

NORWAY, THE GREEN PATH

Norway, a country of 5.2 million people and one of the richest countries in the world, is trying to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet ambitious climate goals. Many Norwegians today are taking part in the world's most ambitious governmental effort to reduce the use of fossil fuels.

Norway has become a global model of how to get the public interested in buying electric vehicles. The country has the highest proportion of electric car registrations in the world—by a long margin. According to a recent study, 1/3 of all new car registrations were of electric vehicles.

This interest in electric cars is attracting the attention of researchers and government officials from around the world. Some people wonder if the Norwegian program is an efficient way to reduce air pollutants. And some elements of the program simply may not be possible in other countries. But for many, Norway is showing a **path** forward.

At first, it seems ironic that electric cars are so popular in a country that is one of the world's biggest producers of oil (Norway is the world's 7th largest producer of petroleum). But Norway also has many fast rivers, allowing it to generate almost all of its electricity from hydropower. As a result, Norway's electricity is clean and relatively cheap. Countries where much of the electricity is generated by power plants burning coal, like the U.S., China, or Germany, would not see as many environmental benefits from switching to electric vehicles.

Electric cars, however, are not popular in all countries with fast rivers. So what does Norway have that others don't? In a word: incentives. Norwegians pay some of the world's highest taxes, but they also receive huge benefits for buying electric cars. An electric vehicle pays no road tax or registration fee, no sales tax, and no **value-added tax**. Public parking is free; **tolls** on roads, bridges, and tunnels are free, and it is free to transport electric cars on ferries. In addition, electric cars can be charged for free at public charging points, and they can also travel in restricted bus lanes.

Those incentives are working. Electric vehicles now account for 2.5 % of all cars in Norway. After more than a decade of government support, officials had expected that there would be 50,000 electric cars on Norway's roads by the end of 2017. The government program has been even more successful than hoped: by September 2015, over 66,000 all-electric cars were in use. The American luxury car manufacturer Tesla, which only makes fully electric cars, sells approximately 30 % of its cars in Europe, and its largest European market is Norway.

Naturally, all those incentives cost a lot of money. In fact, the incentives have been so successful that some of them will be reduced in the future. Electric car owners will have to pay 50 % of the road tax starting in 2018, and all of it in 2020. Local governments can now decide if they offer free parking and free tolls. Many smaller cities have said that they will start treating electric cars like all other vehicles because they need the extra cash to repair bridges and tunnels. Free charging of electric vehicles will probably remain, however, because Norway has so much inexpensive hydroelectric power. The effect of eliminating some incentives for electric cars in Norway remains to be seen, although in Japan, electric car registrations fell by 20 % when some incentives ended. The green approach, although widely supported by Norwegians, may turn out to be too expensive, even for a rich country.

Text adapted from *The New York Times* (October 19, 2015)

path: camí / camino

value-added tax: IVA

toll: peatge / peaje

[4 points: 0.5 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.16 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

		Espai per al corrector/a		
		Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1.	The reason the government of Norway promotes the sale of electric cars is that it wants <input type="checkbox"/> to support the local coal industry. <input type="checkbox"/> to lower the levels of gas emissions. <input type="checkbox"/> to limit petroleum and gas production. <input type="checkbox"/> to support Norwegian companies producing electric cars.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	People in other countries study the evolution of the car market in Norway because <input type="checkbox"/> there are more cars in Norway than in any other country. <input type="checkbox"/> electric cars were only recently introduced in the country. <input type="checkbox"/> a high percentage of electric cars are sold there. <input type="checkbox"/> the government has decided to restrict the sale of cars.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Electricity production in Norway mainly depends on <input type="checkbox"/> coal. <input type="checkbox"/> gas. <input type="checkbox"/> oil. <input type="checkbox"/> water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The effects on the climate of moving away from gasoline-fueled cars to electric cars are greater in Norway than in a country like Germany because <input type="checkbox"/> Norway produces more oil than Germany. <input type="checkbox"/> Norway produces cheap, clean electricity. <input type="checkbox"/> no electric cars are made in Germany. <input type="checkbox"/> of Norway's location.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	The text claims that Norway is able to provide free public charging of electric vehicles because <input type="checkbox"/> electricity is cheap to produce in the country. <input type="checkbox"/> electricity is produced from Norwegian gas. <input type="checkbox"/> it is a world leader in oil production. <input type="checkbox"/> only a very few vehicles in the country are fully electric.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Which of the following is NOT an incentive offered by the Norwegian government to buy an electric car? <input type="checkbox"/> Free charging. <input type="checkbox"/> Free car repairs. <input type="checkbox"/> Free parking. <input type="checkbox"/> Free registration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	The program to promote the use of electric cars <input type="checkbox"/> has been a failure in many ways. <input type="checkbox"/> has succeeded beyond expectations. <input type="checkbox"/> has had very little impact. <input type="checkbox"/> cannot be evaluated yet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	The text states that the benefits of operating an electric car in Norway <input type="checkbox"/> will remain unchanged during the next 5 years. <input type="checkbox"/> will be eliminated in part in the next 5 years. <input type="checkbox"/> will be increased in the next 5 years. <input type="checkbox"/> will depend on the production of Norwegian gas and oil.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Correctes	Incorrectes	No contestades
Recompte de les respostes		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>