

electric/hybrid

World's Largest eTaxi Project with Automated Charging

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To lower emissions and further improve quality of life in the city, Vienna and Graz will be increasingly sh eTaxis. However, for economical operation of the electric taxis, interruptions for trips to distant next charging station must be avoided, which is why the focus is on automated charging directly at the taxi stands.



eTaxi Austria project: automated charging networks with Matrix Charging®

Within the so called "eTaxi Austria" project, a globally unique project, in Vienna and Graz 10 taxi stands and 66 vehicles will be retrofitted with Matrix Charging®, the automated charging technology developed by Easelink, over the next two years.

Instead of plugging an electric car into the charging point with a cable, these vehicles use a connector on the underbody that can be connected to a charging plate at the taxi stand with the push of a button. The taxis are automatically charged, without the driver even having to leave the vehicle.

eTaxi Austria is the largest eTaxi project to date for automated charging directly at the taxi stands and the first to one with the application of an highly efficient conductive charging technology for eTaxi operations. The two vehicle types being used in the project support charging at 100 kW AC and 100 kW DC, which is being implemented as part of the eTaxi Austria project. Matrix Charging® will subsequently support up to 22 kW AC and 100 kW DC at 800V.

"As an automobile manufacturer independent technology, Matrix Charging® can already be retrofitted into most of the electric vehicles available on the market today. The charging pads installed at the parking space are robust and maintenance-free and can be installed in both in public spaces and in garages," says Hermann Stockinger, founder and CEO of Easelink.

Starting in 2025, only taxis with emission-free drive systems will be permitted in Austria. The eTaxi Austria project is intended to set the tone for the future and to prepare the rollout of automated charging infrastructure. The charging infrastructure has already been massively expanded in the last years in Vienna and Graz. In Greater Vienna "Wien Energie", Austria's largest energy supplier, already operates over 1,900 public and semi-public charging stations.

"For the electrification of taxi fleets, the automation of charging at the stand is crucial. This can only be achieved with a robust charging technology that can be integrated flush and thus barrier-free into the roads. Matrix Charging® meets these requirements and offers high efficiency through the conductive connection. Due to the decentralized design of the charging infrastructure and a high connection time of the vehicles with the charging points, a seamless integration into the urban power grid can be achieved," says Paul Gredler Oxenbauer, Group Manager Charging Solutions Wien Energie GmbH.

Major benefit for urban areas and eTaxi driver

The implementation of charging infrastructure with Matrix Charging® offers extensive advantages. By eliminating bulky charging stations and cables, charging infrastructure can be rolled out in densely built-up areas without requiring additional space. At the same time, the project enables year-round comfort for drivers and customers (cooling and heating of electric vehicles at the taxi stand without reducing range) as well as easy moving forward and backward at the taxi stand without a cable.

The simplified charging process and the elimination of uneconomical trips to the charging station boost the acceptance among drivers and pave the way for further electrification of cab fleets.

Rollout of Matrix Charging®

Through collaboration with renowned automotive manufacturers and suppliers, the Matrix Charging® technology is being brought into series production and rolled out worldwide. The technology was recently shown in an electric vehicle platform from automotive supplier Schaeffler at the IAA Mobility Munich.

Project partner und funding authority

The eTaxi Austria project in Vienna and Graz is being implemented by a project consortium. The core team consists of the Economic Chambers of Styria, Wien Energie and Energie Graz, Easelink GmbH, Grazer Energieagentur, tbw research GesmbH, Taxi 40100 and Taxi 31300 as well as vibe r and Quintessenz Organisationsberatung. The motor club ÖAMTC as well as Hyundai are also participating in the project.

The project is being funded by the Climate and Energy Fund as part of the "Zero Emission Mobility Implementation" program. It will last until mid-2021 and should serve as the basis for further mobility transformations.

"We seek to promote long-term approaches with our funding program. The eTaxi project is a pioneering effort. It offers a truly promising way to contribute significantly to climate neutrality. With the participation of Vienna and Graz, we are very pleased to have the two largest cities in Austria on-board cities. We are very excited for implementation of this project!" says Theresia Vogel, General Manager of the Climate and Energy Fund.

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