



# Electric vehicle regulation and law in Slovakia

The automobile industry plays a vital role in the Slovak economy, and comprises close to 35% of the country's total industrial exports. In 2015, more than 1.25m cars were produced and, given the country's small population (around 5.4m), this makes Slovakia the biggest car producer in the world per capita (189 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants). Major manufacturers producing cars in Slovakia include VW group, Kia Motors, PSA Group and, most recently, Jaguar Land Rover.

Slovakia's economy is highly dependent on the automotive sector, with vehicles representing 44% of total industrial production. With its potential to revolutionise the market, E-mobility technological advancements are very topical discussion points. Many have highlighted the need for the country to be at the forefront in EV and alternative fuel vehicle technology and production. <sup>1 2 3</sup>

## 1. What EVs have been deployed in your jurisdiction to date?

There were close to 500 EVs registered in Slovakia at the end of 2017. While not a considerable number, this represents a substantial (40%) increase on the 355 EVs registered in 2016. Currently there are 35 fast charging stations and around 100 normal charging points. To put this in context, over 100,000 vehicles (including more than 95,000 cars) are sold each year in Slovakia, most with a combustion engine. Thus, provided the market share level improves, EVs are considered to potentially have a big and promising future. <sup>4 5 6 7</sup>

In September 2015, the Slovak government adopted the Strategy for the Development of Electric Mobility in the Slovak Republic and its impact on the National Economy of the Slovak Republic <sup>8</sup> ("the Strategy"). The Strategy provides an overview of electro mobility in selected EU countries (Germany, Austria, and the V4 countries – Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), analyses the recommendations of the EU's strategic documents, and proposes a system of measures to support the development of electro mobility in Slovakia. Measures considered by the Strategy include:

- stimulation of growth in the sale of electric cars and plug-in hybrids in Slovakia via direct or indirect support (by subsidising certain costs).
- low emission zones for cities (and legislation to allow local authorities to declare such zones in their territory).

- simplification of the administrative process for the construction of charging infrastructure (with the aim of only requiring project documentation of the electrical installation and an inspection report for the placement of a charging station).
- providing public parking spaces in place of residence. Electric car owners shall automatically acquire the possibility of the reservation of one parking space in the immediate vicinity of their home.
- providing public parking spaces. This includes the possibility of limited parking reservation spaces for electric car owners.
- introducing legislative conditions for the mandatory construction of charging infrastructure when constructing parking spaces.
- building a National Network of Charging Centres. This will allow universal use of EVs, including on long-distance routes.
- ensuring subsidies for local authorities to build a publicly available rechargeable charging infrastructure.
- favouring parking and access to narrower city centres and pedestrian zones for EVs. This will facilitate transport and supply in pedestrian zones to be carried out exclusively by EVs.

In November 2016 the Slovak government also adopted the National Policy Framework for the Development of Alternative Fuels Market. 9 This document sets out various measures to support the development of the market for alternative fuels in the transport sector and to improve the relevant infrastructure. Additionally, the Action Plan for the Development of Electro Mobility in the Slovak Republic is expected to be discussed by the Slovak government during 2018. 10

While these are not legally binding documents, they are designed and expected to form the foundation of legally binding measures in the coming years. Ultimately, the government's stated intention is to have at least 35,000 EVs and plug-in hybrids and at least 1,500 quick and semi-quick charging stations by 2030. 11

## 2. Is there any specific legislation for/regulation of EVs in your jurisdiction?

There is no specific regulation for EVs in Slovakia. However, there are some regulations which work favourably for EV technology and production – see point 3 for more detail.

## 3. What measures promote EVs in your jurisdiction?

- **Low emission zones.** In November 2017, the Slovak parliament adopted an amendment to the Air Protection Act; this amendment enables municipalities to introduce low emission zones and thus indirectly favour low emission vehicles such as EVs or hybrids. 12
- **Exemption from a registration fee for an EV.** The first registration on an EV is exempt from the registration fee (at least EUR 33). 13
- **Subsidies.** Under a subsidy programme which ended at the end of June 2018, any citizen, entrepreneur, firm, city or municipality could ask for a subsidy to buy an EV or a plug-in hybrid up to the amount of EUR 5,000 or EUR 3,000 respectively. The vehicle had to be new, bought in Slovakia, and registered and present in Slovakia for at least two years (for instance the subsidy could not be used to buy Tesla EVs as these are not officially sold in Slovakia). The total amount of the subsidy distributed amounted to approximately EUR 5m. To date, a new subsidy scheme is expected to be introduced in late 2018. In addition to providing subsidies for the purchase of new vehicles, it is anticipated that the new scheme will provide benefits for the development of charging stations and other initiatives. 14 15
- **“Zero” motor vehicle tax.** EVs are not subject to motor vehicle tax (applicable to all vehicles

that are used for business activities). However, the tax return must be filed.

- **No licence for charging stations.** The operation of a publicly-available charging station is exempted from the licensing duty.

#### **4. Who are the main entities (e.g. developers, government, System Operators) and what are their roles in the deployment of EVs in your jurisdiction?**

- **Government** – responsible for coordination, development and support of relevant policies. 16 17
- **Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Transport and Construction** – main ministries responsible for carrying out the relevant policies, administering subsidies and for preparing legislative changes for the future development of the industry.
- **Automotive Industry Association of the Slovak Republic** – an opinion-making and unifying organisation, which represents the interests of its members and presents a key part of the Slovak industry. Its members are car importers such as BMW, DAF Trucks or FCA as well as interest groups like various car clubs as well as universities and schools. 18
- **Slovak Electric Vehicle Association** – organisation founded in 2012 to represent and support the development of traffic and traffic infrastructure for EVs. It provides a platform for effective communication between the private and public sector. 19
- **Office for Investments and Informatisation** – managing, coordinating and supervising the use of EU funds. This office is vital for the distribution of subsidies. 20
- **Local authorities** – play an important role in adopting local measures such as parking rules (possibly favouring EVs). Local authorities may also play key roles in the construction of charging points.
- **Electricity market participants** – electricity generators, suppliers and, most importantly, distribution grid operators that play a vital role in developing electro mobility in Slovakia.
- **Charging station operators** – most fast charging stations seem to be operated by the company GreenWay; other charging station are operated by electricity market participants or car manufacturers themselves (e.g. Tesla has a charging infrastructure in Slovakia). 21

#### **5. What are the main challenges to further deployment of EVs in your jurisdiction? How have EV developers sought to overcome these challenges to date?**

- **Price** – EVs remain more expensive than combustion-driven vehicles. State subsidies should compensate the difference between the prices. Tax benefits (e.g. faster tax depreciation rates or other tax benefits) are also considered.
- **Battery life-span** – EVs currently have a somewhat short battery life-span, and cannot travel long distances without being charged. This underlines the need for more charging points throughout the country.
- **Charging infrastructure** – the infrastructure needs to be developed, especially in the countryside and smaller cities. 22
- **Capacity of the grid** – in the near future it appears the current grid will be satisfactory to support the charging infrastructure. In the mid- to long-term, further investments in the grid will be needed to enable wider use of EVs.
- **Financial support** – the previous subsidy scheme was limited to providing subsidies for the purchase of EVs and was therefore too narrow in scope. A new subsidy should be adopted soon. 23
- **Education and promotion** – as there are still a lot of prejudices about EVs, there is a need for promotion and education about the advantages of EVs.

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