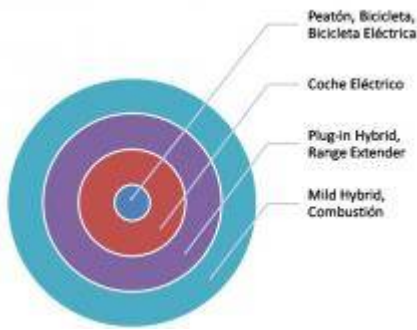


GREEN CARS INITIATIVE - VALENCIA WITH NEWS ABOUT THE ELECTRIC CAR

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The average European car buyer is 54 years old. Normal? Do you have a trick? A statistical misinterpretation? There are many interpretations of this data and one of them points to a declining business model. Last Wednesday and Thursday (April 14 and 15) they met in Valencia for two days, one European - [From Economic Recovery to Sustainability](#) -, and another - [Green Cars and Leadership Opportunities](#) -, organized by the [CDTI](#), the automobile industry, public administrations, and research centers to discuss the automobile of the future and to

develop strategies for it.

Back in November 2008, the European Commission launched an initiative entitled [Green Cars Initiative](#), a public-private partnership (PPP in its acronym in English) in which the European Commission invests 5,000 M€, complemented by the same figure by the automobile industry. Through this initiative, the European Union tries to support the development of innovative and clean vehicles, something to which we are all invited to contribute, since public calls will be published especially so that SMEs can present research projects. They will be published in July 2010, closing in December, and according to Franz Söldner of the European Commission, [DG Mobility and Transport, will finance R&D to introduce new technologies, initiatives to introduce them to the market and projects to advance regulatory issues.](#)

This initiative is also complemented by an [ERA-NET](#) in June 2011 and by a strong increase in credits from the European Bank of Investments (EIB) from €2,000 M to €8,000 M in 2009 alone to finance projects on sustainable mobility, from which the automobile industry has benefited enormously. Although Gunnar Muent of the European Investment Bank warned that the current level of investment in the electric car far exceeds future market forecasts (according to this entity of 6% in 2020), all manufacturers present including Volkswagen Professor Steiger and President of the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ERTRAC), confirmed that the electric car will arrive with absolute certainty; In his opinion, the strong investment in the electric car indicates that the forecasts are incorrect and that the battle of the future will be over who has the leadership in this technology.

Carlos Moliner of the [REDITA](#) pointed out along the same lines, who argued that the current investment in electric cars could not only be explained by aid European, but by the change in consumer preferences, in which urban mobility prevails. The argument of Gonzalo Hennequet from Renault, followed the same paths when commenting that 80% of the population in the EU will live in cities by 2050. In addition, journeys today are less than 60km per day. The electric car does not replace the conventional car, it is rather another business that can compensate for the decline of the traditional model. That is why the electric car will not have to have the same benefits as those we are used to.

Renault's presentation reflected the very advanced status of this manufacturer with electric car technology, well ahead of Ford and Seat, whose initiatives have not gone through incremental improvement projects (mild-hybrid, aerodynamics, tires of low friction, etc.). The electric car in the case of Renault looks like a radically different and economically viable business model for the future.

In addition, Renault presented concrete figures. Considering the entire life cycle of a car, a Megane with a real range of 160 km will go from polluting 120 g of CO₂ per km to 62 g CO₂ in the case of France. The Iberian Peninsula, on the other hand, will benefit even more, since this technology perfectly complements the high percentage of renewables from wind energy, frequently wasted at night due to lack of absorption capacity by the electricity grid, since cars the vast majority would recharge overnight.

The confidence of Mr. Hennequet of Renault is only clouded in one aspect: the very small presence of battery manufacturers on European soil. Almost all of them are in Asia, and some, according to him, are very powerful: *The manufacturer BYD from China is especially dangerous*. Renault for its part will produce batteries at its plant in Paris and will have access to two other plants in the United Kingdom and Portugal through its partner Nissan.

This is the weak point in Europe and especially within the Spanish state, which, having made a definitive commitment to electric cars - see [article by Manu Fernández](#) that excellently analyzes the *Strategy and Action Plan to promote electric vehicles in Spain* -, has not been able to attract the manufacture of batteries. Leading this technology means leading the market, and seeing the great importance that the industry has for these lands (2nd car manufacturer in Europe in 2009), support through European collaboration is essential for a company to take its manufacturing to a of the 11 existing plants today. In this context, the commitment through the *Green Cars Initiative* is a very good start, but it must be complemented by actions so that battery manufacturers are installed not only in the parent company, but also there is a certain proportionality with the actual manufacture.

There are no comments yet.