

Volkswagen tests electric cars, transit apps on Greek island

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A Volkswagen ID.4 electric car of the Civil Aviation is parked on the Aegean Sea island of Astypalea, Greece during the official launch of a project to introduce and test electric vehicles and sustainable energy systems on Wednesday, June 2, 2021. The government has partnered with the German carmaker on the island project aimed a switching to electric vehicle use over the next five years. Credit: Alexandros Vlachos/Pool via AP

German carmaker Volkswagen launched a five-year project Wednesday on the small Greek Aegean island of Astypalea to test the adoption of electric vehicles in areas switching to sustainable energy generation.

The 20-million-euro (\$24.4 million) initiative will receive financial support from the Greek government. It will offer residents purchasing incentives to swap conventional vehicles for [electric cars](#) and scooters, and test ride-share applications and public transport models driven by customer demand instead of using fixed schedules and routes.

"This is very valuable knowledge because what we are going to see on this island in the next five, six, or seven years will probably last in the rest of Europe for 20 years or three decades," Volkswagen CEO Herbert Diess said during a presentation on the island.

Volkswagen has stepped up its plans to produce [electric vehicles](#) in recent years, in the wake of a major emissions scandal first discovered in the United States. The company eventually admitted installing deceptive software in millions of its diesel vehicles to make emissions appear less harmful when placed on a test machine.

Greece is keen to develop [power generation](#) from [renewable energy sources](#) on its islands to replace expensive locally produced electricity, mostly using diesel.



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis opens the door of an electric car as he accompanied by Volkswagen Group CEO Herbert Diess during the official launch of a project to introduce and test electric vehicles and sustainable energy systems on the Aegean Sea island of Astypalea, Greece, on Wednesday, June 2, 2021. The government has partnered with the German carmaker on the island project aimed a switching to electric vehicle use over the next five years. Credit: Alexandros Vlachos/Pool via AP



Volkswagen ID.4 electric cars of the Coast Guard and Police are parked on the Aegean Sea island of Astypalea, Greece during the official launch of a project to introduce and test electric vehicles and sustainable energy systems on Wednesday, June 2, 2021. The government has partnered with the German carmaker on the island project aimed a switching to electric vehicle use over the next five years. Credit: Alexandros Vlachos/Pool via AP



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, right, listens Volkswagen Group CEO Herbert Diess, center, during the official launch of a project to introduce and test electric vehicles and sustainable energy systems on the Aegean Sea island of Astypalea, Greece, on Wednesday, June 2, 2021. The government has partnered with the German carmaker on the island project aimed a switching to electric vehicle use over the next five years. Credit: Alexandros Vlachos/Pool via AP

The government plans to use wind and solar power for the Astypalea project. Officials said researchers from the Universities of the Aegean in Greece and Strathclyde in Scotland were also participating in the program.

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