

Car-packed Sofia sets EU example with solar car charger

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A man parks his electric powered car at a charging station in Sofia. Bulgaria's car-packed capital has recently set a EU example in the fight against greenhouse gas emissions by installing its first state-of-the-art solar power charger for electric cars, officials said.

Bulgaria's car-packed capital Sofia has set an EU example in the fight against greenhouse gas emissions by installing its first state-of-the-art solar-powered charger for electric cars, the project's managers said Wednesday.

"[Electricity production](#) can be polluting so we thought we would build this photovoltaic station and charge electric cars with green [energy from the sun](#)," engineer Rosen Malchev told AFP.

Sofia's solar station was cited by the European Commission earlier this month as one of a handful of success stories in Europe's fight against climate change.

The small installation on a bustling Sofia boulevard cost 25,600 euros (\$33,600) to build, with half of it funded by the United Nations Development Programme.

It can only charge one vehicle at a time but clients do not have to pay as "its energy is a gift from the sun," Malchev said.

"The photovoltaic equipment feeds from the light and not the heat and is even more efficient in winter time, when there is no need for cooling it down," he explained.

Malchev's Green Energy consortium is part of the European Green eMotion project, which seeks to help countries reduce their [carbon dioxide emissions](#) by promoting research and exchange of electromobility solutions.

On Wednesday, the government vowed to promote environmentally-friendly means of transportation, including the production and use of electric cars as well as a network of charging stations across the country.

About 450 electric and [hybrid cars](#) are currently registered in Bulgaria, a country of 7.4 million, according to police data.

Bulgaria, which joined the European union in 2007, has one of the oldest and most polluting car fleets in Europe, with two-thirds of vehicles

bought second-hand due to people's meagre financial means.

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