect and store energy. This is where digital solutions play a crucial role. They enable the balancing of electricity within the system with minimal losses. Energy transmission itself inevitably generates certain losses, making efficient grid management essential for achieving savings. Poland is developing these technologies to ensure that the effort invested in energy production is used to the fullest, rather than wasted.

Q: Many European countries are increasingly developing the concept of energy communities and local energy production. Are such models also being developed in Poland?

A: An interesting example of such initiatives is the support provided to housing communities, where residents of multi-apartment buildings jointly implement energy transition projects. In addition to the thermal modernization of buildings—aimed at reducing energy losses—photovoltaic panels are also being installed. A notable example is the Wrocław solar power plant, installed on the rooftops of 35 buildings within the Wrocław Południe Housing Cooperative (the largest installation of its kind in Poland). The investment amounted to PLN 4.2 million

(approximately EUR 1 million) and has reduced annual electricity costs for common areas in these buildings (such as staircases and basements) from PLN 425,000 to PLN 120,000.

The number of such projects is steadily increasing, largely due to an appropriate legislative framework that supports the development of local energy production and energy communities.

Q: Based on Poland’s experience in modernizing its energy sector, what lessons could be useful for countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are at the early stages of the energy transition?

A: Three key aspects should be highlighted. First—legislation. It forms the foundation of all activities and is crucial for attracting investors. Without a stable, clear legal framework, it is difficult to initiate processes in the energy sector. Second, in addition to producing green energy, it is equally important to focus on saving the energy that has already been generated. This is why strong emphasis should be placed on the thermal modernization of buildings, which reduces energy losses and enables more efficient use of existing resources. Third—accelerating integration with the European Union. The Growth Plan for the Western Balkans projects significant funding for Bosnia and Herzegovina to support its energy transition. Failing to utilize these funds would represent a major loss not only for the energy sector but also for the country’s citizens. This is particularly important given Bosnia and Herzegovina’s substantial potential for green energy production, including hydropower, solar, and wind energy. EU integration also brings access to additional funding that can be used to gradually phase out fossil fuels, resulting not only in financial savings but also in cleaner air.

Interview by Jasna Dragojević



KEY PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE WIND INDUSTRY

Europe is at a pivotal moment in its energy transition, where the pace of renewable energy deployment has become crucial for the continent's economic competitiveness and energy security. The new CEO of WindEurope, Tinne Van der Straeten, takes the helm of the leading European wind energy association at a time when the sector must significantly accelerate the deployment of new capacity, strengthen its industrial supply chain, and support the electrification of the economy. In this interview, she discusses her key priorities, the challenges facing the European wind industry, the need for a stable regulatory framework and stronger investment, as well as the role that the Western Balkans can play in Europe's future energy architecture.

Clean energy investments must accelerate, and Europe must build as much wind capacity as possible to strengthen competitiveness and security

Q: You are taking over the leadership of WindEurope at a moment you described as defining for Europe. What will be your key priorities as the new CEO, and what do you see as the biggest challenges for the European wind energy sector in the next three years?

A: I am taking over at a moment when Europe needs clean electricity faster than ever. My priority is simple: get wind built. We need more deployment, more electrification, and more volume across the entire supply chain. Clean energy investments must accelerate, and Europe must build as much wind capacity as possible to strengthen competitiveness and security. The biggest challenge will be to move forward without drama: avoid reopening the legislation that has been agreed upon, focus on implementing and using the tools already at our disposal, and address grievances and issues as they arise.

of these savings. At the Industry Summit in Antwerp, European industry and EU leaders recognized that affordable energy must be at the heart of Europe's competitiveness, and wind will be central to that. But the missing piece is electrification: heavy industry needs to electrify much faster, and governments must help de-risk those investments and align supply and demand. The North Seas Summit in Hamburg was another sign that politicians see the value of homegrown, cheap and clean energy. From our side, WindEurope is doing everything to make the benefits crystal clear. A renewables-based system is still the cheapest option, even when you include grids and backup. Delaying action will only make Europe pay more. The cumulative €1.6 trillion savings by 2050 are equivalent to Europe's annual healthcare spending, about 9 percent of the EU's GDP. That's what's at stake.



Tinne Van der Straeten
CEO of WindEurope

First, they need to fully apply the new EU permitting rules. These rules work extremely well: Germany is now permitting seven times more onshore wind than five years ago, which shows how powerful they can be when implemented properly. Policymakers also need to remove the barriers that are slowing electrification. Industry should be allowed to use state aid to sign renewable Power Purchase Agreements, including for offsite power. And governments should cut non energy taxes and charges from electricity bills so that choosing renewables becomes the obvious and affordable option for consumers. Another key challenge is investment risk. The sector needs a stable pipeline of two sided Contract for Difference auctions. Contracts for Difference reduce the cost of capital, give long term revenue visibility, and offer good value for governments. Without them, it is harder for companies to plan and invest with confidence. Finally, Europe must support and strengthen its wind supply chain. A strong industrial base is essential for strategic autonomy, competitiveness, and economic growth. If Europe wants to



Q: You highlighted that wind energy could save Europe up to €1.6 trillion compared to fossil-based systems. Do you believe policymakers fully understand the significance of these savings and how WindEurope plans to make these economic benefits more visible and comprehensible to both the public and decision-makers?

A: I believe policymakers increasingly understand the significance

Q: Installing only 13 GW of new wind capacity in 2025 – less than half of what is needed – shows that Europe is falling behind its own targets. What do you see as the main causes of this slowdown, and how can the permitting process and grid infrastructure development be improved?

A: Getting the most from wind energy still depends on European policymakers doing a few essential things.



stay a world leader in wind, it needs to keep building this capacity at home.

Q: What do you expect from EU institutions and national governments in terms of supporting domestic production of turbines, components, and equipment, especially in the context of intensifying global competition?

A: The European Commission is working on the Industrial Accelerator Act, a new package to support Europe's industries. That's important. Europe urgently needs a proper industrial strategy for clean tech. But let's not forget that there's also the EU Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA), which has introduced non-price criteria and European manufacturing targets for key components. Member States are still implementing NZIA and starting to have the first NZIA-conform wind energy auctions. This is already a big

step in the right direction. NZIA and its implementation will provide useful learning opportunities for future industrial policies.

Q: If Europe aims to accelerate the electrification of its economy, which sectors are progressing the slowest in your view, and where can wind energy deliver the greatest impact over the next decade?

A: There are plenty of industries using low and medium temperature processes that can be electrified today with existing technology. This includes production processes in paper and pulp industry, as well as food and beverages. I'd say, let's start with the low-hanging fruits. But the sector that is progressing the slowest is heavy industry. Many companies want to electrify with wind and solar, but they need strong political support to make it happen.

Europe needs targeted measures that match clean electricity supply with industrial demand and de-risk the large investments required for direct electrification. Today, Europe is falling behind: electrification rates have stalled at around 25 percent, while competitors like China are moving rapidly ahead. It is also essential that industry can access wind energy at competitive prices. The European Commission should lead by publishing clear guidance on electricity taxation, and national governments must follow by reducing taxes and levies on electricity, and de-risking demand through Power Purchase Agreements and Carbon Contracts for Difference are essential steps. These measures will unlock private investment, support early movers, and allow wind energy to deliver its full impact over the next decade.



Q: Western Balkan countries, including Serbia, are also accelerating the development of wind power. How do you see their role in strengthening the European energy security, and is there potential for deeper cooperation?

A: There certainly is. Europe is becoming increasingly interconnected with cross-border electricity flows and grid connections. That's the way to go. The wind is not always blowing. But it is always blowing somewhere. And the more interconnected Europe becomes, the cheaper electricity we can transport across the continent. That'll increase energy security and enable affordable electricity for everyone.

Q: WindEurope has often pointed out that local opposition can be reduced through clearer communication about the benefits. What would you say to local communities that remain

skeptical about wind farm developments?

A: Acceptance for wind energy is high all around Europe – even for new wind farms. 85 percent of Europeans agree that the EU should invest massively in wind power. Though it is generally highest where wind farms have already been built. Still, many projects are challenged in court by local communities, and misinformation and disinformation have recently decreased acceptance. Early and transparent communication is one of the most important ones here. Many problems can be solved early on through consultations and community involvement in decision-making. The benefits come in different shapes. They can include cheaper electricity bills, benefits in kind (i.e., renovation to the local football stadium), shared ownership, and others. This all comes on top of

the local taxation. The wind industry contributed €10bn in taxes in 2025, of which €2.3bn were not linked to corporate taxes and were mainly destined for local governments and communities. In line with this, we will present the Fast & Fair Award at our WindEurope Annual Event in Madrid (21-23 April) for the best community engagement project of the year for the first time.

Q: You predict that the wind sector could generate more than 600,000 jobs by 2030. Which skills and professions will be most in demand, and how should Europe adjust its education and training systems to meet this growing workforce need?

A: The European wind sector faces serious skills shortages. Europe's Wind Energy Workforce Report identifies 235 job profiles across the wind farm lifecycle and highlights critical gaps. Most urgently, 7,000 blade technicians, 6,500 field engineers, and 5,000 pre-assembly technicians are needed before 2030. Addressing these skills shortages is essential for Europe to meet its wind energy ambitions. This will require a more strategic approach to workforce planning. WindEurope's new report can help here. It provides real-world data to help identify priority roles across every stage of the wind supply chain. Policymakers must endeavor to scale up training programs for key roles. They must encourage retraining workers from other sectors. They should harmonize certifications and enable EU-wide skills mobility. And they should promote diversity in technical and leadership roles to ensure a sufficiently large talent pool. 8 out of 10 critical roles where we see the largest shortage will rely on Vocational Education and Training (VET). Europe has to give these career paths greater visibility and increase their attractiveness.

Interview by Milena Maglovski



E-MOBILITY DEMANDS A SYNERGY OF TECHNOLOGY, REGULATIONS, AND INVESTMENTS

Electric mobility is no longer just a trend. It's an irreversible shift transforming how we move and consume energy. We spoke with Darko Zeljković, eMobility Business Developer Southeast Europe in Schneider Electric, about global standards and the infrastructure challenges facing the region.

Q: Electric mobility is one of the key pillars of energy transition. How do

you see Schneider Electric's role in developing EV-charging infrastructure in Southeast Europe?

A: Schneider Electric is a key technology partner in digital transformation and energy sustainability. Our role in the region goes far beyond selling equipment – we act as an ecosystem architect. By developing integrated solutions that combine hardware, software, and advanced energy management systems, we deliver infrastructure that is both smart and

future-ready. Our product portfolio meets the complex needs of investors and operators, especially given the accelerated growth of e-mobility across the region.

Q: What are the most significant innovations Schneider Electric is currently developing in the field of e-mobility?

A: We have been in this field for more than 15 years, and that experience has enabled us to overcome the industry's early challenges. Today, we

offer EcoStruxure™ for E-mobility, one of the most reliable end-to-end solutions on the market, as well as Schneider StarCharge Fast DC chargers that deliver up to 320kW with 97 percent efficiency, significantly reducing energy losses.

Another innovation is the StarCharge Fast 720, featuring a split-unit architecture where a central power cabinet supplies satellites (dispensers) distributed within an 80-metre radius, making it an ideal solution for petrol stations and logistics centers. Furthermore, our EV Charging Expert software enables real-time management of up to 150 chargers, ensuring optimal load balancing across the grid. To achieve the balance, it is essential to introduce battery systems,

A: Infrastructure in Southeast Europe is rapidly catching up and entering a phase of accelerated growth. In EU member states, development is governed by the AFIR (Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation), which requires fast-charging stations every 60 km along key transport corridors, and the EPBD (Energy Performance of Buildings Directive), which provides guidelines for installing EV-charging infrastructure. Serbia and other non-EU countries are still focused on the main road network. High initial costs, slower ROI, and limited distribution grid capacity at critical locations remain the main obstacles. Schneider Electric offers technical solutions for all of these challenges, but administrative



Darko Zeljković
eMobility Business Developer Southeast Europe in Schneider Electric



which are the cornerstone of modern electrification. Following this, we have launched the second generation of Schneider Boost Pro, as true sustainability is impossible without energy storage solutions.

Q: The EV charging infrastructure in Southeast Europe is still underdeveloped. In your opinion, what are the key obstacles to accelerating e-mobility development, and how can the industry overcome them?

support is essential to expedite implementation.

Q: How important is cooperation between companies, cities, and institutions in building a sustainable e-mobility ecosystem?

A: Cooperation is crucial, as e-mobility development is too complex for any single stakeholder. Our strategy is built on partnerships, from global ones with companies such as NVIDIA, to our local EcoXpert program,

where certified partners install our equipment. To put it simply: companies bring the technology, cities provide the space, and institutions define the rules of the game.

Q: Electric vehicles are increasingly becoming part of a broader energy system. How do you see these technologies evolving in the next decade?

A: The energy landscape is being transformed from a centralized system to a decentralized grid. Schneider Electric turns the traditional one-way distribution model into a two-way system that allows operators to monitor and actively manage both production and consumption. Our continuously advancing software solutions, ADMS and DERMS, play a key role in this transformation. They enable grid digitalization and efficient integration of renewable energy resources, thus directly accelerating e-mobility development. While V2G (vehicle-to-grid) technology receives a lot of attention, I believe that DC Microgrid solutions will become far more relevant for commercial applications in the coming decade.

Interview by Milena Maglovski



AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN SERBIA: STEADY GROWTH WITH A SLOW TRANSITION

On the occasion of three decades of operation of the Serbian Association of Importers of Vehicles and Parts, we spoke with the Association's Secretary General, Boris Ćorović, about the key changes shaping the domestic automotive market.

From record growth in new-vehicle sales and the increasingly dominant SUV segment, to challenges in developing electric-vehicle infrastructure and the inevitable transition toward sustainable mobility, this

interview provides a realistic picture of a sector at a turning point between traditional powertrains and a future based on electrification and new technologies.

Q: You recently marked three decades since the establishment of the Serbian Association of Importers of Vehicles and Parts. How do you view the Association's mission today, and in what ways has it contributed to the development of the automotive industry in Serbia over the years?

A: During this year's auto show, we had the opportunity, together with the founders, to look back at 1996, when, following the lifting of sanctions, normal import, distribution, and after-sales support for vehicles in the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were re-established. Since then, the Association has continuously worked to provide the domestic market and consumers with access to the latest models and technologies coming from the European and global automotive industry.

At the same time, through cooperation with state institutions and partners, we have made a significant contribution to improving the regulatory framework and business conditions in the market. Today, this role is particularly evident through initiatives we are launching together with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce in the field of e-mobility, infrastructure development, and the long-term transition toward more sustainable transport.

For three decades, we have also been co-organizers of the Belgrade Motor Show, through which we bring the industry closer to citizens and businesses and regularly inform the public about trends in the domestic and European markets. At the same time, through cooperation with the

Q: How do you assess the current government subsidies for electric vehicles in Serbia? Are they sufficient to encourage wider adoption, and what would you potentially change in the existing regulatory framework?

A: Government subsidies for electric vehicles in Serbia certainly represent a good and important instrument, which has been in place for six years and has delivered visible results – although the share of electric vehicles remains low, it has been gradually increasing year by year thanks to this support. Experience also shows that no European country has managed to significantly scale up e-mobility without direct or indirect government incentives.

However, the current level of subsidies in Serbia is not sufficient



Boris Ćorović
Secretary General of the Serbian Association of Importers of Vehicles and Parts



Road Traffic Safety Agency and the Ministry of the Interior, we contribute to the broader public interest in road safety, as well as to the education of the public and the market by raising awareness of modern trends such as electrification and autonomous driving. Taken as a whole, we believe that over the past 30 years, the Association has fulfilled its role as a reliable partner to institutions, a support to its members, and a relevant voice of the modern automotive industry in Serbia.

to enable a stronger and more widespread transition to electric vehicles. An additional challenge is the lack of continuity – once the initial funds are exhausted, interruptions occur, creating uncertainty and effectively halting the market during certain periods. We believe it is crucial to ensure a larger budget and continuity throughout the year, without interruptions between subsidy cycles.

At the same time, subsidies are only one part of a broader picture. An integrated approach is necessary,

including the development of charging infrastructure, improvements to the legal framework, the introduction of non-financial incentives, and the addressing of a range of operational issues that accompany the everyday use of electric and hybrid vehicles.

Therefore, we believe that a more significant breakthrough requires viewing e-mobility as a comprehensive system – where subsidies are an important, but not the only, element of the process.

Q: What are the trends in the import of new and used vehicles in the first quarter of this year compared to the same period last year? Which market segments are recording the highest growth or decline?

A: In the first quarter of 2026, there has been an increase in the sale of new vehicles compared to the same period last year, both in the passenger car segment and in light commercial vehicles. When it comes to passenger cars, around 1,000 more vehicles were sold, representing an increase of approximately 15 percent. In comparison, the LCV segment

recorded growth of around 20 percent, or about 200 vehicles more than in the previous year.

The SUV segment continues to play a dominant role in the new-vehicle market, accounting for around 56 percent of total sales across all classes – from city cars to luxury models. There is also a noticeable increase in interest in premium brands, which are becoming increasingly present among top-selling models.

It is also important to highlight the recovery of the light commercial vehicle market, which declined in 2025 due to a slowdown in economic activity but is now returning to a growth trajectory. At the same time, due to current geopolitical circumstances and energy price trends, there is also growing interest in electric vehicles.

On the other hand, the used car market still dominates, accounting for around 83 percent of the total market, and includes a significant share of imported older vehicles with lower emission standards. During the past year, approximately 147,000 used vehicles were registered for the first time, posing a serious challenge from both environmental protection and road safety perspectives.

Without questioning the need to import used vehicles, we believe that in the coming period, additional mechanisms should be considered to encourage fleet renewal, such as restrictions on older standards or the introduction of higher environmental taxes for the biggest polluters. Overall, the new-vehicle market continues its growth trend from 2025 but remains under the strong dominance of the used-vehicle segment.

Q: Electrification was one of the central topics at the recently held Conference of the Association in the Sava Center. Is Serbia currently ready for greater penetration of electric vehicles, particularly in terms of infrastructure, such as the charging network?



A: Unfortunately, given the current state of infrastructure, the legislative framework, and accompanying measures, Serbia is still not fully ready for a more significant penetration of electric vehicles. This applies not only to the domestic market but also to transit, especially given the upcoming EXPO and the expected arrival of a larger number of visitors using electric vehicles.

Currently, Serbia has between 220 and 250 public chargers, which is insufficient, and the distribution is uneven – most are located in major urban centers and along highways. At the same time, smaller towns and regional routes are significantly less covered. However, it is important to emphasize that there is awareness among the competent institutions and a willingness to intensify infrastructure development in the coming period, with a clear definition of where fast DC chargers are needed and where AC chargers are more appropriate.

In addition to infrastructure, changes to the regulatory framework are necessary, including alignment with European standards such as the AFIR regulation, which means billing based on kilowatt-hours rather than the current practice of time-based charging. It is also necessary to introduce non-financial incentives – such as lower tolls and parking fees – as well as other measures that will encourage the use of zero-emission vehicles.

An important segment also includes operational solutions, such as the introduction of green license plates, as well as a broader, systemic approach that connects all elements – from subsidies and infrastructure to regulation and the used vehicle market. This is precisely why, together with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, we have launched an initiative to develop a national strategy for the transition to e-mobility to address this issue in an integrated, long-term manner rather than in a fragmented way.

The goal is for Serbia to be prepared for a future in which zero-emission vehicles will dominate, whether electric, hydrogen, or other technologies. The Serbian Association of Importers of Vehicles and Parts will be a reliable partner to state institutions in this process, transferring knowledge, experience, and best practices from Europe to help us collectively keep pace with the transition toward sustainable mobility.

Q: How do you assess the pace of development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Serbia, and what are the key obstacles slowing down its faster expansion?

A: The current pace of development of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Serbia is not sufficient to support a more serious transition to e-mobility. When we look at

the number of public chargers per 100,000 inhabitants, Serbia stands at around three to four, while neighboring countries such as Slovenia, Croatia, and Hungary have between nine and 15, clearly indicating the need for acceleration.

It is encouraging that certain initiatives have been launched, such as the project to transform highway rest areas into so-called green stations, which could significantly improve coverage along key transport

taken. Still, it is now crucial to accelerate the pace, remove regulatory barriers, and adopt a systemic approach to network development. In other words, the framework exists; the experience exists. What is needed now is decisive action.

Q: The Belgrade Motor Show was also recently held. In your opinion, what marked this year's edition, and what were the key messages from the industry?

The main message of this year's event is that the market is changing rapidly, that new technologies are already a reality, and that both the market and society need to take concrete steps to keep pace with these changes and be prepared for the future of mobility.

Q: How do you see the further development of the vehicle market in Serbia in the coming years – do you expect an accelerated transition to electric and hybrid models, or will the dominance of conventional powertrains continue?

A: We expect the vehicle market in Serbia to record stable growth of around 10 to 12 percent annually in the coming years, of course, assuming there are no major disruptions on the global geopolitical and economic front. Current energy price trends, particularly fuel prices, could further accelerate the transition to electric vehicles, especially in the business sector and among corporate customers.

This may be particularly evident in the light commercial vehicle segment, where electrification has a clear economic rationale. However, we do not expect a sudden or rapid transition – the dominance of conventional powertrains, primarily petrol and diesel engines, will continue in the near term.

Although after 2035 the supply of new vehicles in Europe will be predominantly electrified, including electric, hybrid, and plug-in hybrid models, the reality in our market will change more slowly. Serbia remains a market dominated by used vehicles, and this trend is likely to persist over the next five years.

In other words, the direction is clear, and the transition is inevitable, but its pace will largely depend on economic factors, the regulatory framework, and the market structure itself.

Interview by Milena Maglovski



corridors. However, the main obstacles remain the regulatory framework and its implementation.

It is particularly important for Serbia to fully align with the European Commission's AFIR regulation, which clearly defines standards – from the distribution of chargers every 60 kilometers along highways, to the availability of payment by bank cards, and billing based on kilowatt-hours. As a candidate country for European Union membership, Serbia will inevitably need to implement these standards, so it is rational to do so as soon as possible.

In addition, it is necessary to consistently enforce already adopted regulations, including the requirement for new residential buildings to include charging infrastructure, as well as the gradual introduction of EV chargers at fuel stations.

Overall, the direction is positive, and certain steps have already been

A: This year's Belgrade Motor Show and Motorcycle Fair was marked by record attendance – over seven days, a total of 137,268 visitors were recorded, representing the highest level in the past few decades. Considering that during the time of the former Yugoslavia, the event lasted ten days and attracted around 150,000 visitors, this result is even more significant.

One of the key features was also the strong presence of brands from the People's Republic of China – out of around 50 automotive brands, as many as 27 came from China, clearly demonstrating their growing influence on our market, in line with global and European trends.

Electrification was also a dominant theme – a large number of exhibited models were electric, hybrid, or plug-in hybrid, clearly confirming the direction in which the automotive industry is heading.



ABB IS DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE THAT ACCELERATES THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

As electric vehicles become increasingly present on the roads, it is becoming clear that their full potential depends not only on drivetrain technology but also on the infrastructure that supports them. It is precisely at this level—where energy and mobility intersect—that ABB is developing new solutions to enable more efficient and sustainable transport.

The latest portfolio expansion includes the A200 and A300 All-in-One chargers, alongside the already introduced A400 and C50 chargers, the megawatt-scale MCS1200 system for heavy-duty vehicles, and the

ChargeDock Dispenser for depot charging. These systems are not designed as standalone products, but as part of a broader platform that enables the gradual development of infrastructure in line with growing demand, and part of a wider strategy to support the transition to low-carbon mobility.

Electrification as a Response to Transport Emissions

The electrification of transport is increasingly seen as one of the key responses to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In its sustainability strategies, ABB emphasizes this role by developing technologies that enable

lower energy consumption and reduced emissions in transport and infrastructure. However, the actual environmental impact of electric vehicles largely depends on how energy is used and distributed. This is where ABB sees its role—in developing systems that enable broader and faster adoption of e-mobility.

Reliability as the Key Currency

One of the main reasons for the slower adoption of e-mobility is not vehicle technology but infrastructure reliability. ABB identifies this as a key area for differentiation. The

new generation of chargers is based on an architecture that divides the system into multiple independent units: user interface, power electronics, mechatronics, and cloud. Such a structure allows charging to continue even if certain components, such as the display or payment system, encounter issues. The result is a target of up to 99 percent operational availability, which is particularly important for commercial operators and fleets, where any downtime translates directly into losses.

Energy Efficiency as the Key to Environmental Impact

One of the key aspects of sustainability often remains invisible to the end user—energy losses during charging. ABB addresses this issue with silicon carbide (SiC) modules, which achieve a conversion efficiency of around 97 percent. In practice, this means less energy waste and more efficient vehicle charging. When observed at the network level, the difference becomes significant, especially in segments such as logistics and public transport.

Additionally, digital management platforms enable real-time optimization of energy consumption, contributing to more stable and efficient system operation.

Integration with Renewable Energy Sources

One of the key environmental benefits of e-mobility is realized only when infrastructure is connected to renewable energy sources—for example, by using electricity generated from solar panels. ABB is developing solutions in this segment that enable easier integration of charging systems with green energy, further reducing CO₂ emissions throughout the entire charging lifecycle. In this way, charging electric vehicles becomes part of a broader energy transition, rather than merely replacing one propulsion system with another.

Circular Economy and Long Lifespan

The environmental aspect of infrastructure is not measured solely by energy consumption, but also by its lifecycle. The platform-based approach applied by ABB enables modular upgrades to existing systems—for example, increasing charger power without a complete replacement—which also improves cost efficiency. Component standardization enables faster servicing—up to six times faster than traditional systems—while modular design extends the lifespan of investments and reduces electronic waste.

Reducing Emissions Through Smart Energy Management

The electric vehicle charging industry is entering a phase where it is no longer sufficient to offer devices tailored to specific scenarios—highways, cities, or depots. ABB now emphasizes a platform-based approach in which different products share a common architecture, operational logic, and user experience. As the company highlights, this model enables greater reliability, faster development, and easier adaptation to a rapidly changing market. In practice, this means that operators and users gain a consistent experience regardless of location or charger type, while the manufacturer reduces complexity and accelerates innovation.

The new ABB platform is designed as a flexible foundation that adapts to different segments – from public charging to logistics and urban transport. In public charging, the focus is on scalability: the new A200 and A300 models allow capacity to increase as demand grows, without the need for complete equipment replacement. For public transport and depot charging, ChargeDock brings greater flexibility in infrastructure layout, which is particularly important for large fleets of buses and

trucks, where space and organization play a key role.

The most significant technological breakthrough, however, comes from the heavy transport segment. The MCS1200, developed in cooperation with truck manufacturers, delivers up to 1.2 MW of power – enough to charge electric trucks during mandatory driver rest periods, directly addressing one of the key challenges in the electrification of logistics.




The combination of software and infrastructure further enhances the environmental impact. ABB's charging management platforms enable optimization of energy consumption across the entire network, leading to reduced emissions and lower operational losses. This is particularly important for fleets and logistics, where electrification has the greatest potential to reduce transport-related emissions.

A Step Toward a More Mature E-Mobility Market

With five new products launched in just one year, ABB clearly demonstrates that the charging industry is entering a new phase – one of standardization, scaling, and professionalization. In this context, the focus is shifting from “how fast we charge” to questions of reliability, availability, and overall user experience – factors that will ultimately determine the pace of the transition to electric mobility.

Through its sustainability strategy, ABB emphasizes its collaboration with partners to reduce emissions across the entire value chain and to contribute to the development of a low-carbon society. In this sense, charging infrastructure is not just a technical solution – it is becoming a key element of the energy transition.



 Peko Dapčević Boulevard 13, Belgrade
 dragan.stankovic@rs.abb.com
 www.abb.com/ev-charging

GLOBAL ENERGY CRISIS – EUROPE’S STRATEGIES FOR MAINTAINING STABILITY

After a period of relative stability, the economy and energy sector are once again facing serious challenges due to geopolitical instability in the Middle East, which intensified further at the beginning of this year. Such developments have quickly affected the global market, prompting countries worldwide to adopt packages of measures and crisis plans to preserve energy security and price stability. Energy independence has thus once again been confirmed as one of the key pillars of national security.

The following text presents an overview of short-term and strategic responses by selected European countries and institutions, illustrating different approaches to addressing the current situation. It is important to note that the data presented are based on circumstances and official decisions made in March and up to early April 2026.

Before examining individual examples, it is necessary to consider

the broader framework of measures implemented by countries in response to energy market disruptions. In short, these responses can be divided into short-term and long-term measures. Short-term measures have been aimed at alleviating immediate pressure on citizens and businesses and have included capping energy prices, reducing excise duties and taxes, releasing state reserves to the market, and, in some cases, imposing export restrictions. On the other hand, longer-term policies focus on strengthening the energy system’s resilience. These include increased investments in renewable energy sources, improvements in energy efficiency, diversification of supply sources, as well as incentives for electric vehicles and broader electrification of consumption.

Although European Union officials state that supply stability is not currently at risk, they also emphasize the need for Member States to adhere to certain measures. One of the

reasons cited for the current stability is the obligation of Member States to maintain oil reserves and to have contingency plans in place in the event of supply disruptions.

To maintain long-term stability, the European Commission sent a letter to the energy ministers of Member States. In that letter, the Commissioner calls for better coordination and for consideration of voluntary fuel-saving measures, with a particular focus on the transport sector, in line with the International Energy Agency (IEA) ‘s 10-Point Plan to reduce oil consumption.

The plan outlines specific measures that governments, companies, and households can implement to reduce consumption and mitigate the economic impact of disruptions caused by the conflict in the Middle East. Special attention is given to road transport, which accounts for nearly half of global oil demand, but the measures also cover aviation, cooking, and industry.





The ten points include:

1. Increasing remote work for jobs suitable for working from home
2. Reducing highway speed limits by at least 10 km/h
3. Shifting from private cars to public transport
4. Introducing alternating driving systems based on license plates in large cities
5. Increasing car occupancy and adopting more fuel-efficient driving practices
6. Better route planning, regular vehicle maintenance, and optimal use of commercial transport capacity
7. Redirecting LPG from transport to households, enabling its use for essential needs such as cooking
8. Reducing the number of flights, especially business travel, where alternatives exist
9. Switching to electric cooking appliances and other alternatives, reducing household dependence on LPG
10. Using alternative raw materials and improving industrial process efficiency, thereby reducing oil consumption and freeing up resources for priority needs

Measures of EU Member States

To maintain long-term stability, the European Commission sent a letter to the energy ministers of Member States. In that letter, the Commissioner calls for better coordination and for consideration of voluntary fuel-saving measures, with a particular focus on the transport sector, in line with the International Energy Agency (IEA) 's 10-Point Plan to reduce oil consumption

Romania



Romania stands out as one of the most decisive examples. In March, the government adopted two important regulations. The first represents a strategic decision for the gas market, extending the maximum price of natural gas for households until March 2027. The second regulation declared a crisis situation in the crude oil and petroleum products market. These measures took effect on April 1 and will remain in place until June 30, 2026, with the possibility of extension depending on the situation in the Middle East.

Romania introduced a requirement for prior state approval for the export of diesel and crude oil. Companies wishing to export or supply fuel within the European Union must



Romania introduced a requirement for prior state approval for the export of diesel and crude oil

submit requests and supporting documentation to the relevant authorities, ensuring that domestic supply is prioritized. In cases of non-compliance, penalties ranging from 5 to 10 percent of turnover may be imposed, along with confiscation of goods. At the same time, trading margins for producers, importers, and distributors have been capped at 2025 levels to prevent unjustified price increases at fuel stations. Additionally, the share of biodiesel in fuel has been allowed to decrease from eight to a minimum of two percent, directly affecting the reduction of final prices for consumers. Alongside these measures, the government also amended rules on state subsidies for diesel fuel in order to accelerate payments to transport operators.

Illustration: Freepik/rawpixel.com



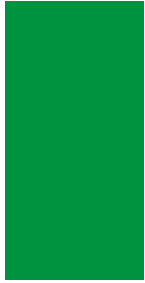
Croatia

In the second half of March, Croatia adopted its 10th package of measures, primarily aimed at protecting citizens and businesses. The package is intended to mitigate the effects of a sharp price increase while preserving energy supply security. One of the decisions was to extend electricity-related measures until September 30, 2026, meaning that prices for households and the non-profit sector will remain unchanged. For entrepreneurs, the price cap model will continue for a six-month period, with consumption capped at 250,000 kWh. Regarding gas, supply stability has been ensured and price increases prevented until the end of September this year.

In addition, EUR 55 million has been allocated to compensate energy

costs, helping to mitigate rising prices, while more than 125,000 of the most vulnerable citizens have received direct financial support. The country has also implemented short-term measures by setting maximum retail prices for petroleum products, thereby limiting fuel prices and curbing their increase. As for long-term measures, the 10th package includes nearly EUR 250 million allocated to investments in energy resilience, covering renewable energy sources, system modernization, and energy efficiency improvements.

Croatia adopted its 10th package of measures, primarily aimed at protecting citizens and businesses. The package is intended to mitigate the effects of a sharp price increase while preserving energy supply security



Italy

Italy has taken a different approach, officially postponing the phase-out of coal-fired power plants to 2038, 13 years later than the deadline set in the Italian National Energy and Climate Plan (PNIEC) for 2024. The country has turned its focus toward securing a more reliable gas supply. In this context, as reported by Italian media, the Prime Minister visited Algeria in March to negotiate an urgent increase in gas deliveries via the TransMed pipeline.

In addition, the Italian multinational energy company Eni agreed to deepened cooperation with Algeria's state-owned oil and gas company Sonatrach to explore new gas fields. In mid-March, the company announced the discovery of two new gas fields in Libya – Bahr Essalam South 2 and 3 – with total estimated reserves exceeding one trillion cubic feet (Tcf). The fields are located approximately 85 kilometers offshore, near the existing Bahr Essalam offshore field, enabling rapid development through existing infrastructure. Initial tests confirmed high reservoir quality

Italy has taken a different approach, officially postponing the phase-out of coal-fired power plants to 2038, 13 years later than the deadline set in the Italian National Energy and Climate Plan

and significant production potential. The produced gas will be intended for both the domestic Libyan market and exports to Italy.

In Spain, the Council of Ministers adopted two Royal Decree-Laws – the first concerning a comprehensive response plan to the crisis in the Middle East, and the second introducing measures in the housing rental sector



Spain

In Spain, the Council of Ministers adopted two Royal Decree-Laws – the first concerning a comprehensive response plan to the crisis in the Middle East, and the second introducing measures in the housing rental sector in response to the economic and social consequences of the conflict in Iran.

The first decree envisages the mobilization of up to EUR 5 billion and includes two groups of measures. Short-term measures aim to immediately mitigate the effects of the crisis through reduced taxes on energy products, additional support for citizens—particularly the most vulnerable—as well as assistance to businesses and key sectors such as transport and agriculture, to prevent further price increases and maintain market stability. On the other hand, long-term (strategic) measures are

focused on strengthening system resilience and reducing dependence on future crises. The emphasis is on accelerating investments in renewable energy sources, strengthening energy independence, developing energy storage capacities, and modernizing energy infrastructure.

The second decree relates to the housing market and includes extending existing rental contracts and limiting rent increases, with the aim of protecting citizens amid rising living costs and economic uncertainty.



United Kingdom

Although no longer a member of the European Union, the United Kingdom is included as a final example, given its significance as a European country. The UK government plans to introduce cheaper electricity during windy days, when wind farms generate more energy than the grid can absorb. During such periods, households near wind farms would pay lower electricity prices, allowing excess energy to be used rather than going to waste.

By a decision also adopted last month, plug-in solar panels will be

The UK government plans to introduce cheaper electricity during windy days, when wind farms generate more energy than the grid can absorb

introduced and made available in retail stores, enabling households to reduce energy bills without high installation costs. In addition, under the Future Homes Standard, a new regulation has come into force requiring that most new homes be built with integrated solar panels and efficient heating systems. Furthermore, from April 1 through the end of June, households pay lower electricity bills.

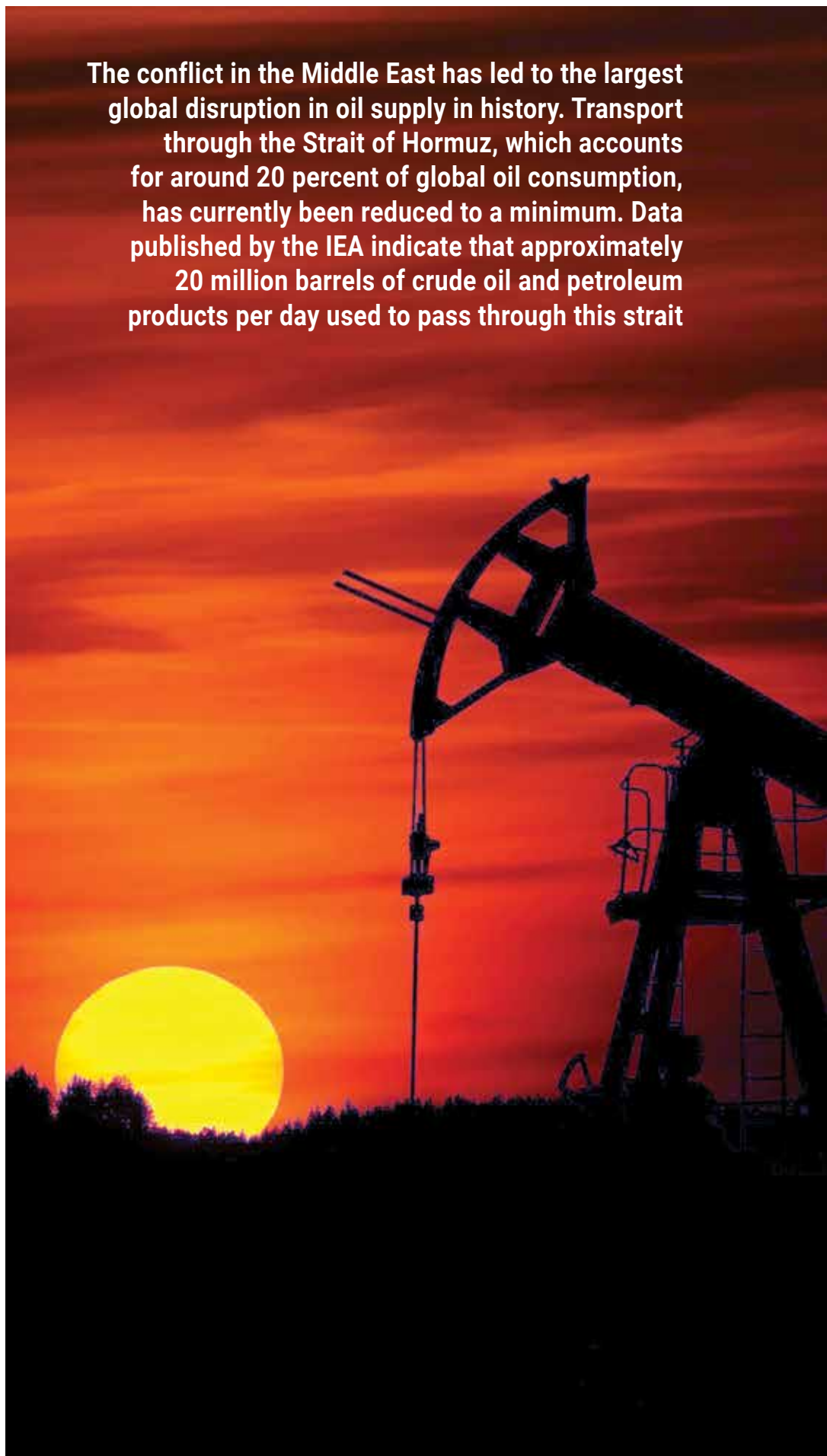
Speaking of these strategic decisions, it should also be noted that the United Kingdom has announced a major renewable energy auction round to be held in July 2026, in which up to 18 offshore wind farms could participate, along with new onshore wind and solar projects.

The conflict in the Middle East has led to the largest global disruption in oil supply in history. Transport through the Strait of Hormuz, which accounts for around 20 percent of global oil consumption, has currently been reduced to a minimum. Data published by the IEA indicate that approximately 20 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum products per day used to pass through this strait.

Although the restoration of transport through the Strait of Hormuz is crucial for stabilizing the global energy market, countries worldwide are implementing various supply- and demand-side measures to mitigate the consequences. One of the most significant strategic decisions at the international level in March was the release of 400 million barrels of oil from strategic reserves by members of the International Energy Agency (IEA), representing the largest release in the organization's history. However, increasing supply alone cannot fully offset the current shortage. Therefore, controlling and optimizing consumption remains an important and effective way to reduce pressure on consumers, improve supply, and strengthen energy security.

Prepared by Katarina Vuinac

The conflict in the Middle East has led to the largest global disruption in oil supply in history. Transport through the Strait of Hormuz, which accounts for around 20 percent of global oil consumption, has currently been reduced to a minimum. Data published by the IEA indicate that approximately 20 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum products per day used to pass through this strait





HOW TO SMARTLY START THE TRANSITION TO AN EV FLEET

The transition to electric vehicles in corporate fleets is no longer a question of “if,” but “how.” However, many companies in Serbia get stuck at the very first step—believing that electrification is simply a matter of replacing diesel and petrol vehicles with battery-powered ones. In this interview, Zorana Đorić, Director of the company “Vozim na struju,”

breaks down the most common beginner misconceptions and explains why the real starting point lies in data rather than catalogs.

How should pilot projects be designed to deliver reliable, measurable decisions? What is Balkan Fleet, and what role does it play in translating general sustainability narratives into concrete business scenarios? This interview shifts the focus from “which

vehicle to buy” to “how to systematically prepare a fleet for the future.”

Q: When a company in Serbia first considers fleet electrification, what is the most common misconception that slows it down at the very beginning?

A: The most common misconception is that electrification begins with choosing vehicles. In practice, it starts much earlier—with analyzing

the entire operation. If a company immediately begins comparing models without first assessing routes, mileage, downtime, load, available power at the location, and cost structure, it will quickly reach incorrect conclusions. An electric vehicle is not a one-to-one replacement for a diesel vehicle. It requires a different approach to planning, and that is where the biggest difference lies between a successful project and a failed investment.

Balkan Fleet: A Central Hub for the Future of Fleet Management in the Balkans

Balkan Fleet is the first specialized platform dedicated to fleet managers and mobility professionals in the region. Its mission is to connect professionals from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo* in order to jointly develop sustainable, innovative, and efficient approaches to fleet management.

As a centralized source of information for the automotive and fleet industry, Balkan Fleet provides daily news, expert analyses, interviews, announcements, and reports from key regional events. The platform is designed to support the professional development of its users through continuous education, the exchange of best practices, and networking with experts from across the region.

Basic news and articles are available free of charge, while subscribers (monthly or annual) gain access to premium analytics, in-depth reports, and specialized interviews.

* This designation is without prejudice to status and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and the opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Q: What data must a company collect before it can make a realistic calculation and assess whether fleet electrification makes sense?

A: Without high-quality input data, there can be no serious decision. A company must understand its actual daily mileage, route profiles, how long vehicles are idle during the day and night, load conditions, seasonal variations, and the real costs related to fuel, maintenance, and downtime. Only when these data points are clearly defined can a meaningful total cost of ownership (TCO) analysis be conducted. Otherwise, companies often compare only the purchase price and neglect the operational perspective, which is crucial in electrification.

Q: When a company decides to take the first step, what does a good start to fleet electrification look like in practice?

A: The best first step is usually not a large-scale procurement, but a controlled pilot. This means selecting a segment of the fleet or a specific operation with the most favorable conditions, and then testing consumption, charging logistics, operational impact, and overall economics on that example. A good pilot is not a marketing move—it is a tool for making the next decision. Companies often make the mistake of skipping this phase and immediately making a major investment decision without sufficient internal data and operational experience.

Q: How important are subsidies, infrastructure, and regulatory development in a company's decision to transition to an EV fleet?

A: They are important, but not sufficient on their own. Subsidies can be a useful incentive, regulatory direction provides additional confidence, and infrastructure development is an important market signal. However, none of these elements can replace internal analysis and proper preparation. If a



Zorana Đorić
Director of the company "Vozim na struju"

company does not have a clear understanding of where a vehicle operates, how it is charged, how long it remains idle, and what service support looks like, neither subsidies nor trends will solve the project. Incentives can accelerate a decision, but they cannot fix a poorly designed concept.

Q: Where do you see the role of Balkan Fleet in this process, and what do you want this platform to bring to companies considering electrification?

A: We see Balkan Fleet as a platform that brings greater operational clarity to a topic that is often approached too superficially. Today, there are many general discussions about electric mobility, but there is still not enough content to help companies understand what they actually need to measure, calculate, and prepare. Our goal with Balkan Fleet is to provide exactly those insights—based on real-world experience, data, and practical business scenarios. And where companies require deeper analysis, a pilot approach, or structured support in the electrification process, there is naturally room for professional consulting services.

Interview by Milena Maglovski



WHAT A NEW-GENERATION FARM LOOKS LIKE IN SERBIA

In the vicinity of Ub, the business story of the company Stočar LSB d.o.o. is developing, based on a family tradition in agriculture, while at the same time increasingly turning toward modern energy solutions. The family story has evolved over several generations, and in 1991, it received its formal framework with the establishment of the company, whose foundations are closely

connected to the land and the heritage of the Leontijević family.

As we have previously reported while following the projects of this company, today a total of 1,400 hectares of arable land are cultivated on their estates, of which around 1,000 hectares are under corn and 400 under wheat. This production is intended for feeding livestock with feed from their own fields, thereby

completing the entire production process.

In addition to agriculture and livestock farming, Stočar LSB has in recent years also been developing the energy segment of its business. Cooperation with the company MT-KO-MEX initially began through the implementation of two rooftop solar power plants on the company's facilities. The first plant, with a capacity

of 40 kW, was installed on a facility with prosumer status, meaning that part of the generated energy is used directly on-site, while the surplus is fed into the grid. This plant currently covers about 80 percent of that facility's needs. The second solar power plant, with a capacity of 391 kW, was also installed on the roof of one of the company's buildings.

Following these solar systems, cooperation with MT-KOMEX continued on the infrastructure required for a biogas plant constructed at the Radobić farm the previous year, one of the two farms that form the core of the business. It is a 1 MW facility that uses organic waste from

a connection substation for the biogas power plant. It also includes a step-up transformer that raises the voltage from the cogeneration unit's output to a medium-voltage level of 10 kV to meet grid connection requirements.

In this way, the technical conditions were established for the efficient use and delivery of electricity generated from biogas to the grid, further improving the system's overall energy sustainability.

After Biogas, a Ground-Mounted Solar Power Plant

Following this direction, a new renewable energy project is now being

of 9.95 MW, which will feed all generated electricity into the distribution grid.

The plant will be installed over an area of approximately 55,914 square meters covered by panels. Technically, the project includes the installation of 21,672 solar panels with an individual capacity of 650 Wp and 36 inverters with a capacity of 300 kW manufactured by Huawei, which convert the generated direct current into alternating current suitable for further delivery into the power system.

With a planned connection capacity of 9.95 MW, Takovo 1 significantly exceeds the previously implemented

Cooperation with the company MT-KOMEX initially began through the implementation of two rooftop solar power plants on the company's facilities



the farms and silos. For the needs of this system, important electrical works were carried out, including two substations, for which MT-KOMEX has the necessary expertise. One is intended for supplying the farm's and the facility's own consumption, along with a connection switchgear for the entire complex, while the other, with an installed capacity of 1,600 kVA, was designed as

developed. As previously announced in a conversation with Branko Leontijević, who stands behind the entire initiative, and once again in cooperation with MT-KOMEX, the project for the construction of the Takovo 1 solar power plant in the Municipality of Ub is currently underway. It is a new, but significantly larger, ground-mounted solar power plant, with a planned connection capacity

rooftop solar systems for Stočar LSB and represents a substantial step forward in electricity generation from renewable energy sources.

Thus, alongside existing agricultural and livestock capacities, an increasingly significant energy component has gradually developed within what is primarily an agricultural enterprise.


Prepared by Milica Vučković

WE BUILD SOLAR POWER PLANTS TOGETHER, WE BUILD THE FUTURE

- ✓ **MT-KOMEX BH**, as part of the group **MT-KOMEX d.o.o. Belgrade** is one of the leaders in the design and construction of solar power plants, with extensive experience and numerous successfully completed projects.
- ✓ The company actively supports clients in preparing for the changes introduced by the CBAM mechanism, offering guidance in meeting new regulatory requirements through concrete steps and expert consulting.
- ✓ By transitioning to solutions that reduce carbon dioxide emissions, we help pave the way toward sustainable operations and the green transition.
- ✓ Our team of experts provides a comprehensive turnkey approach, covering every stage of the project – from planning and power plant design, through equipment delivery and construction, to system functionality testing and maintenance.
- ✓ We believe that solar energy is the right solution for achieving energy independence – see for yourself.



MT-KOMEX BH
ENERGY SOLUTIONS D.O.O.

 www.mt-komex.ba
 info@mt-komex.ba
 **+(387) 64 40 26 295**





ENERGY TRANSITION OF THE REGION IN FOCUS AT THE TREBINJE ENERGY SUMMIT 2026

In the heart of Herzegovina, where the Mediterranean sun reflects off the waves of the Trebišnjica River, the seventh edition of the Trebinje Energy Summit 2026 (SET Trebinje 2026) was held.

Traditionally, Trebinje has become a meeting place for visions of the future of energy, from renewable sources and digitalization to new market models and technological advancements. This year, more than 700 participants had the opportunity, through dialogue, the exchange of experiences, and concrete projects, to contribute to the sustainable energy transition of the region.

However, one of the main reasons SET Trebinje is eagerly anticipated each year is the host city itself. Visitors keep returning not only for content that aligns with modern energy trends, but also for the authentic atmosphere – Trebinje has already become a city that offers the perfect setting for creating new ideas and partnerships.

Trebinje has become a meeting place for visions of the future of energy, from renewable sources and digitalization to new market models and technological advancements

The seventh edition of the Summit was organized with the support of MH Elektroprivreda Republike Srpske and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with general sponsorship by ELNOS Group Banja Luka.

CBAM as a Key Challenge for the Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Region

During the three-day event, a series of thematic panels addressed key issues shaping the present and future of the energy sector.

Particular attention was drawn to the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), one of the most significant instruments of the European Union in the fight against global emissions. This mechanism

introduces additional costs for imported products with a high carbon footprint, directly affecting the competitiveness of industries such as steel, cement, and aluminum from countries that do not yet have aligned CO2 pricing systems.

As highlighted by Arnesa Borčak, moderator of the panel dedicated to this topic, CBAM represents one of the most important regulatory turning points for the energy and industrial sector of Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in the context of access to the European Union market. Its implementation, as emphasized, brings not only new obligations but also clearly indicates the direction in which the global economy is moving.

- In order to successfully adapt to this requirement, a coordinated approach among institutions,

industry, and international partners providing support in this process is necessary – said Borčak.

The process in Serbia was discussed by Milan Aleksić, advisor to the Minister of Mining and Energy.

- As far as our industry and exporters of steel, iron, aluminum, and construction materials are concerned, they are already monitoring and tracking all relevant parameters in order to understand their carbon footprint and avoid a situation in which they are charged based on default values during export, rather than on their actual emissions – said Aleksić.

The level of preparedness of companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina for this new regulatory framework was further explained by Miroslav Kodžoman from EL PROMET Banja



During the three-day event, a series of thematic panels addressed key issues shaping the present and future of the energy sector



Luka. Although, as he noted, companies are largely informed about CBAM, there is still significant room for additional clarification and practical understanding of its implementation.

– From the perspective of our manufacturing company, the first phase did not affect us significantly, but it is clear that we will face serious changes in the coming period. Above all, we will need to adapt our business operations when it comes to exports – emphasized Kodžoman, pointing to the inevitability of transformation.

The panel’s joint conclusion clearly indicated the direction in which the region is moving: timely adaptation, stronger institutional support, and intensified regional cooperation are becoming key prerequisites for successfully addressing the new rules of the game introduced by CBAM.

Investments in Renewable Energy Sources and Challenges of Grid Connection

The final day of the Trebinje Energy Summit (SET Trebinje) was marked by one of the most relevant topics today – investments in renewable energy sources in 2026, with a particular focus on the growing pressure

on the power grid and the challenges of connecting new capacities.

The panel was moderated by Nevena Đukić, Director of CEEFOR, who steered the discussion toward key issues – the current state of the grid, connection procedures, and realistic prospects for further development and investment in renewable energy sources. Through a dynamic discussion, participants sought to shed light on the system’s main current limitations.

At the outset, Cvjetko Žepinić, Executive Director of Elektroprivreda BiH, addressed the widely held view that the power grid is the main bottleneck to the development of renewable energy projects. His response was clear – such a perception does not fully reflect the situation on the ground. As he pointed out, no investor in Bosnia and Herzegovina has so far been rejected when it comes to requests for connection to the transmission grid. Illustrating this with concrete data, he stated that seven wind farms with a total installed capacity of 320 megawatts and ten solar power plants with a total of 330 megawatts are currently connected to the grid, confirming that the system, despite challenges, is keeping pace with sector development.



Željko Zubac from EFT Group emphasized that the grid itself is not among the key factors determining an investment’s fate. According to him, financial models and revenue security through power purchase agreements (PPAs) carry significantly greater weight. Banks insist on long-term arrangements and fixed prices to ensure stable project financing. An additional challenge

is the increasing volatility of electricity prices. Nevertheless, Zubac concluded that the decisive factor for success is a strong team – people capable of carrying a project from idea to realization, as well as through post-commissioning phases.

A similar perspective was shared by Aleksandar Šukalo, Director of Elnos Group Banja Luka, who reflected on insights from an expert panel dedicated to the construction of renewable energy facilities. As he noted, investors openly discussed numerous challenges – from administrative procedures and property-legal relations, to energy offtake, contractor selection, and financing.

Problems more often arise in communication between designers, contractors, system operators, and institutions. According to him, the lack of coordination and effective cooperation represents the biggest obstacle, even though the technical conditions for grid connection generally exist.

The panel also addressed whether the regulatory framework is keeping pace with market developments, with a particular focus on battery storage systems, which are still not fully regulated in the region.

Saša Šćekić stated that Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet adopted a new law regulating this area, adding

rulebook, which now includes energy storage systems. By the end of November last year, the entire set of secondary legislation for battery storage had been developed – covering both standalone and hybrid installations. He added that connection requests already exist.

Miloš Kostić, Director of MT-KOMEX, a company with extensive experience in implementing solar power plant projects, presented the company's experience, with more than 230 MW of installed capacity and over 380 completed projects. Building on the topic of battery systems, Kostić announced that, following three solar power plants scheduled for commissioning in 2026, the company will turn its focus to battery energy storage systems – as a key element for the continuation of the energy transition.

MT-KOMEX is actively monitoring developments in the electricity market, including the announcement that negative electricity prices will be recorded in the Republic of Serbia for the first time in early May. In response to financing challenges, the company successfully issued the first green bonds in Serbia, opening a new way to secure the capital needed for investments.

All speakers at the SET Trebinje 2026 conference agreed that the key to a successful energy transition in the region does not lie solely in resource availability or infrastructure development, but in the alignment of the regulatory framework, the stability of financial models, and above all, high-quality cooperation among all stakeholders in the system.

This is precisely where the importance of such events lies – Trebinje has once again demonstrated its capacity to bring together key stakeholders and foster dialogue that leads to solutions, confirming its role as one of the most important energy hubs in the region.

Prepared by Milena Maglovski



Interestingly, grid connection was not identified as a key issue. According to him, serious investors with a good approach and reliable partners can overcome this challenge without major obstacles.

Ansan Halilović from SMG Sarajevo further highlighted relationships among project stakeholders, emphasizing that investors are rarely the bottleneck in project

that the regulator and system operator currently have only one tool at their disposal – secondary legislation. Nevertheless, due to growing interest in battery systems, Šćekić emphasized that although they cannot fully transpose European Union directives, they have managed to achieve certain progress within their competencies. One such step is amending the grid connection



VOLVO TRUCKS: GAS AND HYDROGEN AS THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

At a time when the transport industry is facing increasingly strict climate targets and growing pressure for decarbonization, Volvo Trucks is positioning itself as one of the leaders in the transition toward sustainable solutions. By combining gas and hydrogen technologies, the company is building a bridge between today's market needs and the long-term goal of zero-emission transport.

Gas as a Real and Immediately Applicable Solution

The year 2025 was a record year for Volvo gas-powered trucks, clearly demonstrating the accelerated adoption of alternative fuels worldwide. Since the technology was introduced in 2018, Volvo Trucks has delivered more than 10,000 gas-powered trucks, and demand continues to grow.

The largest markets currently include the United Kingdom, Germany, and Sweden, while significant growth is also being recorded in India and Latin America. The key to this success lies in a combination of factors: fuel availability, competitive pricing, and performance comparable to diesel engines.

Volvo models such as the Volvo FH, FM, and FH Aero enable the use of LNG and bio-LNG—a renewable

fuel derived from organic waste. Bio-LNG offers the greatest environmental benefit, as it can reduce CO₂ emissions by up to 100 percent over the entire lifecycle (“Well-to-Wheel”).

A range of up to 1,000 kilometers on a single tank makes these trucks ideal for long-haul transport, where electric solutions still face limitations. A well-developed network of gas stations in countries such as Germany, Norway, and Sweden further supports their adoption.

Technology That Bridges the Gap Between Gas and Diesel

One of the key reasons for the success of Volvo gas trucks is advanced HPDI (High Pressure Direct Injection) technology, where a small amount of ignition fuel is injected at high pressure to enable compression ignition before adding gas or hydrogen. Volvo already uses this technology in its

often a decisive factor in investment decisions.

Hydrogen – The Next Phase of Zero-Emission Transport

While gas already represents a sustainable solution today, Volvo Trucks is simultaneously developing future technologies.

The company has begun testing heavy-duty trucks with internal combustion engines powered by hydrogen, with a planned commercial launch before 2030.

These trucks use an advanced version of HPDI technology, enabling high energy efficiency, lower fuel consumption, and greater power compared to earlier generations of hydrogen engines. As a result, their performance is expected to be fully comparable to that of diesel vehicles.

A particular advantage of hydrogen is its suitability for long-haul transport and for regions with

including electric trucks, fuel cell vehicles, and gas-powered trucks and vehicles running on renewable fuels such as HVO.

This strategy reflects market realities—different transport tasks require different solutions. While electric trucks dominate in urban environments, gas and hydrogen offer optimal solutions for long-distance and more demanding operations.

The development of Volvo gas and hydrogen trucks shows that transport decarbonization does not have to mean sacrificing performance or efficiency. On the contrary,

One of the key reasons for the success of Volvo gas trucks is advanced HPDI



gas-powered trucks, with more than 10,000 units sold worldwide.

Volvo’s advanced gas engine technology is based on the highly successful D13 powertrain, delivering performance comparable to diesel engines while significantly reducing CO₂ emissions.

For transport companies, this means that switching to alternative fuels does not require compromising operational performance, which is

limited electric-vehicle charging infrastructure. When green hydrogen is used, along with renewable fuels for initial ignition, these trucks have the potential to achieve net-zero CO₂ emissions.

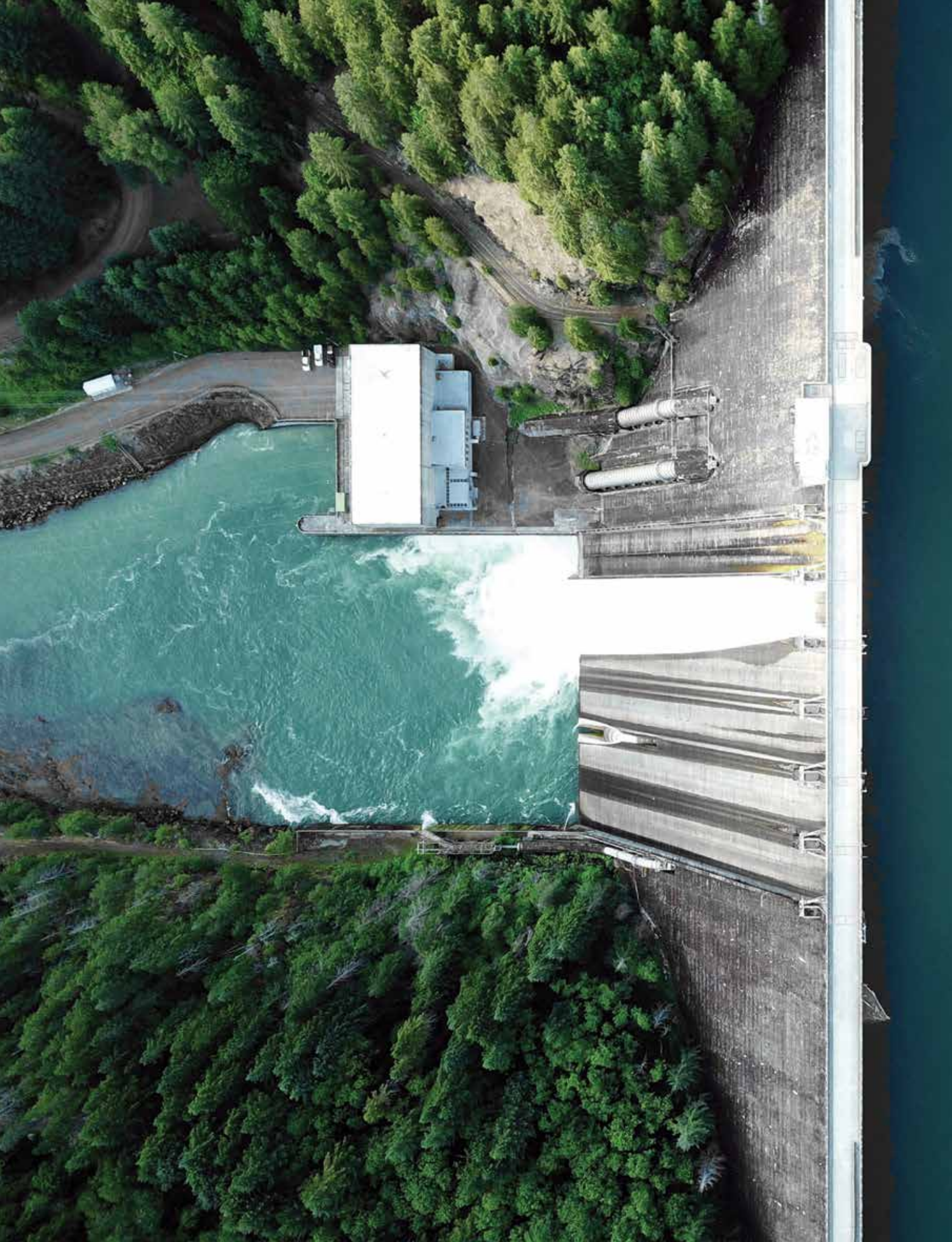
A Multi-Path Strategy for the Future

Unlike approaches that favor a single solution, Volvo Trucks is developing an entire ecosystem of technologies,

innovations in this field enable companies to reduce emissions while maintaining—or even improving—operational performance.

At a time when the energy transition is accelerating, Volvo Trucks clearly demonstrates that the future of transport is not tied to a single solution, but to a smart combination of technologies working together toward the goal of zero emissions.

Prepared by Milena Maglovski





WHAT DOES THE ENERGY SECTOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD 2026–2028 BRING?

The National Assembly of Serbia adopted the Energy Sector Development Strategy until 2040, with projections until 2050, at the end of November 2024. This document replaces the previous framework that defined the country's energy policy. However, the strategy alone is not sufficient – a program is also needed to specify how the defined goals will be achieved. This program, covering the period from 2026 to 2028, has been initiated and is led by the Ministry of Mining and Energy, with the participation of public authorities, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

Key Directions in the Power Sector

When it comes to electricity, the Strategy sets several main objectives. The first is secure supply to the domestic market – that is, reducing

dependence on imports. The second relates to environmental protection, involving the gradual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The third involves increased use of renewable energy sources (solar, wind, and hydropower), while the fourth focuses on improving energy efficiency in generation and in transmission and distribution.

To achieve these goals, seven specific measures have been defined. These include preventive maintenance and modernization of existing power plants and networks, the use of higher-quality coal in thermal power plants, the gradual reduction of coal-based generation, the development of transmission and distribution networks capable of integrating increasing amounts of renewable energy, and the construction of new domestic generation capacities.

In other words, the plan is to gradually transform the existing system

– without abrupt shutdowns, but with a clear direction toward cleaner and more flexible generation.

Renewable Energy Sources: From Incentives to Everyday Use

One of the most dynamic parts of the Strategy focuses on renewable energy sources. The goal is to maintain continuous increases across all three sectors – electricity generation, heating, and transport.

Eight measures have been envisaged in this sector. These range from financial incentives for the development of solar, wind, and hydropower capacities, to public awareness efforts and the simplification of procedures for consumers who wish to become producers themselves (so-called prosumers), as well as adapting the distribution network to the needs of e-mobility and intensifying state incentives for electric vehicles.



The program for 2026–2028 also introduces two additional measures: improving the regulatory framework in the renewable energy sector and enhancing energy statistics, both of which are necessary to monitor and manage the transition.

When it comes to electricity generation from renewable sources, both the public and private sectors have defined plans. Elektroprivreda Srbije plans to build a self-balancing solar power plant with a capacity of 1 GW, as well as the Morava and Koluvara solar plants, and to reconstruct and increase the capacity of certain hydropower plants. Several smaller solar and hydropower projects are also under consideration.

On the other hand, private investors who have already participated in auctions for market premiums are expected to implement eight projects by 2028, including wind farms Vetrozelena, Crni vrh, Čibuk 2, Jasikovo, Alibunar 1 and 2, Bela Anta 2, and the solar power plant Solarina. The total installed capacity of these projects amounts to 1,059 MW, of which 737

MW has already entered the market premium quota.

In addition to large-scale projects, attention is also being paid to small producers. The installed capacity of prosumers (households and companies that generate electricity for their own needs and sell surplus energy) is expected to increase from 30 MW in 2026 to 40 MW in 2028. There are also plans to adopt a new incentive scheme, which will serve as the basis for future auctions, with the aim of creating a more predictable investment environment.

Within energy efficiency measures, the renovation of public buildings is also envisaged, supported by incentives for installing solar panels and by support programs for citizens, such as “Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency for Citizens.”

Development of Heating and Transport

While the power sector is relatively well covered, the heating sector and transport are yet to gain full momentum. In the field of thermal energy,

the Strategy envisages the integration of renewable energy sources into district heating systems—specifically in Novi Sad and in ten local self-government units —alongside the use of heat pumps in Užice, as well as the reconstruction of the boiler plant in Zlatibor. The development of the biomass market is also on the agenda.

In transport, the situation is more complex. The European Union is gradually moving toward reducing the share of first-generation biofuels and increasing the share of advanced biofuels. Serbia, in its Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (INECP) for the period up to 2030, also foresees measures to increase the share of renewable energy in transport. However, the document openly highlights the challenges: the cost and supply stability of advanced biofuels, limited availability of technologies, sanctions affecting the Oil Industry of Serbia (NIS), and the overall geopolitical situation.

For this reason, electrification of transport is seen as a more realistic direction. Planned measures include



fiscal incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles—grants, reduced registration costs, tax relief, lower tolls, free parking, and access to designated parking spaces. The installation of additional charging infrastructure is also planned.

Alternative pathways, such as biomethane and renewable hydrogen, are also mentioned, though for now they remain largely declarative goals.



supply. However, this measure also poses a challenge—how to reconcile the system’s economic sustainability with the need to provide vulnerable consumers with access to energy at affordable prices.

A similar issue exists in the supply of natural gas and thermal energy. As in the case of a just transition (which implies that the burden of change should not fall on the most vulnerable groups), the field of energy poverty is relatively new and requires establishing an appropriate institutional and financial framework.

In this regard, two concrete measures are planned. The first is the development and adoption of Serbia’s Energy Poverty Reduction Plan, which would define the necessary activities. The second relates to the establishment of a database that would consolidate information from various



Energy Poverty in Focus

In addition to production and transition issues, the Strategy for the first time addresses energy poverty in a more systematic way. One of the key measures envisaged in this document, as well as in the Reform Agenda of the Republic of Serbia, is ensuring that the average household electricity tariff covers the cost of

ministries and institutions on socially vulnerable consumers and beneficiaries of social assistance—an essential prerequisite for a clear understanding of the issue and the foundation for an information system that would enable monitoring and updating of data. In other words, before solving the problem, it must first be precisely measured and understood.

Regulation and Statistics – A Necessary Foundation

The Strategy also foresees amendments to the Law on the Use of Renewable Energy Sources, as well as the adoption of secondary legislation on the certification of installers of solar and other systems—requirements stemming from the EU RED III directive. Work is also underway on developing a legal framework for citizen energy communities (cooperatives that jointly invest in renewable energy sources).

Finally, improvements in energy statistics are also envisaged, primarily through research on the actual use of renewable energy in heating, cooling, and transport—because without reliable data, it is not possible to track progress or make informed decisions.

What This Means in Practice

The document at hand does not bring revolutionary changes overnight. What it offers is a framework for gradual, multi-year transformation. In the next three years (2026–2028), continued renewable energy auctions are expected, along with the construction of already agreed wind and solar parks, a gradual reduction of coal-based generation, increased support for citizens who wish to become electricity producers, and the first more substantial steps toward the electrification of transport.

For citizens and businesses, the key message is that the system of incentives will continue, but conditions will gradually evolve—for example, through the introduction of installer certification or new obligations for distribution companies.

Whether all of the planned measures will be implemented within the envisaged timeframe remains to be seen. What is certain is that, with this strategy, Serbia has gained one of the few comprehensive public documents clearly outlining the direction of its energy sector.

Prepared by Milena Maglovski



DESIGNING A SOLAR POWER PLANT – MORE THAN JUST PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



Bojan Stević
Designer from CEEFOR

Although it is often perceived that all work related to a solar power plant is primarily technical, designers' experience shows that it is a much more complex process. From documentation and permits, through structural assessments and grid connection, to equipment selection and economic feasibility, each step requires careful planning depending on the type of power plant. To better understand what this work actually entails, we spoke with Bojan Stević, a designer from CEEFOR.

Q: What is it that investors most often do not see at the beginning when they decide to invest in a solar power plant project?

A: What they usually see is the end goal – to reduce their electricity bill or to generate additional value through energy production. However, they much less frequently have a clear picture of how complex the entire process is and how many steps precede construction itself. At the beginning, we typically start with basic data, such as electricity bills, consumption data, and the investor's plans. But very quickly, questions arise about

documentation, permits, connection conditions, and the site or facility's technical limitations. It is at that point that investors most often realize that a solar power plant is not a project that can be implemented quickly and easily.

Q: How much can an existing facility complicate the entire process, especially in the case of rooftop installations?

A: Much more than it may seem at first glance. One of the common issues is that an investor, for example, wants a power plant on the roof of a hall, warehouse, or farm, but lacks complete documentation for that structure, or the documentation does not correspond to the actual on-site conditions for various reasons.

It also happens that the condition of the facility recorded in the cadaster does not match what exists in reality. In such cases, aligning documentation with the actual situation requires additional procedures and, sometimes, even the development of a new urban planning project, which can further delay and increase the investment's cost, raising questions about its overall feasibility.

It is very important to determine, from the outset, the building's legal status and structural capacity to bear additional loads, such as solar panels, mounting structures, cables, and so on. With older buildings, this often raises additional questions, as they were constructed under previous regulations, whereas today different calculations and European standards, such as Eurocodes, are applied. Therefore, as designers, we cannot assume responsibility for a structure whose condition has not been previously verified, which is often one of the first points where a project may slow down.

Q: And when it comes to ground-mounted power plants – where do the biggest challenges arise?

A: In the case of ground-mounted plants, the situation is somewhat simpler in that you are not starting from an existing structure, but rather building from scratch. However, other complex issues arise – for example, grid connection and property-legal relations.

First, it is necessary to determine whether a connection is even possible, under what conditions, and at

which point. Then comes the issue of land plots, access, and potential cable routes, which sometimes have to pass through private property or populated areas. These steps can take a long time and are often more administratively demanding than the power plant's technical design.

Q: How much do administration and institutions affect project timelines?

A: They have a significant impact, but we have already completed numerous projects across the country, so experience is on our side. Location conditions are one of the most important initial steps, as they define under what conditions construction is even possible, but they are also part of a complex process. The issue is that their issuance depends on multiple institutions – the distribution operator, the Ministry of Interior, water utilities, telecommunications systems, and, for larger and more complex projects, environmental authorities, cultural heritage institutes, and others.

In practice, delays often occur at this stage, either because certain approvals are not obtained on time or due to long waiting periods. Some local self-government units still lack sufficient experience with such projects, which can result in requests for additional documentation or even the procedure being sent back a step. As a result, the entire process from the initial idea to the completion of administrative procedures often takes around two years, even though the technical design itself can be completed within a few months.

We believe it would be beneficial to establish a unified and harmonized procedure for all institutions involved in the process – an integrated system – as regulations today are often not aligned with one another. Although the amendments to the Energy Law in 2021 introduced new procedures, they are still not fully harmonized with the rules of other

sectors, such as the Ministry of Interior, construction, electricity distribution, and even the financial sector, all of which are linked to the final goal of obtaining prosumer or producer status. In practice, this means that the same issue may be accepted in one procedure and rejected in another. A unified rulebook would therefore facilitate the work of investors, designers, and institutions alike.

Q: How much do current regulations and market conditions influence the planning of solar power plants, particularly regarding the prosumer model and the difference between factories and farms?



A: Much more than before. Today, it is no longer enough to simply assess the available roof or land area and determine the plant's capacity accordingly. It is equally important to analyze how the generated energy will actually be used, what the real and time-distributed consumption of the facility is, and under what market and regulatory conditions the investor is entering the project.

The issue of prosumer status is particularly important. Previously, this model was very attractive to investors because the calculation was clearer: part of the energy is consumed immediately, while the surplus is fed into the grid and later used during autumn and winter months when production is lower. Today, the situation is more complex. The rules



are no longer equally favorable for all consumer categories and plant sizes, so investors must understand from the outset that feeding surplus energy into the grid is not always straightforward or as economically viable as before.

This is why we emphasize that a larger power plant does not automatically mean a better solution. If an investor has a large roof and the financial capacity for a more powerful system, it does not mean that all that energy will be efficiently utilized—and this is where our role comes in. The key question is whether the facility has sufficient and continuous daytime consumption, meaning whether the generated energy will be used immediately or whether significant surpluses will occur.

In the case of factories and industrial facilities, the situation is generally more favorable. Such facilities often have stable daytime consumption, with machinery and production processes operating precisely during the period when solar plants generate the most energy. As a result, a large portion of the energy can be directly consumed on-site. In these cases, self-consumption systems typically provide the most stable economic outcome, as the investor clearly understands how the energy is used and how much grid consumption can be replaced by self-generation.

On the other hand, for farms, the situation can be quite different, even



though they may at first glance appear ideal for solar power plants due to their large roof areas. Many farms do not have sufficiently consistent and high consumption throughout the day to fully utilize a larger system. Consumption may vary depending on the season, type of production, equipment operation, ventilation, cooling, or milking processes. As a result, a facility may have enough space for a large number of solar panels but not enough consistent demand to justify a larger investment.

This is where the distinction between technical potential and economic feasibility becomes evident. Technically, it may be possible to install a larger system, but if a significant portion of the generated energy cannot be utilized, the investor

faces more complex issues related to feeding surplus energy into the grid, market sales, or future storage. These areas still depend heavily on regulation, market conditions, and additional investments.

For this reason, much more attention is now given to aligning the power plant's capacity with the consumption profile of the facility. In some cases, this means a smaller but more optimally utilized system. In others, it opens opportunities for battery storage solutions, although we emphasize that broader implementation of such solutions still depends on further development of regulation and the market, particularly when it comes to prosumers.

Q: How important are equipment and panel orientation?

A: Both equipment and panel orientation are very important, but there is no universal solution that works best for every project. The choice of equipment is not just a matter of price and installed capacity, but also of reliability and the assurance that the system will operate efficiently over many years. As we explain, the company designing and installing the power plant must stand behind the equipment it uses, since it will also be involved in system maintenance, interventions, and troubleshooting. Therefore, investors should not only be presented with the equipment's cost and expected output, but also with its long-term reliability.

When it comes to panel orientation, this issue has both technical and economic significance today. On flat roofs, east-west systems are increasingly being chosen, as they allow for more balanced energy production throughout the day and better match facilities that directly consume that energy. This configuration means production starts earlier in the morning, remains more consistent during the day, and avoids a single pronounced peak at midday. This is

particularly important for factories, industrial plants, and other facilities with consumption distributed throughout the working day, as a larger share of the generated energy can be used immediately on-site.

On the other hand, a south-facing orientation can provide higher peak output and overall, very good yields, but it does not automatically result in the best economic outcome. In such cases, the market often sees many solar plants producing the most energy simultaneously. When many systems operate near their maximum capacity simultaneously, a larger volume of solar energy enters the market, which can drive prices down. For this reason, maximum production is no longer the sole criterion in planning.

Additionally, east-west systems offer a practical advantage: on flat roofs, they allow for a denser panel layout and better utilization of available space. With a south-facing orientation, larger gaps between rows are required to avoid shading, often resulting in fewer panels that can be installed on the same surface compared to east-west solutions.

That is why we do not focus only on how much a power plant can produce, but also on when it produces that energy, how it aligns with the facility's consumption, and what economic value that energy has at different times of the day.

Q: So, what is the essence of good solar power plant design?

A: The essence is for the investor to get a realistic picture from the very beginning. A good designer is not only someone who can create a technically sound project, but someone who can anticipate potential obstacles in advance and clearly explain to the investor how long the process may take, where delays may occur, and what the real possibilities are at a given location.

Interview by Milica Vučković



Poland aims to reach

16 GW
of wind capacity

by 2030.

[PAGE 6]



Volvo Trucks has delivered

10.000
gas-powered trucks

to date.

[PAGE 40]



Wind energy could save
Europe

€1,6 trillion

by 2050.

[PAGE 12]



Charge&GO has
commissioned

6 new
charging
stations

in Serbia.

[PAGE 58]

charge
&**GO**

Life Is On

Schneider
Electric



Schneider StarCharge
Fast DC chargers with
up to 320 kW capacity
reduce energy losses by

97 percent.

[PAGE 16]



MT-KOMEX is building a solar power plant on **55.914 m²** in the Municipality of Ub.

[PAGE 32]



The Serbian Association of Vehicle and Parts Importers marked **30 years of successful operation.**

[PAGE 18]



A record **700 participants**

attended this year's Energy Summit in Trebinje.

[PAGE 36]



Cities and municipalities in Croatia are procuring **210 electric buses.**

[PAGE 68]



Fully electric vehicles accounted for **11,2 percent** of new registrations in Slovenia in 2025.

[PAGE 60]



WESTERN GREECE DEVELOPS PUBLIC COOPERATIVE SOLAR PARK: BENEFITS FOR 147,000 FARMERS AND CITIZENS

In Western Greece, one of the country's 13 administrative regions, plans are underway to construct one of the largest public solar projects in Europe, based on the energy community model. The project is designed so that citizens, farmers, and local communities directly benefit from the electricity produced, which Greek authorities present as an example of so-called energy democracy and an attempt to ensure that the benefits of renewable energy do not remain solely in the hands of large energy companies.

The project involves a 105 MW solar park that will be built on public land near the city of Mesolongi. Its implementation was formally enabled through recently adopted legislation passed by the Greek parliament. The project is being led by the Region of Western Greece, with support from the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

According to estimates, once completed, electricity bills for users could be reduced by up to 60 percent. Around 147,000 citizens and farmers are expected to benefit from the project, while part of the generated energy will be allocated to approximately 17,000 vulnerable households. The project's broader indirect impact could extend to nearly 300,000 residents across 12 municipalities in the region.

Unlike commercial solar power plants that sell electricity on the market, this project is designed so that the generated solar energy directly reduces the electricity bills of citizens and farmers participating in the energy community.

During a visit to the region, Environment and Energy Minister Stavros Papastavrou stated that the project represents the largest public cooperative photovoltaic park in Greece and one of the largest in Europe.

Energy Portal

NORTH MACEDONIA: MEMO LAUNCHES REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE INTRADAY MARKET

The national electricity market operator – MEMO DOOEL Skopje, has officially launched the registration process for new participants in the intraday market. AD ESM is the first company to register, thereby preparing for active participation in the first transactions on this new market segment.

The first trading on the intraday market is scheduled for May 6, MEMO announced.

"The introduction of intraday trading opens a new chapter in optimizing our own production and increasing energy efficiency. For us, as the largest producer, this trading is not just a technical novelty, but a strategic tool," stated Lazo Uzunčev, General Director and President of the Board of Directors of AD ESM.

Uzunčev particularly emphasized that the ability to react immediately and make emergency purchases during the day, in the event of unexpected changes in production or consumption plans, will enable more efficient management of system stability and better financial results for the company.

"I am convinced that intraday trading means a strong and liquid exchange, which is the backbone of modern energy. MEMO becomes our complete partner and the most serious market mechanism that follows European standards," added Uzunčev.

Zoran Đordijevski, General Director of MEMO, pointed out that the interest from electricity market participants is high and that he expects new companies with recognizable names to enter the market in the coming days.

"The intraday market will provide participants with additional flexibility, greater precision in balancing portfolios, and the ability to trade close to real time, which is an essential precondition for modern and efficient operations," emphasized Đordijevski.

MEMO states that, with the support of its partners, the Government, and the Ministry of Energy, Mining, and Mineral Resources, it remains committed to developing a transparent, secure, and efficient electricity market and to full integration with the European market.

Energy Portal



EMBER: CLEAN ENERGY MET ALL NEW ELECTRICITY DEMAND IN 2025

According to the latest Global Electricity Review 2026, published by the research organization Ember, 2025 marked a historic moment for the global energy sector. Record growth in solar power enabled clean energy sources to grow fast enough to meet all the new demand for electricity.

This was the first year since 2020 without an increase in electricity generation from fossil fuels, and only the fifth year without such growth this century.

China and India, historically the largest contributors to the global increase in fossil fuel generation, recorded a decline in production from these sources in 2025. In both countries, record additions of clean energy outpaced demand growth, leading to a halt in global net growth in fossil fuel generation.



Solar Energy – The Dominant Driver of Change

Solar energy has solidified its role as a key driver of transformation. Its record growth covered three-quarters of the net increase in global electricity demand in 2025. Solar power grew 18 times as much as gas, the only fossil fuel that recorded growth last year.

Global solar power generation is now equal in size to the total electricity demand of the European Union.

China once again led this growth, accounting for more than half of the global increase in both solar capacity and solar generation. This raised the share of solar and wind in China's generation mix to 22 percent.

India also set a record: renewable energy generation grew by more than twice its previous record, and for the first time, India installed more new solar capacity than the United States.

Renewables Surpassed Coal for the First Time

In another global milestone, renewable energy sources – solar, wind, hydropower, and others – overtook coal in 2025. For the first time in the modern power system, renewables together accounted for more than one-third of global electricity generation.

At the same time, coal's share fell below one-third for the first time in history.

The rapid growth of solar power is increasingly being accompanied by battery storage systems, enabling the next phase of the transition – shifting from daytime solar power to solar power available at any time of day.

Battery costs continued their dramatic decline: after a 20 percent drop in 2024, they fell an additional 45 percent in 2025. At the same time, battery deployment increased by 46 percent, to an estimated 250 GWh. As a result, the world installed enough storage capacity to shift 14 percent of new solar generation from midday to other hours of the day.

Leaders like Chile and Australia have installed enough grid-level storage to redirect over 50 percent of new solar generation in 2025 and are already seeing benefits in lower electricity prices and reduced curtailment, Ember reported.

Energy Portal



DECLINE IN EXPECTATIONS IN THE GERMAN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY DUE TO TARIFFS AND SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS

In the German automotive industry, according to the latest Ifo Institute data reported by DPA, sentiment further deteriorated in April, with companies becoming increasingly cautious about the months ahead. The sector, which has long been under pressure from growing competition from China and a slower transition to electric mobility, is now additionally affected by announced U.S. tariffs and disruptions in global supply chains.

The business climate index in the automotive industry fell to -23.8 points in April, down from -19.0 points in March. This indicator is based on company surveys, and a negative value indicates that more firms expect deterioration than improvement. An even sharper decline was recorded in the business expectations index, which dropped from -15.3 points in March to -30.7 points in April.

Although companies assessed their current business situation somewhat more positively than in the previous month, their outlook for the coming period has worsened significantly. Additional pressure stems from trade relations with the United States, as President Donald Trump announced an increase in tariffs on cars imported from the EU to 25 percent. Such a measure would further complicate European manufacturers' position in the U.S. market.

The situation is also complicated by geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, which are affecting the supply of certain raw materials. According to the Ifo Institute, 9.3 percent of companies reported shortages of key intermediate goods in April, compared to less than 1 percent in March. Particular attention is drawn to helium, a gas used in the automotive industry for chip production, airbag deployment, metal processing, and battery leak detection. This is further underscored by the fact that the European Union sources approximately 40 percent of its helium needs from Qatar.

Energy Portal

SERBIA'S PROGRESS IN APPLYING CIRCULAR GLASS THANKS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Although Serbia currently recycles between 40 and 45 percent of glass packaging, the application of circular glass is still in the development phase, but it is recording significant progress. According to the conclusions of the "Creative Glass" Forum, this is primarily due to harmonization with European Union regulations and the introduction of business practices that already function successfully in member states.

The European Union remains the global leader in glass recycling, with an average rate of about 75 percent, which annually means recycling as much as 11 million tons. Although Serbia is ahead of Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia in this regard (where rates are below 30 percent), further progress requires infrastructure development, the introduction of a deposit system, and raising citizens' awareness.

The Forum was held as part of marking 180 years of organized glass production in Serbia, and the project "Glassmaking tradition meets innovation," supported by the European Union. The gathering included experts, artists, and educators from Serbia, Denmark, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Great Britain.

Energy Savings of up to 30 Percent

At the global level, there is an increasing shift towards the circular model of glass production, which means the material is constantly returned to use rather than becoming waste. Circular glass is most prevalent in the packaging industry (bottles and jars), construction, and the automotive industry.

The application of these models yields energy savings of up to 30 percent, along with a significant reduction in carbon dioxide emissions and waste generation compared to traditional production methods.

Circularity implies the synchronization of all phases – from collecting glass waste, sorting by color and quality, crushing, melting in furnaces, shaping (blowing, pressing, casting), to cooling.

Energy Portal





SOLAR POWER BRINGS EUROPE SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS AMID MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

The events in the Middle East have prompted countries around the world to increase investments in renewable energy, and a new report from SolarPower Europe highlights just how much solar power is currently contributing to Europe's savings.

Data shows that the EU's existing solar capacity saved more than 110 million euros per day on gas imports between March 1 and 17, reducing the overall gas import bill by 32 percent.

During these two and a half weeks, the EU's solar capacity generated 19.9 TWh of electricity. Producing the same amount of energy from gas-fired power plants would have cost around 1.9 billion euros – an additional 32 percent on top of the 6 billion euros the European Commission estimates was spent on fossil fuel imports during the same period. More precisely, from March 1 to 31, total savings reached 3.77 billion euros.

If gas prices rise above the average March levels, solar energy savings could reach nearly 67 billion euros by the end of 2026. According to SolarPower Europe's medium scenario for future solar deployment, cumulative savings by the end of the decade could reach 170 billion euros.

SolarPower Europe emphasizes that, in addition to expanding solar capacity, it is urgent to develop flexible solutions such as battery storage, smart grids, and demand management to further reduce dependence on gas and stabilize electricity prices.

The increased use of fossil fuels also affects periods when the most expensive fuel sets the price for all electricity on the market, so such measures directly contribute to lower costs for industry and households.

Energy Portal

ZAGREB STREETS WELCOME AUTONOMOUS TAXI – THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS DRIVERLESS RIDES IN EUROPE

Imagine a perfectly ordinary taxi ride. You sit down, close the door, and within minutes, a conversation starts on its own. Sometimes it drifts into serious topics, sometimes into laughter, sometimes you find yourself recounting your whole day to a complete stranger. And then there's the familiar question: "Which route would you like us to take?" – followed by explanations of why this street is better, where the traffic is heavier, what's going on in the city... and suddenly, the ride becomes more than just transportation.

We're used to this. And probably many of us have enjoyed it. But what happens when you enter a vehicle, and that conversation is gone? No questions, no route suggestions, no glances in the rearview mirror. Just you, silence, and technology that knows the way better than any driver. This is where a new era of mobility begins – one in which the taxi is no longer a person, but a system. And the question is no longer which route you want to take, but whether you are ready to trust a ride without a driver.

It may still seem like an experience reserved for distant countries and tech metropolises. Yet, a company from this region has just pushed that boundary – by launching Europe's first commercial robotaxi service. This story comes from Croatia, where in Zagreb, the company Verne has launched a new era of mobility by introducing autonomous taxis on city streets. Citizens of Zagreb can now book rides and pay via an app.

In the first phase, electric vehicles equipped with Pony.ai's seventh-generation autonomous driving system will hit the streets of Zagreb. It's completely normal to feel a certain degree of fear or mistrust towards such new technology, but passengers can relax – during this early phase, trained operators will be present in the vehicles, acting as a safety net while the system fully integrates into city traffic.

For now, the service is available in key parts of the city, with plans to expand routes to the rest of Zagreb in the near future. Once all safety standards are met and the necessary regulatory approvals are obtained, the taxis will operate autonomously, without operators.

Katarina Vuinac



CEE BANKWATCH NETWORK: WASTE INCINERATION IN THE BALKANS CONTRARY TO EU GOALS

Despite growing evidence that waste incineration is not a solution for the circular economy, governments and utility companies in the Western Balkans are increasingly turning to the construction of waste incineration plants and the use of fuel derived from waste in outdated coal-fired thermal power plants.

However, such projects are technically unviable, environmentally hazardous, financially risky, and inconsistent with European Union policies and legislation, concludes the new analysis by the CEE Bankwatch Network titled “Waste Incineration Trends in the Western Balkans”.

Incineration Is not a Circular Solution

The author of the analysis, Nataša Kovačević, emphasizes that waste incineration and co-incineration, rather than keeping materials in use, destroy recyclable resources, generate carbon dioxide and other toxic pollutants, and produce large quantities of hazardous ash. This, she points out, undermines decarbonization, especially given that auxiliary fossil fuels are needed to maintain combustion, since oil-based and plastic waste constitute the most calorific fractions.

On the other hand, the EU waste hierarchy places incineration, even with energy recovery, near the very bottom – only above landfilling. New EU directives further limit incentives for such projects, predicting their economic obsolescence as early as 2028.

Toxic Contamination – Evidence from the EU

The analysis highlights new, independent studies supported by Zero Waste Europe, which documented serious contamination in the vicinity of waste incineration plants in France, the Netherlands, and Spain.

Eggs from backyard poultry in the town of Zubieta, Spain, contained 10 times the amount of dioxins above the EU legal limit, while dioxin levels in moss increased up to 300 times compared to the period before the incinerator started operating. In Harlingen, the Netherlands, the presence of PFAS chemicals (so-called forever chemicals) in surface water was 138 times higher than the drinking water threshold. In Paris, soil contamination above EU limits was recorded near several schools and public parks.

This, the analysis states, is the strongest available empirical evidence that even modern waste-to-energy plants, equipped with advanced emission controls, cause long-term cumulative deposition of carcinogenic substances.

Why Is the Balkans Particularly Vulnerable?

According to the analysis, the risks are even greater in the Western Balkans. Air quality is already among the worst in Europe, with PM2.5 particles regularly exceeding both legal limits and World Health Organization recommendations. An additional source of waste and fossil-fuel combustion would only worsen the situation, especially in closed basins such as Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, and Pljevlja.

Another problem is the lack of hazardous ash landfills – while 26-40 percent of incinerated waste ends up as toxic fly and bottom ash, the region lacks adequate capacities for its disposal. This poses a risk to soil and groundwater, or leads to huge export costs.

The near-total absence of functional environmental inspections and law enforcement is also problematic, increasing the risk of uncontrolled pollutant discharges into rivers.

Instead of incineration, which destroys resources and pollutes the environment, the report urges the region to urgently focus on waste prevention, improved separate collection, and high-quality recycling, in line with the principles of the circular economy and EU legislation. Without this, waste incineration projects in the Western Balkans pose a risk to citizens' health, budgets, and the European integration of the countries in the region.



Energy Portal



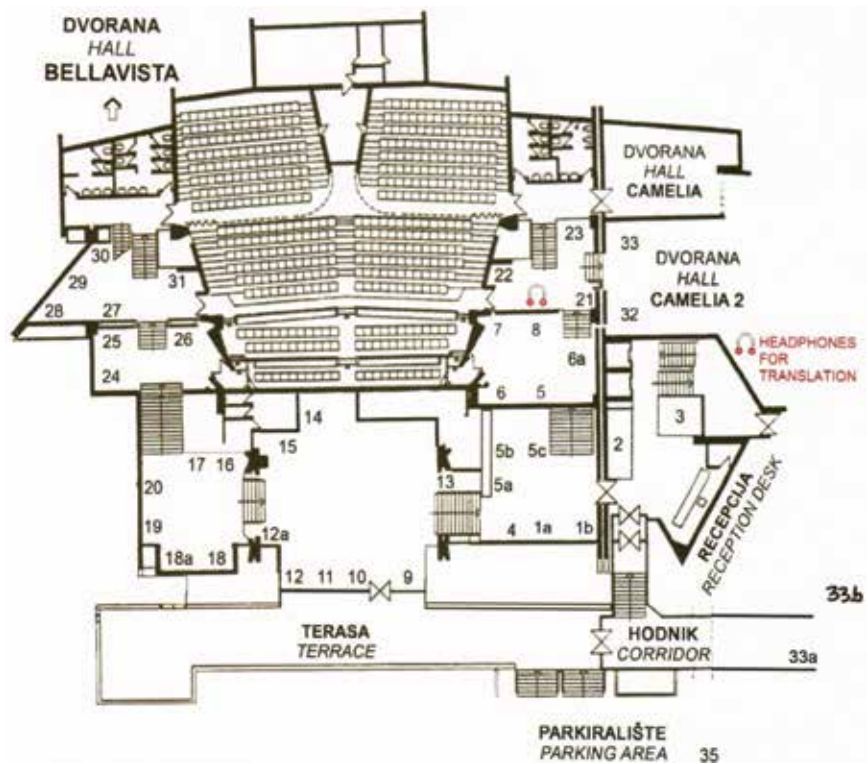
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FROM NIŠ TO SUBOTICA: **charge&GO** CONNECTS SERBIA WITH A NETWORK OF FAST EV CHARGERS

In recent months, new stations equipped with state-of-the-art technology have



Riva Park Velika Plana
120 kW charger



Stop Shop Čačak
120 kW charger



Airport Niš
Three 24 kW chargers



Charge&GO is also expanding its network in North Macedonia. In addition to the 50 kW charger at the OKTA fuel station, four fast chargers with capacities of 120 and 150 kW will be commissioned in the coming period.

This expansion confirms the company's mission—to build a reliable and comprehensive infrastructure that keeps pace with the rapid growth of the electric vehicle market in Serbia and the region.

Recognized as a pioneer of e-mobility in Serbia, Charge&GO is continually expanding its charging station network to provide EV drivers with faster, safer, and more accessible mobility across the country.

In addition to the active locations, Charge&GO is rapidly preparing the commissioning of nine new chargers, which will cover key transport corridors and cities throughout Serbia:

- OMV Zrenjanin – 120 kW
- OMV Borča – 60 kW
- OMV Kikinda – 60 kW
- OMV Smederevo – 120 kW
- OMV Požarevac – 120 kW
- OMV Kovin – 120 kW
- OMV Subotica – 110 kW
- OMV Šabac – 120 kW
- OMV Pančevo – 150 kW

been successfully commissioned:



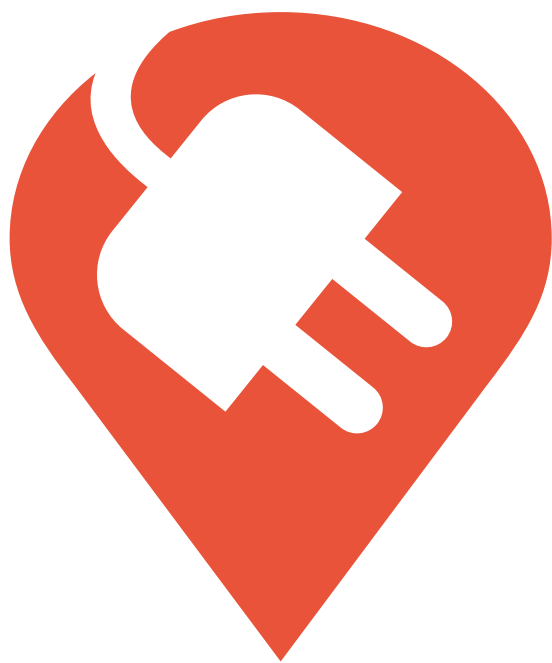
OMV Niš 2
120 kW charger



OMV Niš 4
140 kW charger



OMV Palić
110 kW charger



For more information on station availability, charging conditions, and future expansion plans, visit our website or download the Charge&GO application:





E-MOBILITY IN SLOVENIA: HOME CHARGING AS THE KEY TO INCLUSIVE E-MOBILITY

E-mobility in Slovenia has recorded strong growth in recent years, but the key questions today are no longer related solely to the number of vehicles on the road. The focus has shifted to infrastructure quality, user experience, and public trust in the system. While statistics indicate progress, everyday practice reveals challenges that will determine the pace of future transition. Issues such as public and home charging, price transparency, and service accessibility for all users stand out in particular. At the same time, sustainable mobility involves much more than electrification alone. To better understand where Slovenia stands today and what is needed for the next step, we spoke with Ignac Završnik, President of the e-Mobility Slovenia Association (DeMS).

The biggest challenge today is no longer whether electric vehicles work, but whether the entire ecosystem functions well enough for people to trust it

Q: How would you describe the current state of e-mobility in Slovenia, and how much progress has been made in recent years?

A: In recent years, e-mobility in Slovenia has made a very noticeable step forward. Until recently, it was primarily a topic for enthusiasts, companies, and early adopters, but today it is becoming part of the broader automotive market and everyday mobility. According to data reported by DeMS, 6,419 new battery electric vehicles were registered in Slovenia in 2025, representing more than 100 percent growth compared to the previous year. The share of fully electric vehicles among new registrations reached around 11.2 percent. This is significant progress, although Slovenia still remains below the European Union average.

Developments in 2026 are also very encouraging. In March, for the first time in history, the best-selling

car in Slovenia was electric. The Tesla Model 3 ranked first with 352 registrations, ahead of the Nissan Qashqai with 241 and the Škoda Octavia with 199 registrations. In the same month, a total of 6,535 new passenger cars were registered in Slovenia, which is 23.7 percent more than in March last year, while fully electric vehicles accounted for 1,162 units, representing an impressive 242 percent increase compared to March 2025. This is no longer a glimpse of the future, but a clear signal that electric mobility has become part of the present of the Slovenian automotive market.

Q: What are the biggest challenges today when it comes to sustainable mobility in Slovenia?

A: The biggest challenge today is no longer whether electric vehicles work, but whether the entire ecosystem functions well enough for people to trust it. Users still face uncertainty



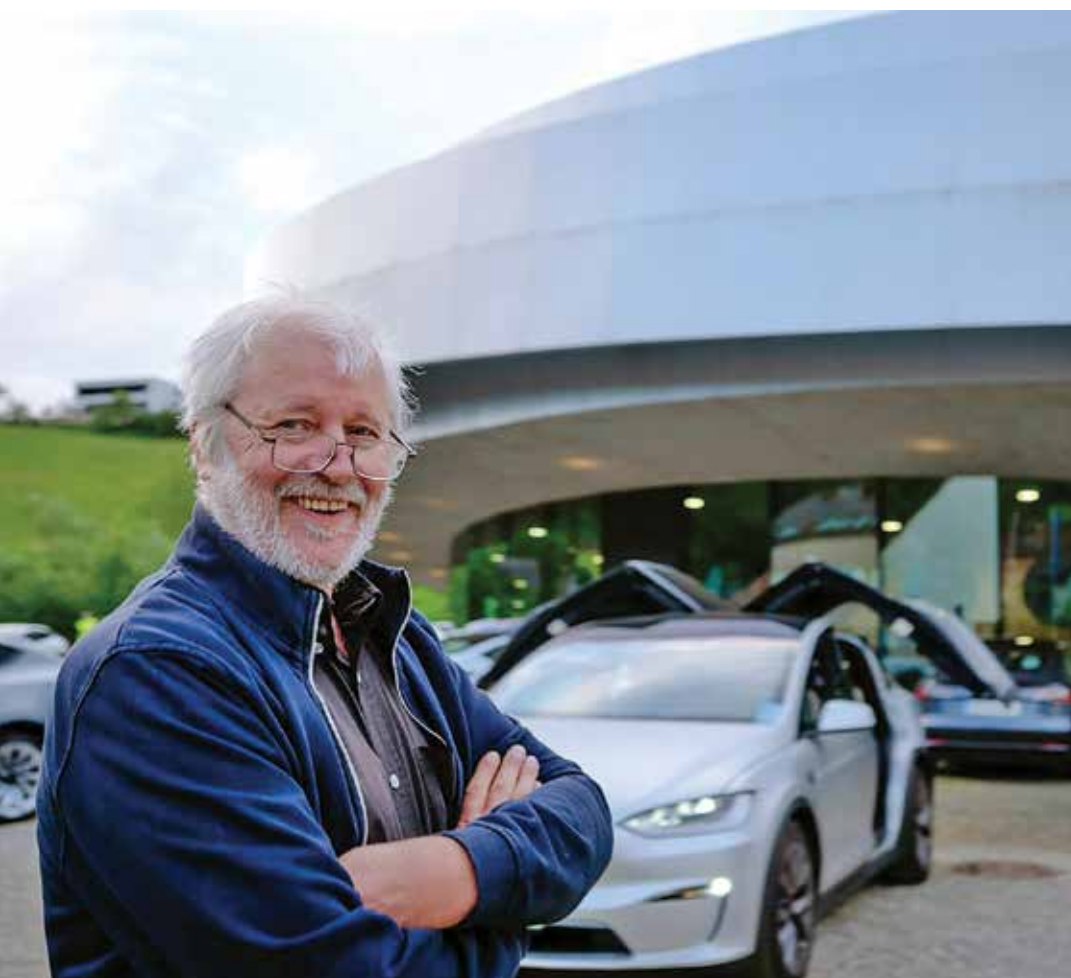
Ignac Završnik

President of the e-Mobility Slovenia Association (DeMS)

regarding public charging, different activation methods, unclear pricing, and inconsistent user experiences. A particular challenge remains home charging in multi-apartment buildings, as this is where it will be decided whether e-mobility will be accessible to the wider population or primarily to those living in houses. DeMS has long emphasized that the next phase of development must focus on reliability, transparency, and inclusive accessibility—not just on growth in numbers.

Sustainable mobility, of course, is not only about the powertrain. It also involves integrating public transport, cycling, walking, car sharing, and better spatial planning. Electrification of passenger transport is an important part of the transition, but it cannot be the only solution. Therefore, measures must be broader—across energy, transport, and social dimensions.

Q: Within public policies, what role do the principles of sustainable mobility play in the strategic planning of transport in Slovenia, and what changes do you expect in the coming years?





A: At the level of strategies and public documents, the principles of sustainable mobility are already strongly present. In practice, however, what will be decisive in the coming years is how successfully they are translated into implementation. Slovenia will need to connect transport policy, energy, spatial planning, and housing policy more systematically. DeMS particularly emphasizes that the development of charging infrastructure must not be viewed solely as a technical issue, but as part of a broader public interest and the overall quality of mobility.

A stronger focus can be expected on requirements stemming from European public charging regulations, especially regarding simpler payment methods, better user information, and greater network reliability. It will also be necessary to develop effective charging solutions for residential buildings, as without them, the transition will not be sufficiently widespread. The key shift in the

coming period will be moving from promotion to systemic regulation.

Q: How does DeMS contribute through its activities and projects to the promotion of e-mobility and raising awareness of sustainable transport in Slovenia?

A: DeMS contributes primarily through very concrete on-the-ground work, public information, and by creating space for professional discussion. Particularly important is the multi-year evaluation of public charging infrastructure, through which the association monitors real user experience at charging locations across Slovenia. During 2024, the team visited 56 locations, and a year later, 81 locations, with more than 200 hours of fieldwork. In cooperation with the Slovenian Consumers Association and with the participation of ministry representatives, DeMS helped develop a methodology to evaluate not only technical functionality but also user accessibility, transparency, and availability.

In addition, the association organizes events such as “Connecting e-Slovenia,” publishes market analyses, vehicle tests, and content on infrastructure, legislation, and practical user challenges. In this way, it acts as a bridge between users, industry, policymakers, and the wider public. This is crucial, as in practice, e-mobility expands not only through vehicle sales but also through trust, knowledge, and the sense that the system works.

Q: According to a recent analysis of ultra-fast chargers in Slovenia, nearly 35 percent of DC chargers fall into the ultra-fast category. How does this affect the perception of electric vehicles and the overall development of the network?

A: This is a very encouraging figure. According to DeMS analysis, Slovenia has 231 ultra-fast charging points across 44 locations, representing about 34.9 percent of all DC chargers. This means the network is



developing toward fast, transit charging, which significantly improves the sense of security during longer trips and reduces hesitation when purchasing an electric vehicle.

However, the share of ultra-fast chargers alone is not sufficient. For users, the most important factor is not just how powerful a charger is “on paper,” but whether it works, whether it is available, clearly marked, easy to pay for, and priced transparently. This is why DeMS emphasizes that infrastructure growth must be accompanied by improvements in the overall quality of service. When these two aspects are aligned, the perception of electric vehicles will become even more positive.

Q: What innovations or new technologies in EV charging can we expect in Slovenia in the coming years?

A: In the coming years, we can expect further expansion of ultra-fast charging, simpler payment options,

greater interoperability between operators, and the gradual introduction of solutions that make charging similar to a standard, intuitive service. In its analyses, DeMS has already highlighted the importance of transparent pricing, direct card payments, clear on-site information, and better accessibility for different user groups.

A major development step will also be the expansion of charging, where vehicles actually spend the most time—at home, in residential buildings, at workplaces, and at destination locations. The future will therefore not be defined solely by higher charging power, but also by smarter infrastructure planning and a simpler user experience.

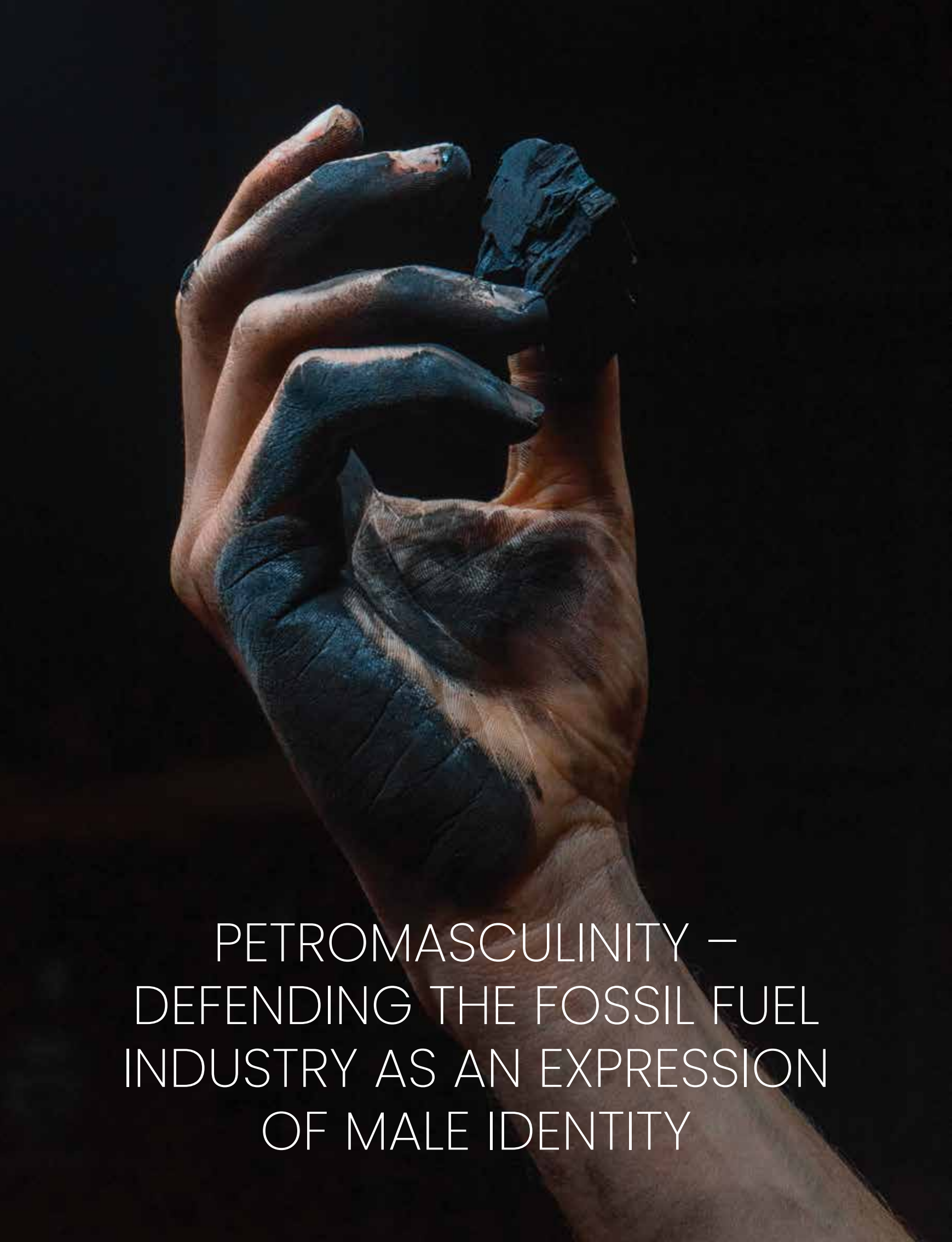
What key measures and policies do you consider most important for accelerating the transition to e-mobility and supporting its broader development in Slovenia?

– The most important measures are those that build trust. This

includes stable, predictable incentives for vehicle purchases and charging infrastructure development, systemic solutions for multi-apartment buildings, improved monitoring of public charger performance, rapid fault resolution, transparent pricing, and simple user interfaces. Users do not decide to transition solely on the basis of subsidies, but primarily on confidence that the system functions without unnecessary complications.

In recent years, Slovenia has demonstrated that it can make significant progress. The key now is to turn that growth into a lasting, well-structured, and inclusive system. March 2026, when the best-selling car in the country was electric for the first time, symbolically confirms that the transition is no longer a distant possibility, but a reality. The next step is to make that reality reliable, accessible, and standard for as many people as possible.

Interview by Jasna Dragojević



PETROMASCULINITY –
DEFENDING THE FOSSIL FUEL
INDUSTRY AS AN EXPRESSION
OF MALE IDENTITY



Jovana Vurdelja

Doctor of Philology with a focus on ecolinguistics and climate change communication

From a linguistic perspective, communication about climate change occasionally sees the emergence of new words, terms, and expressions that can serve as diagnostic tools for identifying and revealing the dominant ideologies, attitudes, and values that shape and influence our understanding of changes in the climate system. Therefore, the emergence and popularization of such words is never accidental. They always carry a message, both implicit and explicit, and often signal a shift in the climate paradigm. Whether they criticize previously unsustainable practices such as air travel (flight shame), promote climate-responsible dietary trends (climatarian), condemn unethical business practices of companies and corporations (greenwashing/greenhushing/greenwishing), or draw attention to the dangerous impact of climate change on mental health (solastalgia, eco-anxiety) or the economic consequences of extreme climate events (climateflation). In this regard, such new words also serve as a guide indicating the direction we should take to achieve the goals of a carbon-neutral society, while at the same time, they can be understood as a form of warning, as they draw attention to hidden social, political, and

ideological mechanisms that slow down or obstruct this transition.

One such term is petromasculinity. Although it first appeared in 2018, developments on the global stage since the beginning of 2026, the intersection of political, geopolitical, and economic interests, marked by Trump’s second term and the rhetoric of climate skepticism, have contributed to its renewed relevance, particularly in the context of the “Epic Rage,” that is, the American-Israeli military operation against Iran. The originator of this term, political science professor Cara Daggett, in her 2018 work published during Trump’s first term, explained

petromasculinity as a toxic link among fossil fuel use, patriarchal identity, and authoritarianism.

In a broader context, Daggett analyzes the correlation between petroculture and climate change denial with racism and misogyny, as well as the rise of authoritarian regimes in the West. “Fossil fuels mean much more than profit; they contribute to shaping identity, which poses a risk to post-carbon energy policy,”





Two major studies from France and Sweden have shown that there is a gender imbalance in emissions, meaning that men have a larger carbon footprint than women, particularly in the categories of transport and diet

Daggett states. In this regard, control over energy resources and energy infrastructure is not only a matter of managing strategic resources but also an instrument of power and national pride. Dominance over energy resources thus becomes the foundation of economic status, a means of political influence, and a key source for constructing male identity. Within contemporary theories of hegemonic masculinity, power over resources is considered the main determinant of authority. In this context, the process of decarbonization and climate policies are often perceived as a threat, not only economically but also as a destabilizing factor for social hierarchies, male and national identities. In

this sense, petromasculinity represents a gender ideology that affirms the fossil fuel industry and resists the green transition as a mechanism for defending male identity.

Male Lifestyle – More Carbon-Intensive

The extent to which the issue of the energy mix and climate policies is actually gender-conditioned and ideologically shaped is also indicated by a number of studies. Daggett notes that in the United States, “the most vocal opponents of climate science and leading advocates of fossil fuels in the West are white conservative men – regardless of class affiliation.” Similar results were also presented in



the Norwegian study Cool Dudes in Norway, which highlights the phenomenon of denial of anthropogenic climate change among about 63 percent of conservative, right-leaning Norwegian men who deny that human activities (the burning of fossil fuels) have contributed to increased emissions and global warming, often linked to a tendency to preserve an oil-based energy order.

However, in this context, it is also interesting to consider the role of the gender dimension in pollution levels. If greenhouse gas emissions are analyzed from a gender perspective, significant differences emerge in the shares attributed to men and women. Two major studies from France

and Sweden have shown that there is a gender imbalance in emissions, meaning that men have a larger carbon footprint than women, particularly in the categories of transport and diet. These research findings are not interpreted in light of biological needs or socially embedded roles, but primarily in the context of different lifestyles and consumption patterns – male habits: barbecues and cars (men consume more red meat and drive longer and more frequently).

In 2024, the World Meteorological Organization warned that climate change is not gender-neutral and emphasized that girls and women are disproportionately exposed to risks and consequences in the form of extreme climate events, droughts, and water scarcity, and that by 2050, it is projected that 158 million girls and women will be affected by poverty, which is 16 million more than men.

“patriarchal ideal of cheap fossil fuels,” which is why the slogan Make America Great Again can also be interpreted as “make men great again.”

The core of Trump’s political discourse is the idea of maintaining the status quo, that is, preserving an energy system based on fossil fuels, and in this context, the narrative of delayism is often mentioned – a synonym for climate skepticism and denial, or the tactical postponement of the process of decarbonization and green transition. To legitimize such a stance and convince the public and decision-makers of the correctness of his political ideologies, he frequently resorts to manipulative language, primarily through rhetorical strategies that discredit science, delegitimize research findings, and minimize or trivialize the consequences and risks of climate change. In this sense, it can be said that clexit marked Trump’s

economic terms focused on losses, thereby giving the withdrawal a heroic and patriotic tone. This was followed by the withdrawal of the United States from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), along with 64 other organizations key to the fight against climate change. In an effort to ensure the survival of the fossil fuel industry, he also carried out the “largest deregulation in American history” by abolishing one of the most important provisions for climate protection, so that greenhouse gases are no longer considered a threat to human health. His petromasculine rhetoric glorifying the fossil fuel industry is also reflected in slogans such as Drill, baby, drill and Mine, baby, mine. One of the most recent moves of Trump’s administration was the mascot Coalie, that is, the visual rebranding of coal into a small, likeable miner, with the aim of becoming the main ambassador of the “American energy dominance agenda” and thereby convincing the public of the harmlessness and usefulness of “clean coal” for the American economy, while downplaying its harmful effects and its link to global warming. Researchers from the University of California, Berkeley, have defined Trump’s political style as “authoritarian populism,” and the recently held American “No Kings” protests can be interpreted precisely in the context of petromasculinity, as a reaction to the strengthening of centralized power and authority with a tendency toward an almost monarchical form of governance. In this regard, Trump’s attempt to reintroduce fossil fuels as the primary source of energy and his opposition to all climate policies clearly illustrate how the transition of the energy system from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources is not only an economic or political issue, but also a matter of identity.

Jovana Vurdelja



The Petromasculinity Type – Donald Trump

In her work, Daggett pays particular attention to Donald Trump as the embodiment of petromasculinity, who seeks to revive a mid-20th century formula, i.e., petronostalgia – a

policy – the withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement during both his first (2017) and second term, which formally came into force on January 27, 2026. He justified the decision to withdraw by portraying the climate agreement as an enemy of the American economy, framing it in negative



THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORT IN CROATIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE HUEM ASSOCIATION

The country of a thousand islands is increasingly positioning itself as a regional leader in transport electrification, with professional and independent organizations playing a significant role in this process. Among them, the Croatian National E-Mobility Association (HUEM) stands out, bringing together all relevant stakeholders in Croatia's growing EV ecosystem. We spoke with Davor Karolj, Director of the Association, about the development

of e-mobility, infrastructure challenges, incentives, and the broader geopolitical context of transport electrification.

Q: To begin with, could you provide an overview of HUEM's founding history and its core mission? How has the role of the Association evolved since its establishment in the context of energy transition and the decarbonization of transport in Croatia?

A: HUEM – the Croatian National E-Mobility Association – was

established in 2025 with a clear vision: to create an independent, national community that brings together all participants in the e-mobility ecosystem. From drivers and enthusiasts to CPOs (charging point operators), service providers, vehicle dealers, and experts – they are all united by the belief that electric mobility is better for the environment, cities, and quality of life. In a relatively short period, we have become a recognized platform with more than 250 association members and nearly

a thousand users of our shared digital platform. What differentiates us from lobbying or commercial interest groups is our independence – we act solely in the interest of end users and the broader public. Our role has developed in two directions: the first is community-oriented, providing daily support, knowledge exchange, and information sharing, while the second is directed toward the public, state administration bodies, and regulators, delivering expert analyses and concrete recommendations to remove administrative and infrastructural barriers.

Q: How do you assess the current incentive schemes for the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles in Croatia?



Are the existing measures sufficiently effective in accelerating the transition to electric and other low-carbon vehicles, or do you see room for improvement?

A: Incentives in Croatia are not new – the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund (FZOEU) has been implementing them since 2014, and in that sense, there is institutional continuity that should be acknowledged. However, the current model is still not sufficient to significantly accelerate mass adoption, nor

is it predictable, as calls for applications are not issued every year for certain categories.

There are several structural issues we observe in practice: seasonality and the “fastest finger” model are the first. Funds are opened periodically, interest is high, reservations are filled extremely quickly, and uncertainty then follows. Individuals and legal entities that have applied cannot know with certainty whether they will receive the incentive until they receive confirmation and a contract for signing. This uncertainty when deciding to purchase a vehicle worth 30,000, 40,000, or 50,000 euros is not negligible.

The second issue is administrative complexity. The procedure is

demanding and leaves no room for error – a single document missing or incorrectly submitted can result in the application being rejected, often several months after the funds are reserved. The result is that a user who, in good faith, planned a purchase is left without the incentive, without a clear timeline for reapplying, and with the impression that the system is not user-friendly.

It is also important to be fair regarding the amounts, as they are indeed substantial. Depending on the



Davor Karolj

Director of the Croatian National E-Mobility Association

call, co-financing can reach 30–50 percent of the vehicle’s value, with a maximum of 9,000 euros for a fully battery-electric vehicle. This is a significant financial lever that, when functioning properly, genuinely helps encourage the purchase of a battery-electric vehicle compared to an equivalent internal combustion engine vehicle.

What we advocate for, as HUEM, is a transition to a more predictable, continuous model – rather than seasonal calls with a limited number of allocations. This would result in a stable, transparent program that provides users with certainty when planning their investments. An electric vehicle is not an impulsive purchase; it is a decision planned over months, and the incentive system must follow that logic, rather than creating additional stress and uncertainty in the process.

Q: HUEM has conducted analyses related to electric buses – could you tell us more about the key findings? What are the main challenges and advantages of electrifying public transport according to your data?

A: The Croatian National E-Mobility Association conducted an analysis of the electrification of public bus transport in Croatia, and the results show significant progress. According to our data, Croatian cities and municipalities have already procured or are in the process of procuring more than 210 electric buses. The project includes 19 cities and municipalities, with a total investment value of around EUR 163 million. This represents one of the largest transformations of public transport in Croatia's history.

A large portion of these investments has been enabled by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, meaning that European non-repayable funds were the key driver behind cities' actions. This is an important lesson for policymakers, as without a clear and accessible financing mechanism, many cities would not have had the capacity to undertake such a transformation independently.

In terms of advantages, electric buses do not emit CO₂ or other harmful gases, reduce noise in urban areas, and provide citizens with quieter, more modern public transport. In addition to environmental benefits, the economic argument is becoming increasingly clear – our data for Osijek indicate estimated energy-cost savings of around 40 percent per kilometer compared to diesel vehicles. Given the

mileage achieved by bus operators, this figure is highly relevant.

The key challenge remains charging infrastructure. Vehicle procurement is only part of the story – cities must simultaneously build depot charging stations and ensure sufficient power grid capacity. Zagreb is addressing this systematically – “Končar” is building the largest charging terminal in Croatia, with a capacity of 124 charging positions, but not every city is in a position to plan at that scale. This is where we see room for coordinated national support for smaller municipalities.

Q: Are you satisfied with the current pace of public transport electrification in Croatia? What are the key factors influencing the faster or slower introduction of electric buses in cities?

A: The pace is not satisfactory if observed in absolute numbers and in comparison with the European average, but if we look at the trend and dynamics over the past two years, the picture is significantly more positive. In a short period, Croatia has initiated procurement of more than 210 electric buses across 19 cities and municipalities, which would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

The key factor accelerating the process has been European funding, specifically the NRRP. As a rule, cities

do not have the capital for such investments from their own budgets, and electric buses are significantly more expensive to procure than diesel ones, so without grants, most of these projects would not have been initiated at all.

However, this is also where a structural issue lies that slows further progress. Vehicle procurement is only the first step, as cities must simultaneously address the construction of charging terminals, which are technically complex and financially demanding. Smaller cities often lack both the administrative capacity to prepare such projects and the technical expertise to define tender documentation. As a result, the same cities that have successfully utilized the funds are generally those that already had well-established administrative structures and experienced teams.

What would help concretely is centralized technical support for smaller cities in preparing tenders and project documentation, a clearer national plan for the electrification of public transport with measurable targets, and continuous access to financing, rather than one-off funding cycles that create pressure and administrative complexity.

Q: How many fast chargers for electric vehicles are currently available



in Croatia, and how do you assess the development of this infrastructure? Do you see a clear correlation between the expansion of the charging network and the growth in the number of electric vehicles on the market?

A: The Croatian National E-Mobility Association recently conducted a detailed analysis of ultra-fast chargers in Croatia, and the results are surprising for many who have the impression that the infrastructure does not exist. According to our data, Croatia currently has around 300 ultra-fast charging points, while the total number of public chargers, including slower connections, is around one thousand locations. This results in a ratio of approximately one ultra-fast charging point per 38 registered electric vehicles, which is actually a respectable indicator in the European context.

The market is rapidly transforming, and it is particularly interesting that new, agile operators such as Eleport, Electrip, Qelo, and Greenway are already matching or surpassing traditional operators in terms of power and capacity, despite the latter having built the network over the past decade. Eleport, for example, operates 48 ultra-fast charging points with a maximum power of 400 kW across just five

locations, demonstrating the intensity of its investment.

However, there is an important note directly related to the question of correlation with the growth in the number of electric vehicles. Infrastructure is no longer the main barrier, but its quality and geographical distribution are becoming decisive factors. Older infrastructure does not meet the charging capacities of modern vehicles, and the network is unevenly distributed, with a concentration along the coastal corridor and highways, while inland areas and smaller cities remain insufficiently covered.

There is a correlation between the charging network and the growth in the number of electric vehicles, but it is not straightforward to determine. What drives the purchase decision is not only the number of chargers on the map, but also the reliability and predictability of charging. One charger that operates 99 percent of the time is more valuable than three that are occasionally unavailable. It is precisely in this area – the network's reliability and operational transparency – that we still see considerable room for improvement across all operators.

Q: What is the approximate number of electric vehicles in Croatia today, and how do you explain the fact that some

citizens are still hesitant to switch from petrol and diesel vehicles? What are the main barriers – price, infrastructure, habits, or something else?

A: According to official data from the Center for Vehicles of Croatia (CVH), by the end of 2025, Croatia had 12,605 registered fully electric passenger vehicles in the M1 category, along with an additional 5,678 electric vehicles in categories L1-L7 (electric motorcycles, mopeds, and light quadricycles), totaling around 18,300 electric vehicles. There are also 105,729 hybrid passenger vehicles, of which 13,562 are plug-in hybrids that can be charged from an external source.

The growth trend is consistent and impressive in the long term. As recently as 2019, Croatia had only 730 fully electric passenger vehicles, whereas today there are nearly 17 times more. However, in the context of a total passenger car fleet of 2.08 million vehicles, the share of fully electric vehicles still remains below one percent, which is a fact we must acknowledge.

The geographical distribution reveals another important dimension: the City of Zagreb leads with 4,640 registered EVs, and, together with Zagreb County, accounts for nearly 49 percent of all EVs in Croatia. At the other end of the spectrum, Lika-Senj County has only 32 electric passenger





installing chargers remains highly complex from an administrative and legal standpoint. Without home charging, an electric vehicle loses its key advantage. By comparison, Germany recently announced EUR 500 million in subsidies to install chargers in residential buildings, while Croatia still lacks both a regulatory and a financial solution for this issue.

The second factor is price perception, as buyers tend to focus on the upfront cost, rarely considering the total cost of ownership over five or ten years. The third factor is misinformation and myths, and this is precisely where HUEM plays an

Croatia, like other countries in the region, relies heavily on imported fossil fuels. The price of diesel and petrol at the pump depends directly on a global market that we do not control, and geopolitical disruptions – whether crises in the Middle East, tensions around energy corridors, or sanction chains that reshape oil flows – make this dependence costly and unpredictable. Every time instability drives up the price of a barrel, it is directly reflected in the expenses of Croatian drivers and businesses.

An electric vehicle powered by a domestic renewable source – a rooftop solar panel, a hydropower plant, or a wind farm – means that mobility is fueled by local energy whose price does not depend on decisions made in other countries. This represents energy security in a practical, everyday sense.

For Croatia, this dimension carries particular weight. According to CVH data, more than 2.08 million passenger cars are on Croatian roads, 65 percent of which are more than 10 years old. This is a fleet of vehicles that is entirely dependent on fossil fuels. Most of the diesel and petrol consumed by these vehicles, which are not locally produced, represent imported energy, imported vulnerability, and imported price instability.

The electrification of transport is not just an environmental project – it is a strategic diversification of energy dependence. And this is a message that is understandable and relevant even to those citizens who are not primarily motivated by climate-related arguments.

We are aware that this transformation is gradual and will not happen overnight. Nevertheless, every new electric vehicle that replaces a diesel or petrol car represents a small step toward energy autonomy. When these steps are added together, they become part of a national strategy.

Interview by Milena Maglovski



vehicles. This is not just a statistical detail, but a clear signal of where infrastructure and purchasing power set real limits.

Additional context highlighting the necessity of electrification is the age of the vehicle fleet. The average age of passenger vehicles in Croatia is 13.35 years, and as many as 65 percent of the total 2.08 million vehicles are older than 10 years. Such an aging fleet implies high emissions, high maintenance costs, and safety risks, while electrification represents a natural mechanism for its renewal.

Why are citizens hesitant? The answers are consistently the same in discussions within our community. The primary issue is home charging, particularly for residents of multi-apartment buildings, where

active and concrete role through its platform, expert analyses, and direct communication with users and the wider public.

Q: In light of geopolitical tensions, such as the current crises in the Middle East, how do you see the role of electric vehicles in the context of energy security? Can the electrification of transport be a long-term response to instability in the fossil fuel supply?

A: This is a question that is gaining importance every year and one that has long been outside the central public debate on e-mobility in Croatia. The discussion has been framed too much through an environmental lens and too little through the lens of energy independence and the state's strategic interests.



GRIDS AS THE BACKBONE OF EUROPE'S ENERGY FUTURE

Amid accelerated energy transition, rising geopolitical tensions, and increasingly complex market demands, the 2026 European Grids Summit was held in Brussels on April 14, organized by the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E). This important event brought together key stakeholders shaping the energy future of the Old Continent, with a clear shared message: grids are no longer just technical infrastructure—they are a strategic priority for Europe.

From industry representatives and transmission and distribution system operators to policymakers and manufacturers, all participants agreed that Europe's energy trilemma—transition, security, and competitiveness—is now being addressed precisely through the development of electricity networks.

In the opening remarks, President Zbyněk Boldiš and Vice President Tahir Kapetanović reminded attendees that the European internal energy market

The European Grids Package represents a set of legislative and financial instruments launched by the European Commission to accelerate the development of grid infrastructure



for transmission lines currently take between five and ten years on average in most Member States, which is unsustainable given that renewable energy projects are completed within two to three years.

In his keynote address, Michael Damianos, President of Cyprus and Minister of Energy, Commerce, and Industry, emphasized the central role of transmission system operators and ENTSO-E, noting that accelerating grid development is essential to unlock renewable energy, electrification, and digitalization, while warning that infrastructure constraints remain a critical bottleneck.

This island country remains the only EU Member State not yet physically connected to the European transmission network. The EuroAsia Interconnector subsea electric cable project, which is expected to connect Cyprus with Greece via Crete, is one of the Projects of Common Interest (PCI) and symbolically demonstrates how important grids are for energy solidarity—and how challenging it is to connect the final links in the chain.

Emmanuelle Vargon, Chair of the ACER Board of Regulators, emphasized that stronger grids are essential for ensuring universal access to clean and affordable energy and for supporting the European Union's

is one of the Union's greatest achievements. ENTSO-E leadership emphasized that the future of the energy system directly depends on the expansion and modernization of grid infrastructure in order to meet expected demand and integrate renewable energy sources.

Given that grids are now a strategic priority, it was underlined that the key challenge is no longer planning, but implementation—particularly permitting, financing, and execution.

While for decades the focus was on “what needs to be built,” attention has now shifted to “how to actually build it.” Permitting procedures



energy security goals. She highlighted that grids are key to solidarity and mutual support among Member States, which is the fundamental purpose of the internal market.

Dan Jørgensen, EU Commissioner for Energy and Housing, framed his remarks within the context of the global energy crisis and geopolitical

The 2026 European Grids Summit delivered one clear lesson above all: coordination, coordination, and coordination

tensions, stressing that dependence on fossil fuels remains a major vulnerability for Europe, while also pointing to grid limitations as a key bottleneck. He presented the European Grids Package as a central response and underlined his readiness to work closely with transmission system operators to implement it.

The European Grids Package represents a set of legislative and financial instruments launched by the European Commission to accelerate the development of grid infrastructure. Key elements include shortening permitting procedures, improving cross-border coordination, and increasing funding for Projects of Common Interest.

proposed central reference scenario was a key point of debate, with particular emphasis on aligning system needs with real-world developments.

THE SECOND PANEL addressed grid security as a multidimensional challenge, combining supply security, physical protection, and cybersecurity. Discussions emphasized the need for stronger preparedness, faster recovery, and deeper cross-sectoral and regional cooperation.

THE THIRD PANEL turned to the industrial dimension, highlighting that the expansion of grid infrastructure will depend on resilient supply chains, a skilled workforce, and greater long-term visibility to unlock investments and support Europe's competitiveness.

The long-term goal of ENTSO-E and the European Commission is to develop a connected, resilient, and intelligent European supergrid, enabling energy transport from the windy north to the sunny south, from the water-rich Alps to the geothermal Mediterranean. The Brussels summit demonstrated that this goal is gradually but steadily moving from planning boards to real-world implementation.

Coordination as the Key Message

Overall, the 2026 European Grids Summit delivered one clear lesson above all: coordination, coordination, and coordination.

Grids have finally been recognized for what they have always needed to be—the backbone of Europe's energy future. Without them, there is no integration of renewable energy, no electrification of industry and transport, and no energy security. With them—and with bold, coordinated action by all stakeholders—Europe can build an energy system fit for the 21st century.

Prepared by Milena Maglovski



Three Panels – Three Priorities Shaping Europe's Grids

Across three panels, the discussions highlighted key priorities shaping Europe's electricity networks.

THE FIRST PANEL, focused on the European Grids Package, pointed to the gap between planning and implementation. Delays in permitting, financing constraints, and supply chain limitations were identified as major bottlenecks, alongside the need for stronger coordination and more efficient connection processes. The



“DRY, BUT CLEAN” – BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND SOCIAL CRITIQUE

Behind the appearance of a clean stream, the Studena River was in fact hiding a true industrial dump. Used tractor tires, carpets, car parts, and even remnants of household appliances and bicycles were just some of the diverse types of waste collected during this year’s

environmental campaign “Dry, but Clean.”

Nearly eighty volunteers, equipped with gloves and a shared determination to restore Suva Planina to its former beauty, covered three key sections: from Bojanine vode to Devojački grob, and from Niška Banja to Koritnjak. The largest amount of

waste was collected in the Jelašnica Gorge, near Potkapina. It was precisely there—where nature offers the most—that people had polluted it the most, and where they have now cleaned it.

The result? Exactly 270 fully filled bags. Each one a small reminder that rivers and mountains are not landfills.



A Desire to Make the Initiative a Tradition

Milica Branković, editor of the portal *dovrha.rs*, says that the motivation behind organizing the “Dry, but Clean” campaign was the desire to make it a tradition, considering that it was initiated last year by two members from two Niš-based clubs—PK Železničar and PSK Mosor.

The Vrh Nature Lovers Association, that is, the portal *dovrha.rs*, participated as volunteers last year, while this year they wanted to take a more active role in organizing the event. A third association also joined, named after the mountain being cleaned (PD Suva planina), as well as the climbing association PAEK.

– In addition to members of Niš-based associations, a large number of citizens also applied for the campaign, and I will be modestly proud to say that we did expect a large turnout this year, because we remember how we felt last year when

we participated as volunteers. This is not just cleaning—it is also socializing with like-minded people, building new friendships, and spending a wonderful day in nature – Branković emphasizes.

She adds that, prior to the campaign, all institutional requirements had to be fulfilled, as is necessary for such large-scale activities—reporting the gathering to the police, “Srbijašume,” emergency services, and the local public utility company “Mediana,” which promptly removed all collected waste after the action.

– Organizing people was demanding, as we also needed to arrange transportation with as few vehicles as possible, but everything went relatively smoothly because people came with positive energy and a strong desire to do as much as they could for the nature that offers us enjoyment every weekend—and mountaineers truly know how to appreciate that – Milica explains.

Waste as a Reflection of Society

She notes that the amount of collected waste did not come as a surprise, especially compared to last year, when there were significantly fewer participants.

– Considering that we found carpets, car parts, bicycles, washing machines, bathroom sanitary equipment, food and beverage packaging, and much more in and around the river, I conclude that both the local population and visitors do not treat Suva Planina the way it deserves – says Branković, adding that this likely means they are not aware of how fortunate they are to live near such an environment, or, in the case of visitors, to be able to reach it easily by suburban transport.

She also points out that cooperation with institutions is very important in such initiatives, especially since the area is a Category I protected zone. On the other hand, she believes it would be beneficial for all relevant institutions to join forces to design a system of penalties for irresponsible behavior toward nature, as this is the only way to prevent such situations—not only around Suva Planina but in thousands of locations across the country.

As for the next steps, she says many participants suggested that clean-up actions should be organized more frequently. However, she personally believes it would be better to focus on measures that would make such frequent clean-ups unnecessary.

– Education is something mountaineers continuously promote, whether through numerous social media posts or by setting a personal example of how to respect nature. I can guarantee that mountaineers are among its greatest admirers. We certainly plan for “Dry, but Clean” to continue in the future, at least once a year, Branković concludes.

Prepared by Milena Maglovski





REGENERATION: TAILINGS THAT HAVE BECOME A RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

In a place where the law ceases to operate and responsibility remains buried beneath mining waste, a story emerges about the convergence of industry and nature. Mineral extraction brings economic value and a luxury accessible only to the selected few, while the resulting debt is borne by nature and local communities.

The circular economy has opened a new perspective on waste – encouraging us to recognize it as

a resource. Although the modern world is increasingly finding more sustainable solutions, their true value depends on the broader picture – how they are created and the impact they leave throughout their entire life cycle. The development of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power plants, geothermal systems, and energy storage systems, requires enormous quantities of minerals. However, if these processes are not sustainable, their

environmental objective may be undermined by adverse impacts on the environment. This growing demand for minerals further intensifies the pressure on their extraction, deepening already existing environmental and social challenges.

Regeneration – an international social enterprise based in the United States, originating from the non-profit organization RESOLVE – has directed its work precisely toward obtaining the necessary minerals in a



more responsible way. They are writing a different story: the required minerals can be found exactly where we least expect them – in old mines. As they explained, more than 3 billion tons of these resources will be needed to further develop renewable energy sources. Therefore, the team from this social enterprise reprocesses existing mining waste, namely tailings and residues from previous extraction, to recover remaining minerals and metals.

Although they are not the first to engage in such processes, Regeneration highlights an important distinction compared to others. In addition to collaborating with responsible companies that purchase minerals and metals obtained from mining waste, they go a step further: they reinvest the funds they generate to restore these sites. Through cooperation with governments, mining companies, technology manufacturers, and local and Indigenous communities, Regeneration develops specific methods to extract remaining

minerals from abandoned mines and restore degraded land, thereby restoring its ecological and social value. The moment of restoration is precisely what sets them apart from other companies engaged in re-mining abandoned sites. Restoration is not a mere formality – it is built through dialogue with local communities and their needs.

Mining Waste – Challenge and Potential

After the completion of the extraction process, mines are often abandoned without implementing closure and site restoration measures. Instead, mining waste remains at these locations, carrying numerous risks. Pollution may originate from tailings and waste material, and depending on the type of ore, heavy metals and chemicals may be present. One of the most significant issues highlighted by Regeneration is the so-called acid mine drainage. It occurs when mineral-rich mining waste, such as pyrite, comes into contact with water and air, triggering a chemical reaction that produces highly acidic water. This water can pick up heavy metals and other harmful substances and transport them into soil, rivers, and groundwater. Estimates show that there are approximately 1.8 million abandoned mining sites in the United States, while in Australia, this number is around 50,000. One of the reasons why mines are left without remediation is the high cost of this process, which is globally estimated in the billions of dollars.

Such an approach to mines affects not only nature – large areas remain unused, and local communities miss the opportunity to use them for beneficial purposes. However, mining waste also contains a significant untapped resource – minerals and metals that remained after extraction. Estimates by the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) indicate that more than nine million

tons of tailings were produced worldwide in 2018 alone. In the United States, nearly all demand for critical minerals could be met by using by-products from existing mining operations, where metals such as cobalt, lithium, copper, platinum, and tellurium can be found.

Regeneration is currently considering dozens of locations worldwide. The extraction of precious metals from tailings can contribute to the development of technologies such as catalysts, fuel cells, or green hydrogen.

Like a golden necklace adorning the neck, the Salmon Gold initiative, launched in 2018, represents the crowning achievement of this social enterprise. It originated from the idea that gold can be extracted from existing mining waste in streams and riverbeds, with revenue from gold sales used to restore these sites, while its customers remain confident that they are supporting responsible business practices. Although the process of extracting gold from sediment can damage fish habitats and hinder migration and spawning, Salmon Gold is committed to changing this. At locations where mining previously took place, after gold extraction, habitats important for salmon, grayling, and other species are restored, vegetation is replanted, sites are cleaned, and new spawning pools are created. RESOLVE advocates for ensuring that this responsible approach to mining does not remain limited to the scope of their own activities. Therefore, this organization also publishes expert documents (White Papers) that provide guidelines and tools for achieving a more responsible relationship toward mining and nature. These documents are intended for decision-makers, institutions, and experts to enable the implementation of responsible practices worldwide.

Prepared by Katarina Vuinac

The parish house is a representative example of architecture – its walls were built from clay soil sourced in Čelarevo, the roof structure from hewn timber transported via the Danube, and it is covered with tiles from the nearby Čelarevo brickyard



Along the banks of the Danube, a place has developed whose history has not remained confined to archives, but has been passed down through generations, transforming into values that continue to evolve today through work and creation. Čeb, the former name of today's Čelarevo, emerged from a feudal estate with extensive agriculture into an area of intensive production, shaped by the arrival of colonists from Germany and other parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and later by a strong industrial momentum driven by the Dunderski family.

After the Second World War, new communities from Bosanska Krajina continued to build this story — through agriculture, but also through industry that relied on what nature provides. The establishment of the agricultural combine “Podunavlje” and the utilization of the Danube-Tisa-Danube canal system further

strengthened this connection between people and resources.

A special place in the development of Čelarevo is held by the textile combine “Dunav,” which followed the spirit of its time but was also ahead of it — developing packaging made from natural materials such as hemp and sisal, and already introducing polymer processing into production by the late 1960s. It was precisely this combination of tradition and innovation that laid the foundations for modern production, which continues to shape this place today.

In such an environment, where the legacy of working with natural materials and the idea of reuse run through generations, contemporary stories are also emerging — those that deal with recycling and renewal, but in a way that does not forget the past from which they originated.

PLASTIC WASTE FROM VOJVODINA'S FIELDS TRANSFORMED INTO NEW VALUE

Although Vojvodina is not geographically located in the very heart of Serbia, its plains have long been one of the most important pillars of domestic agricultural production. It is precisely in these fields, where each season is measured by yields, that increasing attention is being paid to a broader context – how to make agriculture more sustainable. In a time of climate change and growing pollution, this sector is both heavily affected by these changes and a key link in their evolution.

RKS Kompoziti d.o.o., a company founded in 2009 in Čelarevo, began as a small enterprise that developed technological solutions for the treatment and reuse of plastic waste from the local carpet, PVC flooring, and jumbo bag industries. The developed technology has enabled the reuse of these materials in various production processes by producing regranulates and compounds, which are applied across multiple industrial sectors.

A few years ago, a group of large agricultural producers from the area approached the company with a request to assist in managing plastic pipes used for drip irrigation, which are generated during vegetable harvesting. Based on its prior experience and recognition of the importance of this issue, the company decided to take on the challenge. Vladimir Knežević, an electrical engineer and the

company's director, spoke about this for our magazine.

The company soon adapted part of its equipment to process this specific type of waste and produce regranulate – a recycled plastic raw material used for manufacturing new pipes, wastewater separators, and other HDPE-based products.

With technological development and increased capacity, the company simultaneously worked to educate its clients on the expanded use of regranulates in production. This allowed it to extend its operations to other parts of Serbia and achieve continuous growth in processing, with plans to reach approximately 500 tons annually.

– Our partners had been producing separators from virgin granulate for years, and our role was to provide advisory support in adapting their processes so they could use recycled materials. This cooperation also helped us improve quality and reach the

point where certain products can be made from 100 percent recycled material, contributing to the protection of watercourses, says Knežević.

Agricultural waste, particularly drip irrigation pipes, poses a challenge due to its large volume and low mass, complicating transport and disposal. In practice, this material is still sometimes burned in fields after harvest, further polluting the air and soil.

According to our interlocutor, the recycling process is complex, primarily due to soil contamination from the plastic and the high water consumption required during the washing phase. As an abrasive material, soil additionally accelerates equipment wear, significantly increasing costs.

Today, the company places special focus on educating farmers to better prepare waste for transport and processing, and on expanding its collection and treatment capacity.

Prepared by Katarina Vuinac



THE BAROQUE PEARL OF VOJVODINA REVIVED THROUGH TRADITION AND NATURE

In order to preserve the traditional values of Vojvodina – above all, its multiculturalism and diversity – the desire to contribute to the local community brought together a critical mass of people from business, culture, and art in the spring of 2023. From this initiative emerged an association with an intriguing name – PASTIR (Shepherd), a once widespread profession in Vojvodina symbolizing care and the preservation of shared values.

These values are being revived through the restoration of the parish house – a single-story Baroque building from 1817, constructed

from earth and serving as a testimony to time and tradition. As Branislava Grubor, graduate environmental protection analyst, founder and president of the PASTIR Citizens' Association from Čelarevo, points out for our magazine, the idea for reconstruction was born at the moment of the first encounter with the building and the realization of its exceptional architectural and craftsmanship solutions dating back more than two centuries. Built as a representative facility for church purposes, the parish house embodies the very best of Vojvodina – spaciousness, light, and a position

overlooking the central park in Čelarevo.

Already worthy of attention, this story gains its uniqueness through the desire to restore the building using natural materials and traditional construction methods, and to present it as such to the wider community.

The significance of preserving this building is further emphasized by the fact that it is one of the rare surviving earthen structures that still contains an original open hearth used for cooking before the introduction of masonry stoves. The parish house has also preserved original



documents from the early 19th century, testifying to the turbulent history of Čeb as an imperial estate that was bought and sold by Hungarian noblemen and shared their fate, our interviewee explains.

– Buildings of this size and type no longer exist; they have been demolished. We began the reconstruction at the very last moment, and we will succeed in preserving this jewel of Vojvodina architecture – emphasizes Branislava Grubor.

Great support in this successful undertaking also comes from architect Dragana Kojičić, PhD, a scholar dedicated to sustainable construction, ecology, and permaculture, whose shared love for earthen buildings connected her with the association. The importance of this architectural approach is particularly evident in the times ahead, which bring challenges such as limited resources, prolonged temperature peaks, and alternating periods of extreme drought and heavy rainfall.

Earth as a construction material is exceptional when one knows how to work with it and apply it to

various applications – wall structures, different types of plaster, floors, facades... The list is, in fact, the same as for modern materials and depends on the composition and fineness, i.e., the particle size of the soil. The soil of Vojvodina has an exceptionally fine granulation, making it ideal for finishing plasters and for buildings that are not constructed to great heights.

– If you have trained workers and a material that is practically all around you, you can build a serious structure suitable for a high-quality life. When you realize that all the materials originate from within a radius of just ten kilometers, you also understand the remarkable rationality and ecological principles according to which it was built. At the same time, every unsuccessful attempt, old plaster fallen from the walls, and so on, can simply be recycled: by adding water, they turn back into mud that can be reused, emphasizes the president of the PASTIR Citizens' Association.

The parish house is a representative example of architecture – the walls were built from clay-rich soil

from Čelarevo, the roof structure from hewn timber transported via the Danube, and it is covered with roof tiles from the nearby Čelarevo brickyard. In addition to earth, materials such as straw of various lengths, chaff, and woven wicker are also used in construction. It is particularly interesting that houses built this way do not require air-conditioning systems. Thanks to the excavated basements, a constant temperature of around 10 degrees Celsius is maintained, while the houses themselves remain warm deep into autumn from the summer sun that heated them.

– Through the reconstruction, we aim to raise awareness about sustainable and natural construction, which we achieve through the promotion of natural materials. We use various gatherings and events to speak about the importance and beauty of this type of construction. We are aware that this is a more demanding path, free from shortcuts, prefabrication, and similar approaches, yet these are ultimately the healthiest homes to live in, concluded Grubor.

Prepared by Katarina Vuinac





WHEN POLLEN IS NOT NUTRITIOUS ENOUGH: OXFORD TEAM DEVELOPS A NEW SUPPLEMENT FOR BEES

Nectar is a sweet liquid rich in sugars that plants use to attract bees and other insects. Honey is processed nectar that bees store as a reserve for periods when forage is unavailable, while pollen is a fine powder and the main source of protein and other nutrients essential for the development of young bees. Therefore, any disruption in the availability or quality of food sources can directly weaken an entire bee colony.

However, bees do not face food shortages only when flowers are absent. Problems arise even when pollen is available but does not contain all the nutrients necessary for brood development. In this gap between quantity and insufficient nutritional quality, a solution has emerged from researchers at the University of Oxford – a supplement based on a genetically modified strain of oil-producing yeast (*Yarrowia lipolytica*), designed to provide honeybees with an essential mix of sterols, natural compounds important for cell structure and function.

Nutrient-rich pollen provides bees with the substances necessary for the functioning of their hypopharyngeal glands and the stable development of brood



Einstein, although never confirmed—frequently appears in discussions: “If the bee disappeared from the surface of the Earth, humanity would have no more than four years left to live.”

Nutrient-rich pollen provides bees with the substances necessary for the functioning of their hypopharyngeal glands and the stable development of brood. Poorer-quality pollen, on the other hand, may supply part of the required nutrition but not everything the colony needs in the long term. Thus, bees may have access to pollen yet remain nutritionally deprived. In some ways, humans in modern cities experience a similar phenomenon – fruits and vegetables from stores may appear fresh and healthy yet lack the taste and sweetness of those grown in

role in bee development during the pupal stage, and without it, brood development slows down. Unlike existing supplements, this engineered approach aims to compensate for rare yet essential and hard-to-obtain components, bringing the nutritional profile closer to the complex composition of natural foods found across diverse plant ecosystems. During trials, colonies receiving this supplement showed better brood development over a three-month period compared to those that did not receive appropriate additives.

Bees do not face food shortages only when flowers are absent

Artificial pollen substitutes have been used for decades and are not new. They are typically composed of protein flour, sugar, and oils, but so far, they have not been able to fully replace natural nutrition. Challenges increasingly faced by honeybees worldwide, such as habitat loss, reduced plant diversity, and increasingly unstable flowering periods, result in a lack of nutritionally complete pollen. This makes bees more susceptible to diseases and increases the risk of colony collapse.

However, the consequences do not affect beekeeping alone. While foraging, bees transfer pollen from flower to flower, enabling plants to produce fruit. This is particularly evident in species such as apples, pears, cherries, sour cherries, plums, raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, sunflowers, pumpkins, and zucchinis, whose yields largely depend on pollination. This means that beekeeping is directly linked to agriculture and food production, and, indirectly, to human life on the planet.

This is why the often-cited quote—commonly attributed to Albert



natural conditions. Simply put, there is a difference between having enough food in quantity and having truly nutritious food.

This is where the yeast developed by Oxford researchers comes into play. It is a supplement based on genetically modified yeast that produces sterols, with particular focus on 24-methylenecholesterol, along with five additional sterols required in smaller quantities, as stated in the research. This sterol plays an important

Therefore, this story is not only about a new supplement. The strength of bee colonies determines whether there will be enough healthy brood in hives, enough worker bees, sufficient pollen and nectar collection, and ultimately enough honey. When bees weaken, it is not only the hives that suffer, but the entire natural cycle from flower to fruit, which ultimately affects agriculture, food systems, and humans.

Prepared by Milica Vučković



THE YOUTH FOR CLEAN ENERGY SECTION DRIVES INNOVATION IN TUZLA

How waste can be smartly utilized with a bit of creativity is demonstrated by the students of the Mechanical School in Tuzla. Through the school section Youth for Clean Energy, which was established relatively recently, they are developing ideas and solutions that reduce environmental pollution.

Their first project, a solar panel made from cans, has already attracted wider public attention, and how it all began was explained to us by Professor Muamera Hasančević.

– We came up with the idea for this project through real problems we faced in our school. During the cleaning of the schoolyard around the Mechanical School in Tuzla, as

well as the area near the bridge on the Jala River, we noticed a major issue with littering, especially cans. In October, due to a pipe burst, the school was left without heating, which significantly made it more difficult for students and teachers to stay and work. It was precisely then that we began thinking about alternative and affordable solutions



for heating spaces – says Hasančević.

Their goal was to design a solution that requires minimal investment while delivering concrete results. This led to the idea of creating a simple solar heating system using recycled materials and resources. They emphasize that such solutions can be accessible to everyone, regardless of

financial means or whether someone lives in a rural or urban area.

A solar panel made from cans can be used to heat air in smaller spaces such as classrooms, workshops, greenhouses, and garages.

The panel is made from simple and easily available materials, which was one of the main goals of the project – to achieve maximum effect with minimal investment. A wooden structure was used as the base – OSB boards and laminated boards (frame), while the main elements of the panel were aluminum cans, which were previously cleaned, cut, and connected in rows to allow air-flow and improve heat transfer, with thermal insulation on the back side.

The interior of the panel is lined with a dark (black) material to better absorb solar energy, while the front side is covered with a transparent material (plexiglass or glass) to retain heat inside the panel and create a greenhouse effect. In addition, openings for air intake and outlet were added to enable the circulation of warm air.

A fan is installed at the top of the panel, with the role of extracting (removing) warm air from the panel. In this way, the fan creates continuous airflow: it draws in cold air from below, heats it inside the panel, and expels warm air into the space being heated.

Hasančević emphasizes that this arrangement of the fan further improves efficiency by preventing warm air from accumulating inside the panel, enabling constant circulation, and accelerating the heating of the space.

She adds that the fan can be powered by electricity or a small solar panel, making the system energy-efficient and environmentally friendly.

At the Sarajevo Energy Forum, their project was declared one of the best in Bosnia and Herzegovina, representing significant recognition

and confirmation of the quality of their work. One of their plans is to launch and develop the Tuzla Energy Forum, an event that would bring together experts, young innovators, companies, and institutions to actively engage all stakeholders in developing sustainable energy solutions.

When it comes to the work of the Youth for Clean Energy section, the Mechanical School Tuzla plans to strengthen it through activities in both urban and rural areas.

– Our focus is to involve as wide a range of people as possible – regardless of education or place of residence – and through simple and accessible solutions enable the use of renewable energy sources with minimal financial investment. In the future, we aim to develop educational programs, workshops, and practical projects that will have a direct impact on the community and contribute to creating an energy-sustainable and environmentally responsible environment, says Hasančević.

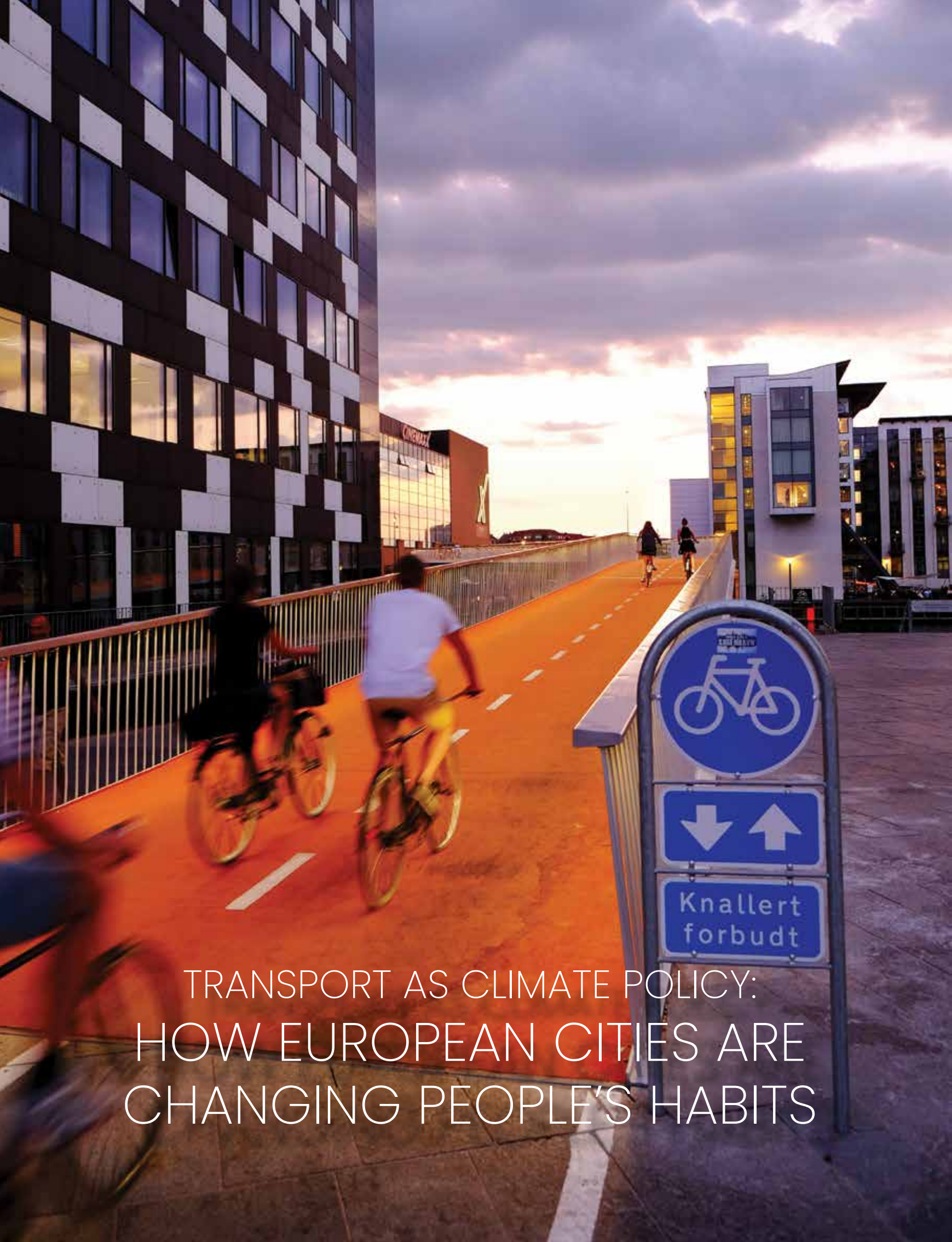
Although the section is among the first in Bosnia and Herzegovina to work with young people in this way, it has already gained recognition across the country. So far, among other things, they have developed small solar-powered cars that use solar energy for movement, projects utilizing the power of water (producing electricity using propellers), and experiments with wind energy.

They are currently working on developing a system for charging electric vehicles in the schoolyard, which will use renewable energy sources, and which represents their most significant project. The goal is to demonstrate that even small communities, such as schools, can take concrete steps toward a sustainable future.

Through their activities, they strive to bring clean energy closer to everyone using practical, simple solutions and ideas.

Prepared by Jasna Dragojević





TRANSPORT AS CLIMATE POLICY:
HOW EUROPEAN CITIES ARE
CHANGING PEOPLE'S HABITS

In European capitals today, it is no longer sufficient for public transport lines to simply become faster and more modern. Urban transport is increasingly viewed as a tool for reducing emissions, air pollution, and the number of cars in urban areas, as well as a way to encourage citizens to choose buses, trams, or the metro instead of their private vehicles. In other words, mobility in cities is increasingly becoming part of climate policy.

London is certainly one of the most striking examples of an accelerated transition toward cleaner urban transport, primarily through the intensive electrification of its bus network. According to a statement by Transport for London (TfL), the public body responsible for urban transport in London, published in June last year, more than 2,000 zero-emission buses were operating on the streets of this metropolis. With this, London reached an important milestone in the modernization of public transport, as the number of such vehicles increased from just 30 in 2016 to more than one-fifth of the total bus fleet. TfL also stated on that occasion that around two out of every nine of London's iconic red buses had already become green. As explained, buses can carry up to 80 times more passengers than cars while occupying only about three times as much road space, making them one of the most efficient ways to use streets in large cities.

At the same time, the city is implementing a broader policy of limiting pollution through the ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zone), which covers almost the entire area of London. Vehicles that do not meet strict environmental standards are required to pay a daily charge, thereby directly discouraging the use of older, more polluting cars. By combining investments in cleaner, better-organized public transport with restrictive measures on individual traffic,



in Vienna, public transport is used by around 2.4 million passengers daily, while approximately 873 million trips are recorded annually, accounting for about 34 percent of all mobility in the city, according to data from Wiener Linien, the city's public transport operator

London aims to achieve a dual effect, reducing the need for car travel through the city.

However, when you arrive in Vienna, it becomes clear what it means when public transport is much more than a competitive, more affordable, and less burdensome alternative to the car. In this city, the metro and trams already operate on 100 percent green electricity, while the goal is for bus transport to become climate-neutral by 2040. Through major infrastructure projects, such as metro expansion, the city directly reduces car traffic. According to estimates, such investments could reduce emissions by tens of thousands of tons of CO₂ annually. This is also indicated by the fact that the U2 and U5 metro line expansion project could reduce the total annual car travel distance in the city by around

550 million kilometers. Their model shows that the focus is not only on technology, but also on ensuring that a broad, reliable, and accessible system becomes the logical choice. This is confirmed by the figures – in Vienna, public transport is used by around 2.4 million passengers daily, while approximately 873 million trips are recorded annually, accounting for about 34 percent of all mobility in the city, according to data from Wiener Linien, the city's public transport operator. The system further demonstrates its mass adoption, with around 1.3 million people holding an annual pass or some form of subscription, making public transport in Vienna a primary mode of everyday mobility.

Tallinn, as a smaller city than those previously mentioned, on the other hand, manages to combine the



London is certainly one of the most striking examples of an accelerated transition toward cleaner urban transport, primarily through the intensive electrification of its bus network

environmental and social dimensions of transport policy. Public transport is not only less polluting but also free of charge for city residents, further encouraging its use and reducing reliance on cars. A similar direction can be seen elsewhere in Europe – Luxembourg has introduced free public transport at the national level, while Belgrade joined this group in 2025 as the largest European city with such a policy. However, unlike major European metropolises, Belgrade’s system still lacks a metro, leaving open questions about the capacity, speed, and reliability of public transport.

What these examples have in common is the effort to influence people’s everyday decisions through

transport infrastructure. From here, the story naturally expands, as emissions are not generated only by citizens’ daily mobility but also by how people arrive in a city and how they behave during their stay. In other words, the boundary between urban mobility and tourism is becoming increasingly blurred, prompting cities to think about transport beyond the framework of daily commuting. Some metropolises are therefore introducing more creative models that influence not only the habits of residents but also the behavior of visitors.

Copenhagen, through the CopenPay project, attempted to go a step further. The initiative was first tested during 2024 as a pilot project with 24 attractions, aiming to encourage

tourists to make more sustainable choices, such as walking and cycling. Among the more notable examples was a model in which boat rides were free for those who collected waste from the canals, while some other activities were rewarded with coffee, a meal, or access to city amenities. Positive results, including a 29 percent increase in bicycle rentals, led to the program’s expansion the following year. In 2025, CopenPay was implemented from June 17 to August 17, with as many as 90 attractions participating.

Through this project, Copenhagen also focused on the way visitors arrive in the city, not just how they move within it. Travelers who arrived by train rather than by plane were rewarded for lower CO₂ emissions, while those arriving by electric car could benefit from perks such as parking discounts.

In addition, rewards were linked to the concept of “travel less often, stay longer,” aimed at reducing the overall environmental footprint of travel—fewer frequent weekend visits with high emissions, and more extended, more efficient stays.

Instead of restrictions, Copenhagen sought to influence visitor behavior through incentives, thereby demonstrating how mobility and tourism can jointly become part of the same climate strategy.

Prepared by Milica Vučković

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