# Electric island Astypalea: Transformation of mobility fully underway

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Island in the Agean sea serves as a future laboratory for smart, sustainable mobility

- All measures to electrify cars and scooters on the island fully implemented

- High demand for digital mobility services; number of electric vehicles is growing continuously

- 3-megawatt solar park will supply electric vehicles entirely with electricity generated from renewable sources from 2024

The island of Astypalea serves as a future laboratory for smart, sustainable mobility. As part of a joint project of the Volkswagen Group and the Hellenic Republic, it is to be gradually converted to e-mobility, digital mobility solutions and green energy. First results are positive: The new, digital mobility solutions are well established, 25 percent of the inhabitants regularly use the ASTYBUS ridesharing service. Over the past twelve months alone it has completed more than 200,000 customer kilometres. Electrification also makes progress: Almost all new cars to be registered on Astypalea are now fully electric.

The Volkswagen Group supports Astypalea with its comprehensive mobility know-how as well as vehicles from the Volkswagen, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, Ducati and SEAT MÓ brands. The measures to transform the mobility sector have been almost completely implemented. These include, in particular, the public charging infrastructure, the special subsidy scheme for private customers and companies, the electrification of authority vehicles (e.g. police, airport), as well as the mobility services ASTYBUS and astyGO. The number of electric vehicles on the small island has risen from zero to 84 in a short period of time.

The ridesharing service ASTYBUS has replaced the traditional bus line, which had offered a very limited local transport on Astypalea. Unlike the bus line, ASTYBUS operates all year round and connects many more places on the island. Depending on the season, up to five vehicles are used for this service. Through the vehicle sharing service astyGO, customers can rent e-cars from Volkswagen as well as e-scooters from SEAT MÓ and e-bikes from Ducati. The booking is made via smartphone via the integrated astyMOVE app.

Maik Stephan, Head of Business Development of the Volkswagen Group, said:

> Over the next two decades, we will see many of the changes that make up the Astypalea project in other regions of Europe as well. Particularly impressive is the people’s change in mood from initial skepticism to great approval. This shows that rapid transformation is possible if companies, politicians and society work together.

Green energy: 3-megawatt solar park to start in 2024

The next step is to renew the energy system, which is to be gradually converted to using locally produced, renewable energy. The already existing smaller solar plants are supplying, among other things, the current e-fleet with green energy. The next milestone is the construction of a hybrid power system, consisting of a solar park with a capacity of 3,5 megawatts and a battery storage system, which is scheduled to start operation in 2024. This system will cover 100 percent of the island's energy needs for e-mobility and up to 60 percent of its general energy needs. The Greece-first tender for this energy project was just recently closed.

By 2026, the energy system is to be further expanded and, in the final stage, will cover around 80 percent of the total energy demand. So far, the island has mainly been supplied with electricity from diesel generators, which emit up to 5,000 tons of CO2 per year.

Accompanying scientific study: Transformation meets with great approval

The scientific study, which is part of the project, shows a high level of support for the transformation: 80 percent of the people on Astypalea have a positive view of e-mobility and mobility services. This is a

significant improvement compared to the first survey at the beginning of the project in 2021 and underlines how crucial it is to provide relevant information about new technologies and services. The ridesharing service ASTYBUS is rated particularly well, with 97 percent approval. Among other things, the flexible use combined with low prices is appreciated.

The survey also shows that on Astypalea, costs are a decisive factor in switching to electric cars. The charging infrastructure, on the other hand, is no longer seen as an obstacle. The surveys took place in two waves in winter 2022/23 and summer 2021, with a total of 211 and 221 people taking part. The study is being carried out by scientists from the University of the Aegean (Greece) and the University of Strathclyde (Scotland) and will evaluate the project for several years.

Sustainability in the Volkswagen Group

Sustainability is one of 10 strategic fields of action that the Volkswagen Group is pushing forward at full speed under the leadership of CEO Oliver Blume. For example, the Volkswagen Group is placing a clear focus on e-mobility and is planning an ambitious ramp-up across the Group's brands. Last year, Volkswagen also tightened its CO2 targets in production and is now aiming to reduce production-related CO2 emissions from passenger cars and light commercial vehicles by 50 percent by 2030.

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