

In a first, electric cars outsell traditional ones in Norway

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In this Nov. 26, 2014 file photo electric cars queue in the bus lane, left, on the main road into Oslo, Norway. In a symbolic first, electric cars outsold fossil fuel-powered ones in Norway in March 2019. Christina Bu, the Norwegian Electric Vehicle Association's general secretary, says sales figures show 58.4 percent of new cars sold in the country in March were battery-powered, calling it "historically high." (Lise Aserud/NTB Scanpix via AP, File)

In a symbolic first, electric cars outsold fossil fuel-powered ones in Norway last month.

Christina Bu, the Norwegian Electric Vehicle Association's general secretary, said Monday that 58.4 percent of new cars sold in the country in March were battery-powered, calling it "historically high."

Bu added that electric cars' share of the market in the first three months of 2019 was 48.4 percent and is expected to hover around 50 percent for the whole year.

"Norway shows the whole world that the electric car can replace cars powered by gasoline and diesel and be an important contribution in the fight to reduce CO2 emissions," Bu said in a statement.

Norway, a wealthy European nation of 5.3 million, has provided big incentives to boost electric car sales. It waived hefty vehicle import duties and registration and [sales taxes](#) for buyers of electric cars to boost sales. Owners don't pay road tolls and use bus lanes in congested city centers.

The perks, however, are to be phased out in 2021.

Norway's Parliament has voted to require that all new cars sold in the Scandinavian country be electric by 2025.

Countries around the world are trying to encourage more people to buy [electric cars](#) as part of the effort to reduce [carbon emissions](#) and fight climate change. China, the world's biggest auto market, has also provided big incentives as it tries to clean up the country's air pollution problem and gain a lead in new technologies.

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