



FlixBus starts next pilot project: Reducing CO2 emissions with solar panels on bus

FlixBus has equipped its first international bus with solar panels, running between Dortmund and London, via the Netherlands, Belgium and France. The generated solar energy is used for electronics on the bus, while reducing journey's CO2 emissions.

- + Supplies bus and traveller with solar-based electricity
- + First trial with Dutch bus partner and international technology company TRAILAR: 7% less diesel used
- + FlixBus tests various sustainable alternatives to be fully CO2-neutral by 2030 at the latest

Amsterdam, 07/02/2020 - FlixBus has installed solar panels on its green bus that runs from Dortmund, via Eindhoven, Antwerp, Bruges and Calais to London. The solar panels generate energy for the bus's electrical consumption. This effectively reduces fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

Tech: Mobile charging on solar energy

The solar mats installed on the roof of the FlixBus are ultra-thin and lightweight to prevent air resistance. The solar mats on the roof can communicate with the alternator in the bus through a charge controller placed in the FlixBus. The new technology, charges the bus battery mainly by solar energy, relieving the alternator of the need to charge it using fuel. During the trial period, an average of 1.7 litres of diesel was saved per 100 km. With an average distance of 600 kilometres per day, this is a daily fuel saving of around 10 litres. The solar panels are expected to produce more energy during the summer.

The battery, in turn, supplies the power consumption of all the electronics on board. As usual with FlixBuses, the bus with solar panels is also equipped with USB ports, sockets, air conditioning, wi-fi and a media entertainment system. With the new technology, all on board equipment is now powered by solar energy. In this way, FlixBus travellers can charge their mobile devices with renewable energy - namely with the sun shining on the green bus.

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Unique collaboration: Local bus partner & international tech company

For this pilot project FlixBus is working with TRAILAR, a British company that offers innovative transport solutions to reduce the environmental impact of commercial vehicles. The flexible solar mats have been specially developed for use in the transport sector and are already being used for trucks and delivery services. FlixBus is the first to apply this technology to an international long-distance bus.

FlixBus further cooperates with local bus partners who operate the daily trips. One of these partners is Kupers Touringcars, from Limburg. The solar panels are installed on one of their buses that runs daily from Dortmund, via Eindhoven, Antwerp and Bruges to London. Director Kupers Touringcars, Bert Fonteijn says, "We are very proud that our double-decker is participating in this international pilot project to further reduce the environmental impact of long-distance bus journeys. We are pleased to be able to offer our travellers a tech-forward way of travelling".

Project optimisation and rollout

TRAILAR, Kupers Touringcars and FlixBus continue to regularly evaluate the results and improve the project. The technology is designed in such a way that the data, and therefore the yield, can be monitored. Circumstances can be optimised, ultimately reducing CO2 emissions as much as possible. Factors like the route of the bus and the season influence the performance of the technology. The bus currently runs twice a week from Dortmund to London. From April, the bus will drive even more frequently and even daily during the holiday periods.

"We strive to travel as climate-neutrally as possible and make climate-friendly travel accessible to as many people as possible," says Jesper Vis, managing director of FlixBus Benelux. "This pilot project with solar panels is just one in a series of initiatives and climate-friendly projects for our travellers. Based on the initial results, we will evaluate the extent to which we amplify this pilot to more buses or even all buses in the network".

Climate-neutral travel

In 2018, FlixBus launched pilot projects with the world's first electric long-distance buses in France and Germany, and last year ran a test drive in the USA. Moreover, FlixBus also offers its passengers the opportunity to offset the exact CO2 emissions of their journey. For this, FlixBus has a long-term partnership with atmosfair, an internationally renowned organisation that offers projects recognised by the UN with the so-called Gold Standard. Currently, around 6% of FlixBus travellers worldwide opt for this compensation, compared to 9% in the Netherlands.

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