

Slovenia Opens First CNG Station

Slovenia's first compressed natural gas (CNG) filling station has been opened in Ljubljana, the country's capital and largest city.

At the same time the city has welcomed 20 new CNG powered public transport buses. The CNG filling station was co-financed by the European Union under the CIVITAS ELAN project.

Ljubljana is one of five cities, the others being Ghent (Belgium), Zagreb (Croatia), Brno (Czech Republic) and Porto (Portugal), that joined together in a project "to 'mobilise' our citizens by developing with their support clean mobility solutions for vital cities, ensuring health and access for all".

The CNG station was set up under cooperative agreement between Geoplin d.o.o., the biggest supplier of natural gas in Slovenia, Ljubljanski potniški promet d.o.o. (LPP), a public transportation company that serves the Municipality of Ljubljana and sixteen suburban municipalities, and utilities provider Energetika Ljubljana d.o.o., part of Javni Holding Ljubljana (JHL).

The construction of the station, at Ljubljana Brigade Road, implements one of the environmental requirements of the European Union to reduce emissions of harmful substances into the atmosphere. The city explained in its press release that because of the negative impact of transport on the environment, particularly in urban areas, it was directed to search for eco-efficient modes of transport; the use of methane as a fuel for transport significantly reduces the amount of combustion products released into the atmosphere.

The station was established at a cost of EUR 1.1 million (USD 1.43 million), including all costs of demolishing the previous building and the establishment of land for construction of filling stations, gas processing, utility and road infrastructure. The city anticipates growing consumer and commercial interest in CNG as an environmentally friendly fuel. The purchase of new CNG buses by LPP and a commitment to purchase CNG fleet vehicles by public companies within the JHL is seen as a major step forward toward improving air quality in Ljubljana.

The new buses are 12 meter low-floor Iveco Irisbus Citelis city buses, employing vertical rear-mounted Cursor 8 CNG EEV, 6-cylinder line engines. Each bus has 8 roof-mounted cylinders by 155 liters, or 1240 liters total, sufficient for 400 kms of urban driving. LPP plans to increase the number of natural gas buses to 110 by 2015, approximately 50% of its fleet.

(This article primarily compiled using information from a Ljubljana Municipality press release)

