

ELECTRIC AVENUE

Following its hugely successful “Velib” bicycle scheme, Paris launches its electric car-hire project this month.

This month, the new, fully electric, noise-free, emissions-free “Autolib” system will be rolled out across Paris. The system is patterned after the ever-popular and widely imitated “Vélib” bike hire scheme. The vehicles, dubbed¹ « bluecars », will be available from 250 hire stations across the Île-de-France, with prices starting at €5 (excluding membership costs). Autolib' launches on December 5 with 250 cars and plans to expand to around 3,000 by next summer, which would make it the world's largest fleet of electric cars available for hire.

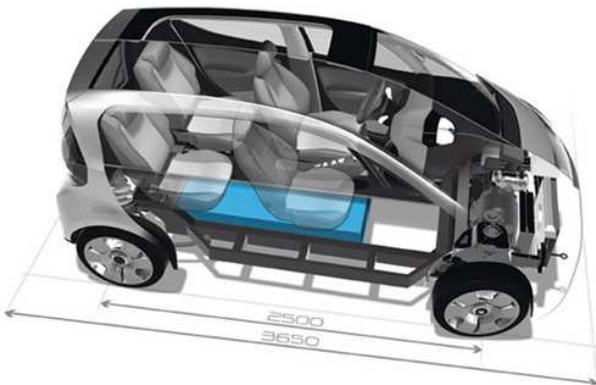


Miniature electric vehicles were invented as early as 1828, and a full-size model drove into the International Exhibition of Electricity in Paris in 1881.

[...]

At the end of the 1920s, however, electric-car manufacture had run out of juice². By World War I, the discovery of large oil reserves in the US, along with the mass-production techniques introduced by Henry Ford, made the petrol-driven car the cheaper option.

[...]



The new project is set up as a public service and run by a syndicate that includes various municipalities within the Île-de-France, under the auspices of the private investment group Bolloré.

Registration for “Autolib” takes only 10 minutes and is open to anyone with a valid driving licence. Once you're signed up, the system works in much the same way as it does for the bikes - pick up and return a bluecar to any station that suits.

The vehicles themselves, designed by Italian firm Pininfarina (responsible for the Peugeot 205 and the Ferrari 550), resemble little bubbles. They're all electric, so there's no need to shift gears, and they reach a top speed of 80mph - well above the limit.

Adapted from autolib-paris.fr, December 2011

¹ dubbed : baptisées

² had run out of juice : avait atteint ses limites

ORAL SECTION EUROPÉENNE : ANGLAIS INDUSTRIEL					
Session	N° Sujet	Préparation	Durée	Coefficient	Page
2013	3	0h20	0h10	1	1 sur 1