

ENERGY INSIDER

by Kostis Geropoulos



# Iran wants EU technology to boost sustainability of cities



Smog obscures buildings in Tehran, Iran, December 30, 2015. The Iranian government and the Mayor of Tehran are very interested about clean and safe public transportation, the Deputy Mayor told New Europe on the sidelines of the CIVITAS forum in Gdynia on September 28, 2016.

EPA/ABEDIN TAHERKENAREH

## Tehran is talking with European companies with the western sanctions lifted

by Kostis Geropoulos

**GDYNIA, Poland** – Iran plans to use European technology to reduce emissions and improve the quality of life in Tehran and other major cities now that the western sanctions against the Islamic Republic are lifted, Tehran Deputy Mayor **Maziar Hosseini** told New Europe.

“We have started to negotiate with European companies,” he said. “We’re interested to coming back the new technologies to our country and making a new hub for the European cities in the Middle East and West of Asia,” Hosseini said on the sidelines of the CIVITAS forum 2016 ‘Shaping the mobility of tomorrow’.

He said Iran values the experience of the European cities in the field of transport and that they share the same main attitude of “making better cities with higher mobility and making the cities a better place to live. Over 75 percent of the population in Iran is living in cities”.

Regarding the major air pollution problem in Tehran, Hosseini said there are very specific projects in progress at the moment. “For example, the LEZ - low emission zones - started from the end of September and we try to change the standards. For example, we switched from the diesel buses to Euro 4 with the filter and I think that in near future we are going to Euro 6. We also have some changes from the percentage

of the public transportation from 40 and in the near future we are going to 45 percent,” Tehran’s Deputy Mayor said.

The Iranian government and the Mayor of Tehran want to tackle the pollution problem and “are very interested about clean and safe public transportation and I think it’s a transitional route for us,” Hosseini said.

He said that there is an effort to change the people’s mentality to increasingly use public transport in the major Iranian cities. “Unfortunately or maybe fortunately, we’re an oil-rich country and the fuel cost is very cheap and they like to use their private cars. This is a big challenge for the future for us,” Hosseini quipped.

## China, Britain, France sign pact for new UK nuclear plant

Officials from China, Britain and France have attended a signing ceremony to mark the final approval for the construction of the new Hinkley Point nuclear power station in southwest England.

The 18 billion-pound (\$23 billion) project will be financed by Chinese nuclear power provider CGN and

French energy group EDF. It will be Britain’s first new nuclear plant in more than two decades, AP reported.

French Foreign Minister **Jean-Marc Ayrault** and Chinese Energy Minister **Nur Bekri** attended the ceremony on September 29.

British Business Secretary **Greg Clark** said the signing marked a crucial

moment in Britain’s effort to upgrade its energy supplies.

New Prime Minister **Theresa May** had delayed approval of the project while reviewing its security implications and other matters. The government says future foreign investment in infrastructure projects will face tighter reviews.

## Gdynia strives for zero emissions transport

**GDYNIA, Poland** – The people-friendly city of Gdynia, a port on the south coast of the Baltic Sea, is easy to get around using public transportation, biking and walking. Smartening European cities and switching to low emission mobility has been a cornerstone of EU policy especially this year, European Commission Vice President for Energy Union **Maroš Šefčovič** said on September 28 in video address at the opening of the CIVITAS Forum 2016 ‘Shaping the mobility of tomorrow’ in Gdynia.

The three-day forum focused on EU sustainable cities and transport. Šefčovič reminded that in July the European Commission presented its communication on low-emission mobility, spelling out how to make Europe’s transportation more sustainable and more energy and resource efficient in the coming years.

After riding a Solaris trolleybus cross the city, the company’s public relations head told me a little later that they cooperate very closely with Gdynia for over 15 years.

“The first trolleybus we delivered was in Gdynia. Actually, it was the very first trolleybus we built for them. And those days no one perceived trolleybuses as a future of public transportation and nowadays Gdynia is one of the best examples of a mobility movement in Europe,” **Mateusz Figaszewski** told New Europe. “It’s a zero emission vehicle at least at the place of operation, even if it is supplied energy from the coal mining, it is still zero emissions in the city where the pollution is the biggest problem and the biggest challenge,” he added.

The last six years in Gdynia they invest a lot in the development of new kind of trolleybus equipped with additional Li-Ion batteries so trolleybus is partially trolleybus and partially electric bus so they can in a great way extend the lines of operation without huge investments in the overhead wires, Figaszewski said, adding that this is one of the best examples how modern transportation can be built on the zero emissions vehicles. Gdynia Deputy Mayor **Marek Stępa** said his city plans to move away from polluting diesel buses to buses that run on natural gas and to develop the already existing fleet of trolleybuses although with a completely new impetus. “Obviously zero emissions are a very important and very attractive goal. However, we should always remember about the transportation costs and bear in mind the fluctuation of these transportation costs,” Stępa told a press briefing, responding to a question from New Europe.

“Sometimes it is cheaper to run on natural gas, sometimes it is cheaper to run on electric power and what that means is the rolling stock needs to be diverse in order for any changes of prices of sources energy have a smaller impact on the overall cost of public transport in the city and its budget. The idea is to stabilise these costs because at this scale it has a very important effect upon the entire city finances,” Stępa said, adding that although public transport in Gdynia is not free, the city covers 50% of transport costs.

The Gdynia deputy mayor also noted that the city uses EU funds for such projects an innovative energy-saving system for its trolleybuses. “This involves energy recuperation,” Stępa said.

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