

TROLLEYBUS

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May 2025



The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*Istanbul Ramblings
Istanbul in 1974*

TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the
British Trolleybus Society

No. 766. May 2025

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BTS NOTICE BOARD

Reading Meetings

Held at the Reading District Oddfellows' Hall, 118b Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7NQ. Admission: Adults £3.00, Juniors £1.50. Non-members £4.00. Meetings commence at 19.30. Organised by the BTS. NTA members welcome.

Meetings Organiser Graham Bilbé, 12 Belle Avenue, Reading RG6 7BL. Email grahamebilbe@btinternet.com

Friday 6 June 2025. To be advised.

London Meetings

Held at The Model Railway Club, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9DA (nearest Underground station: King's Cross). See meeting details for start time. Organised by the NTA. BTS members welcome.

Meetings Organiser John Parkin, 59 Beechwood Court, West Street Lane, Carshalton SM5 2QA. Email trolleybus654@aol.com.

Wednesday 21 May 2025 (Meeting starts at 19.00)
From Diddlers to Q1s – London Trolleybuses on film

Wednesday 18 June 2025 Keith Farrow – Some lesser-known trolleybus systems worldwide and a preview of "London Trolleybus Operation Volume 2" which will be the pool of candidates from which the final photographs are selected.

West Midlands Transport Circle

BTS members are invited to attend WMTTC meetings on the second Wednesday of each month (not August) at Bradmore Community Centre, Wolverhampton. Start 19.30, finish 21.45. At half-time we have a break with tea/coffee/biscuits! Visitor entry £3. Full details of upcoming talks are on the website <https://westmidlandstransportcircle.wordpress.com/>

Wednesday 9 Apr 2025 P Jones presents 'Sentinel Steam Vehicles' on DVD.

Wednesday 14 May 2025 K Hodgkins (Black Country Society) – subject to be advised

Monthly Prize Draw Winners

£50 David Snellgrove, Watford, Hertford
£40 Peter Braybrooke, Orpington, Kent.
£30 Martin Haywood, Coulsdon, Surrey



Front Cover: Istanbul 82 was one of 100 Ansaldo trolleybuses delivered in 1962. It is seen on a wet day in January 1974.
[John Scragg]

BTS Weekend at the Trolleybus Museum

The Society traditionally operates one open weekend at the Trolleybus Museum every year. This year the spotlight will be on us over the Spring bank holiday weekend, Saturday 24 May to bank holiday Monday 26 May.

As many BTS trolleybuses as possible will be in service or on display, so this will be a good time to see our fleet. We had hoped that the restoration of Bournemouth 301 would have been completed in time for our MF2B to return to Sandtoft for our event, but unfortunately this is looking unlikely.

BTS Archivist Dave Hall will be running a special programme of BTS-related film shows in the Regal Cinema.

BTS AGM and Members' Day 2025

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held in the Regal Cinema at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft on Saturday 18 October, starting at 5.00pm. By this time the Museum will have closed to visitors and members who wish to attend only the AGM will have free entry.

The Members' Day will immediately precede the AGM. It will be an open day at the museum with all the museum's usual attractions. The following day will be the Isle of Axholme Running Day so it's well worth planning to make a weekend of it.

From the Membership Secretary – Your Views Needed

The British Trolleybus Society is working hard to serve our members and you receive Trolleybus magazine and News & Events each month to showcase our work. We have a new membership database which is far easier for you to use than its predecessor and we are maximising our income to devote to the Society's objectives.

One item we are questioning is the necessity of issuing membership cards. They are not needed for access anywhere and we remind you of when subscriptions are due for renewal. You receive *Trolleybus* and *News & Events* each month in confirmation of your continued membership

and we save the postage for those who receive Trolleybus online.

We are seeking members' views on whether we should cease to issue membership cards. Paul Dicken, BTS Membership Secretary April 2025

Online responses:

Members for whom we have an email address should have received the link by email. Thank you if you have already made your views known.

If you have not yet responded but do not have the email, using the PDF version of the magazine, which can be downloaded from www.britishtrolley.org.uk, please click on one of the three responses to the question below.

Should the BTS continue to issue membership cards?

- 1) [No, they are unnecessary](#)
- 2) [BTS should only issue a card if requested by a member at the time of renewal](#)
- 3) [BTS should continue to issue cards to everyone](#)

Postal responses

If you do not have access to email, please write to me at 8 Glan Llyn, Llanfairpwll, Ynys Môn LL61 5YX
secretary@britishtrolley.org.uk

Paul Dicken

Boost to Aachen 22 Fund

The Society has been steadily building up a fund for Aachen 22 in preparation for the complete restoration of our 1956 Henschel/Ludewig trolleybus, which is the only one-and-a-half deck trolleybus in the world.

Recently the fund has been boosted by a donation of £4,500 by a member who wishes to remain anonymous. This comes at a time when the Society is having a discussion with the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft's Board of Directors about helping to fund the Museum's proposed restoration workshop so that work can start on Aachen 22. One of the Museum's volunteers is a skilled welder who is keen to work on 22.



Commemorating Rotherham's Trolleybuses – Sixty Years On

Bookings are being taken for the Rotherham Trolleybus Group's anniversary tour of the former Rotherham area trolleybus routes.

The tour will be held on 11 October, departing Rotherham Railway Station at 11.00, using a preserved vintage bus from South Yorkshire, availability permitting of course! Anyone can join the tour, but reserving a place is essential by emailing David Hanchett

david.hanchett@talktalk.net

The RTG's AGM will take place at the South Yorkshire Transport Museum at 2pm on the same day, for members only.



Left: Picture Neil Lewin, Rod Bramley collection

Model Tram, Bus and Railway Exhibition

Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 August
Open: 10am to 5pm both days

Organised by Crich Tramway Village, ten layouts will be featured. Trams will be operating in the street for the public to take rides on. Other attractions will be the woodland walk, Robert Whetstone Model trams on static display, car park and café.

Venue: The National Tramway Museum, Crich Tramway Village, Crich, Derbyshire, DE4 5DP

Admission: Adult 25.00, Concession 25.00, Child 15.00, Family 55.00

Contact: John Huddleston 01773 854321



Email: john.huddleston@tramway.co.uk

Website: www.tramway.co.uk

Page 84, upper: On 2 June 1973 Aachen 22 poses under the wires, two weeks after arriving at Sandtoft. [DG Chick]

Page 84, lower: An even more ambitious restoration project will be Mexborough & Swinton 34. A substantial fund has been built up so that we will be ready for work to start when we have the capability to commence the project. We intend to have another study visit to the Long Shop Museum at Leiston, where work is progressing very well on their Garrett, Ipswich 26, so that we can learn lessons to apply to the 34 project.

No. 34 is seen at Thorne on 20 August 1973.

[DG Chick]

Istanbul Ramblings By Graham Stone

A few years ago (2016-17) I worked for a Turkish start-up company in Istanbul. While reorganising the files on my computer recently, I discovered that I had failed to catalogue my final few weeks' photos in that city – an equal mix of stunning urban scenery (pre-Christian meets ultra-modern, with plenty of Ottoman Empire for good measure) and Istanbul's fascinating and bustling motorbus scene.

So, while reviewing a pleasant walk under a blistering May sun, from Vezneciler bus interchange, through the grounds of Istanbul University to the Grand Bazaar, with the aid of 'peg man' (the little yellow man you 'walk' through Google Maps), I found a building I wanted to identify.

I zoomed in on the map to make its name appear. İstanbul Üniversitesi Eczacılık Fakültesi. And, just to its north, another building – İBB Kütüphane Trolleybüs. WHAT! My Turkish extends only to such essential things as "please", "thank you" and "where can I catch a number 16 bus?" but that word Trolleybüs could mean only one thing. And how come, after living in the city for a year, I hadn't noticed it before?

More googling, the most promising 'hit' being Turkish-run international rail-news site Railynews. Switch into English, and all becomes clear. This was an old horse-tram depot built in 1910 and converted into a power station for tramway electrification in 1914. When the trams in that area ceased in 1961, it continued to generate power for the trolleybuses. Since the last trolleybus ran, in 1984, the building – known as the "Beyazıt İETT Trolleybus Force Center" – had effectively stood idle. Until 1 March 2022, that is, when the President of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Ekrem İmamoğlu, officially opened it as a neighbourhood library (Kütüphane Trolleybüs = "Trolleybus" Library) containing over 20,000 books¹.

In his speech, İmamoğlu said, "We are aware that the trolleybus is actually a nostalgic concept for the new generation. When we see [images of] it in Beyoğlu and

Istiklal, we see it as an object of nostalgia. However, these vehicles were also the symbol of modernization in transportation at that time. And until 1984, he (sic) provided very valuable services to the people of Istanbul. With their withdrawal from traffic, such areas and such structures have become idle. This is one of them". He noted the care taken to preserve the essence of the building; the work had "proceeded with precision due to the fact that it was a restoration project" but was also "finished quickly and meticulously as it should have been". He said that buildings like this "are a kind of historical representative of Istanbul's industrial and production culture. And they need to be told. At the same time, when we look at their potential, they have the chance to serve the future of the city in a different dimension".

Not only has the small (c. 20m x 13m) building itself been preserved; clicking the link from the building on Google Maps reveals a gallery of exterior and interior photos, indicating that some of the electrical equipment has been retained as exhibits.

Readers may also be interested to know that an Istanbul trolleybus is also preserved. While none of the original 100 vehicles² survives (Alfa Romeo 910Fs supplied via Ansaldo), the unique No. 101 (registered 34 BEU 26) still exists. The sole trolleybus built by İETT (the municipal İstanbul Elektrik, Tramvay ve Tünel İşletmeleri, now one of Istanbul's three major motorbus operators), it was based on the shell of a Magirus diesel bus. Known as the Tosun (meaning 'plump') due to its appearance, it has occasionally been operated for short pleasure rides, presumably powered by batteries – although during my time in the city it seems to have been tucked away inside a depot somewhere. The following Anadolu Agency article from 2013 explains:

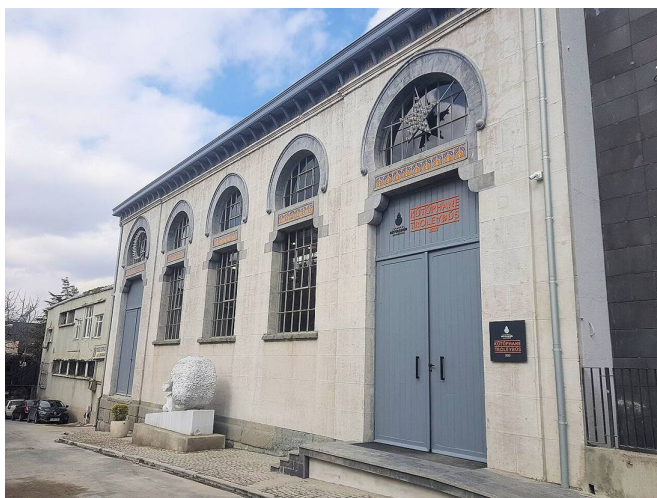
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/culture-and-art/turkeys-first-trolleybus-back-on-road/173198>



Above:

Formerly a Magirus diesel bus, No. 101 is the only remaining example of an Istanbul trolleybus. [AA]

Right: Kütüphane Trolleybüs, the Trolleybus Library. [Wikipedia]



¹ Unlike in many places, Istanbul seems to be opening rather than closing libraries. Mr İmamoğlu's speech pointed out that, as of March 2022, they were adding "four more libraries to the nine libraries we have opened so far" – many in disadvantaged areas.

² Six pages of information on these vehicles (in Italian and English), including nine colour photos, can be found in *Italian Trolleybuses Abroad* by Alessandro Albè and Marco Montanarini (Trolleybooks, 2018).

Istanbul's Trolleybuses

Istanbul was the last of Turkey's three first-generation trolleybus systems to open, in 1962, and the first to close, in 1984. It was also the largest, operating a total of 101 vehicles against the 56 in Ankara (open 1946 – 1986) and Izmir's maximum of 90, although during the life of the system 116 trolleybuses were owned (1954 – 1992).

The system opened in 1962, almost completely replacing the city's extensive tram network as well as to service some hilly areas which were not suitable for a tramway. The fleet consisted of 100 Ansaldo trolleybuses (1-100) with Alfa Romeo 910F chassis and monocoque Aefer bodies. There was also a unique trolleybus (101) which was converted by the undertaking from a Magirus motorbus, fitted with BBC electrical equipment and an Ansaldo motor, as described in Graham Stone's article. This vehicle entered service as a trolleybus in 1968 and still exists in preservation but sadly none of the more typical Ansaldo survive.

By the 1980s the trolleybus fleet and some of the infrastructure needed renewal but the undertaking found it difficult to find replacement vehicles at a suitable cost. Despite the advantage of operating trolleybuses in the city's hilly districts it was decided to replace the trolleybuses with diesel buses. In 1984 75 of the Ansaldo were sold to Izmir and the system finally closed in the same year.

Turkey was without trolleybuses after the Izmir closure in 1992, but in 2015 a new system opened in Malatya using double-articulated trolleybuses. More recently a second system opened, in Şanlıurfa in 2023. The original plan had been to use double-articulated trolleybuses but after a long delay single-articulated trolleybuses were placed in service.

The first generation trolleybus systems all used imported trolleybuses but the systems built this century use trolleybuses built in Turkey by Bozankaya. Turkey will soon become a trolleybus-exporting

country because Bozankaya trolleybuses have been ordered by Timişoara, Romania, and Prague, Czech Republic.

It has also been reported that a new trolleybus system is to be built in Izmir, although the press release photographs of the signing ceremony for the financing agreement showed a vehicle with a pantograph. City officials were reported to have stated that the plan is to introduce trolleybuses.

To learn more about Istanbul's trolleybuses see 'Italian Trolleybuses Abroad' by Alessandro Albé and Marco Montanarini, published by Trolleybooks in 2018. The last few copies are available from Trolleybooks.

[Italian Trolleybuses Abroad](#)

Photos

I am grateful to John Scragg for supplying photographs of Istanbul trolleybuses in service. At the time of his visit with Michael Cleary in January 1974, as will be seen from the photos, it was very wet there. The UK was at the time suffering from power cuts but Turkey was no better in this respect!

As well as the trolleybuses, tramway museum etc, there were also many shared 'dolmuş' taxis, many of which were elderly and more modern American cars, some early post war and possibly some pre-war. Some may be seen in the background on some photos. A Turkish dolmuş is a shared taxi or minibus running a pre-determined route, with each passenger paying only a portion of the normal fare. The word means "filled" and is used because a dolmuş waits at the beginning of its route until most or all of its seats are filled.

The rebuilt Magirus, 101, features in a couple of the photos.







MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Jody White



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

The Museum reopened to the public on 5 April and was open for seven consecutive days.

Much has been achieved during the winter closure and as soon as visitors arrived they were greeted with a much-improved Reception area. The ceiling has been repainted and new carpets and mats fitted. The "parks and gardens" department has been busy making sure that the site looks tidy and has some attractive flower displays.

The entrance to the Regal Cinema has been repainted and the corridor was expected to be painted before Easter. With all the display boards removed in preparation for redecoration the wall was used to display thank-you letters and posters created by the Year 5 pupils of Belton All Saints School who visited the Museum in March.

After a lot of hard work by the Engineering team, Bournemouth 297 returned to service for the first time in four years. It proved very popular with the public and with the drivers.

The Society's own South Shields 204 was also returned to service with some encouragement from the Engineering team. The weather was mainly very good for the whole week and this helped to achieve very good visitor numbers.

On 9 April the "Tardis" police box built by Les Taylor was officially launched by Alan Hardwick, a former journalist and television presenter who was the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner from 2012 to 2016. Alan and his wife were very impressed with the Museum and said they would return for a visit with their grandchildren.

Also during the week the café was inspected by the Food Standards Agency and was again rated 5, the highest possible rating. Congratulations to the café team for maintaining the high standard.

Volunteering

The Museum needs volunteers with a wide range of skills. There are opportunities to volunteer on open days with a wide variety of jobs to be done, mainly customer-facing. We also need volunteers at other times to maintain the site and vehicles. Some managerial and administrative jobs can be done from home.

A volunteer recruitment day is being held at the Museum on Saturday 7 June. All will be welcome to learn how the Museum operates and about the roles available.

To enquire about volunteering at the Museum please email volunteering@sandtoft.org

Events

- **Saturday 3 – Monday 5 May 1960s Weekend.** Another weekend held in conjunction with Bainbridge Events.
- **Saturday 24 to Monday 26 May BTS Weekend,** featuring the Society's trolleybuses.
- **Tuesday 27 to Friday 31 May Weekday opening.**

On weekdays we make no charge for entry but we request a donation if possible.

[Open Days – The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft](#)

Black Country Living Museum

Many people have been wondering what the current status of trolleybus operation is at the Black Country Museum. Rather than guessing, I contacted Dave Pitt, Head of Site Conservation, Transport & Maintenance. Below, is the answer I received:

Thank you for your enquiry, our current position is as follows:

To enable the safe construction of our major new development, which has taken our storytelling into the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, we paused the operation of our trolleybus and tram network due to the close proximity of the overhead power cables to the

construction works. This also gave us the opportunity to upgrade our electrical control system, giving us greater control and improving our existing safety systems.

A condition survey of our existing overhead system has been carried out, and over the last six months we have been replacing various components and cutting back vegetation. These works are still ongoing. Once completed and the OLE system is deemed electrically safe, it will be re-commissioned and tested.

We will then move into the testing and training phase, which will involve mechanical and electrical testing of our trolleybuses, prior to driver training taking place.

We look forward to welcoming our visitors aboard again soon.

Cardiff & South Wales Trolleybus Project

These last six weeks have seen work on both Cardiff 243 and 262, with most tasks centred around 262.

All booms were finally covered with Amalgamating tape. Both offside inspection hatches were refitted and currently, both their spring-loaded retainers (which keep the hatches open when inspections are undertaken) are being stripped and restored.

262's front inner door has been refitted and secured with spring clip retainers.

Within the boxes, the correct number of bulb holders were determined from photographs during the time 262 spent in Bill Way's dock scrapyard. First, the rear destination box

new budget locks and access covers. We did have a bit of a puzzle in that the new three section inner destination box structure had a rectangular cut out, but as this was copied from the original, we realised that this was to provide access in the event of a bulb failure, so a hinged door has been fitted. As we cannot proceed with fitting the rear blind at present, we used a battery charger to test the bulbs and the lower saloon lights, which was successful.

262 now sports a working blind donated by member Carl Isgar, which is an original full West route, with some very interesting destinations that never happened. We hope to get an East route rear blind. 262's three offside inspection hatches and overhauled



The underside of Cardiff 262. [Keith Walker]

retainers are now in place.

An ongoing job is a pre steam clean physical removal of possibly six decades of accumulated grease, road dirt and congealed oil under the front of 262.

Like 262, 243 has not seen all its destination blind roll tubes and end drivers fitted, but with it being an ongoing job, 243 has received its functioning rear destination blind. (Readers are directed to look at the project Facebook page, as there is a video of the blinds in operation).

Keith Walker 1 April 2025



Cardiff 262's front inner destination box door. [Keith Walker]

bulb holders were wired up - and then connected to the rear platform light - while the destination box door was cleaned up and painted (another item that took over two decades to be reunited with 262). It now has



Page 91, upper: Members of the Sandtoft Engineering team keep South Shields 204 running on 10 April. [DG Chick]

Page 91, lower: Bournemouth 297 made a very welcome return to service at the start of Sandtoft's new season. [DG Chick]

Above: Keith Walker is holding the replacement C&SWTP banner for the one lost in the fire in 2019.

[Keith Walker]

Below: Cardiff 262's rear destination box and lower saloon lights illuminated.

[Keith Walker]



World News

Edited by Colin Page



Numbers in parentheses indicate the previous edition of Trolleybus containing news of that operator

AUSTRIA Linz (753, 759)

Further to the above reports about new routes, Federal approval, which included financial arrangements, was given in the first week of March 2025. This allowed work to start on detailed design and construction of new trolleybus line 48. With a length of about 7.5 km, it runs between WIFI in the south and Karlhof in the north via Bulgariplatz, Grüne Mitte Franckstrasse and Donauparkstadion.

For the first time trolleybuses will reach the left side of the river Danube. Line 48 will cross and use parts of existing lines 45 and 46 between Prinz Eugen Str and Defflinger Str. It is scheduled to open in late 2026, with a vehicle requirement of 16. The order for the Van Hool 25m double articulateds now in service included an option for 16 additional vehicles but this lapsed when Van Hool closed. Linz Linien AG has therefore issued a new tender for an alternative fleet of 16 double artic trolleybuses.

In the original scheme there was to be a second trolleybus line (47) but this was abandoned because much of the alignment was covered by the 48 and a new tram line which also forms part of this major scheme and is due to start construction after the trolleybus is completed.

CZECH REPUBLIC Brno (764)

On Saturday 15 March 2025 the Brno Public Transport Company organised a farewell trip featuring the trio of recently withdrawn Škoda 21 Tr trolleybuses, Nos. 3030, 3059 and 3063, together with the related 22 Tr model 3601. The route was from Česká – Slovanské náměstí – Přívrat – Antropos – Čtvrťe – Kohoutovic, hájenka and back, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a thirty-minute frequency and a fare of CZK 50. No. 3030 has been included in the DPMB fleet of retro vehicles; No. 3063 is confirmed as going to the collections of the Technical Museum in

Brno and 3059 should head to South Bohemia.

CZECH REPUBLIC České Budějovice (761)

The first SOR/ Škoda 33 Tr artic trolleybus arrived in the city on 11 February 2025 and went into regular service from 11 March for a week of final testing on line 9. When it has accrued 1500 km it was to be returned to Plzeň for evaluation. The remaining 13 from the initial batch were due for delivery by April 2025. From September, the remaining 21 of the order will be delivered at approximately four per month.

With these first deliveries the remaining nine Škoda 15 Tr, used on peak journeys on five lines, will be withdrawn. Two date from 1990, and seven 15 TrMs from 2002. DPMČB is planning a series of special trips through to September. Details are yet to be published.

From May 2025, motorbus line 15 will be converted to trolleybus operation. There is no catenary on the section from the exhibition centre to the intersection of Mánesova and Lidická tř, a length of about 2.2 km. The Škoda 33 Tr test vehicle travelled along this route for the first time 14 March 2025, using its batteries. To enable rewiring, funnels will be installed at the Poliklinika Jih and Nádraží stops.

FRANCE Nancy (762)

Trolleybus services on the re-incarnated Tempo T1 line started on Saturday 5 April 2025 under blue skies and with attendant crowds lining the streets.

GERMANY Esslingen (763)

With the expiry of the tender period at the end of March 2025 for 52 battery trolleybuses, the Council announced that they were recommending Škoda Electric a.s., Plzeň (CZ) receive the order.

Six articulated vehicles were promptly ordered from the offer.

GREECE Athens (750)

The situation at the end of 2024 indicates that in addition to staff shortages, the

reliability of the 21 to 25-year-old trolleybuses has continued to decrease, resulting in the timetable being further diluted. Compared to the planned winter timetable, only 70% of the trips on the 20 trolleybus lines were provided. Lines 2 and 10 are particularly affected, where only 50% of the trips were provided.

An article on the website AthensTransport.com dated 29 May 2024 compared the availability of trolleybuses between March 2024 and 2021 as follows:

36 vehicles of the 6000 series (1999), compared to 52 in 2021.

67 vehicles of the 7000 series (2000), compared to 109 in 2021.

64 vehicles of the 8000 series (2003), compared to 75 in 2021.

42 vehicles of the 9000 series (2004), compared to 50 in 2021.

The fleet strength reduced by 77 vehicles in this three-year period, adding to the availability problems.

At the end of 2024 the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport was overseeing a major tender for 700 vehicles which included 175 trolleybuses but due to a lack of funding this has been put to one side in preference to a single tender for 125 electric buses.

HUNGARY Budapest

On 10 March 2025 BKK (Budapesti Közlekedési Központ) was assessing the received bids for its tender for 160 trolleybuses (40 being for rigid vehicles) which was issued over a year ago. The best price has been submitted by Electrobus Europe Zrt., acting as a distributor of electric buses from Ikarus and which sponsored a co-operative bid between Ikarus and Yutong. The trolleybuses will be based on the platforms of the U12 and U18 electric buses. The final announcement is expected in about two months.

IRAN Tehran

Trolleybus operation in the city has an uncertain future. A report in December 2022 described the trolleybuses as 'old generation electric buses' and that they should be replaced in 2023. However, this was postponed when deliveries of electric buses were delayed. Only in March 2025 have the first of 189 Higer electric buses arrived from China but these have been

deployed as replacements on other (motor) bus services. Trolleybuses serve two lines: Shohada Square – 17 Shahrivar – Besat (about 5 kilometres) and Shush Square – Khorasan Square – Shohada Square (about 4.5 kilometres). Of the original fleet of 64 trolleybuses only 16 are currently in use. A photograph from July 2024 provided evidence of trolleybus operation.

MEXICO Mexico City

Trolleybus line 12 from Tasqueña to Perisur, is due to re-open in June 2025. A third of the 7.3km line is already equipped with overhead and will gradually be provided with additional catenary sections.

ROMANIA Bucureşti (755)

Delivery of the 100 Solaris Trollino 12 trolleybuses with Medcom electrical equipment (5401 to 5500) was completed by the end of 2024. However off-wire extensions of some existing routes and conversion of some motorbus routes to trolleybus operation has meant that a number of the Astra/Ikarus 415T trolleybuses dating from the turn of the century (batches 5100 to 5199 and 5201 to 5300) have been refurbished and returned to service. Around fifty remain, with several repainted in the latest livery.

In February 2025 a follow-up tender was announced calling for 22 12m vehicles, with traction batteries for a range of at least 20km. It is not considered necessary for homologation tests to be held if the successful supplier should be new.

RUSSIA Balakovo

Twelve new PKTS-6281.01 "Admiral" battery-powered trolleybuses with an off-wire range of 20 kilometres were delivered by the end of August 2024. They began regular service on 1 September 2024. Another four (with increased autonomous operational capability) were delivered in March 2025. They were manufactured in the former TrolZa trolleybus factory in Engels, about 150 km away.

At the beginning of September new lines 12 and 12A were introduced running through the city centre as a circular route. They are operated exclusively by the new trolleybuses as part of the route has no catenary. Operation of lines 5/5A has been discontinued as a consequence.

The twenty trolleybuses acquired from Moscow in 2020 were out of service by

2024. At the end of March 2025, the fleet comprised 21 trolleybuses, namely the 16 new vehicles, and five ZIU682 models from 2008 with a modern front, which are used on the 4 trolleybus lines 1, 4, 6 and 11.

SERBIA, Beograd (763)

Opposition voices to the announcement to close the trolleybus system were quickly raised, particularly by the unions involved. While it has been acknowledged that there has been little investment in the network over the last few years it is recognised that a programme of refurbishment and overhaul of older vehicles has produced machines which are almost in as new condition. One observation is that the value of the land in the city centre on which the depot sits is of significant value. The mayor was expected to update the situation on the future of trolleybuses at a meeting within the council on 20 March 2025.

UKRAINE General – 2024 (759)

Trolleybus operators in Ukraine received a total of 37 new trolleybuses in 2024 and 6 which were used vehicles from another system. This is the lowest number since 2009, when 31 new vehicles were procured. The low number was of course due to the war with Russia and the associated lower budget funds for new procurement. Programmes of international financial organisations have also been stopped and at the moment deliveries are mainly those concluded within the framework of old agreements.

Nineteen PTS T123 vehicles went to Mykolaiv, financed by a EBRD loan and the Danish government grant. A further nine were procured with its own budget. Vinnytsia was able to procure five PTS T123 cars and Chernihiv four Etalon T122 cars. All are equipped with traction batteries for longer off-wire journeys. The six used trolleybuses were Škoda 24 Tr trolleybuses built in 2005 and delivered to Ivano-Frankivsk in 2024 as a gift from the city of Jihlava.

Matters may improve in 2025 as several operators have issued tenders for new trolleybuses. In addition to Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi has conducted an extensive tender, with Etalon likely to supply 44 vehicles. The result for Lutsk is

pending, while Kyiv is tendering for 70 rigid and articulated trolleybuses.

UKRAINE Kremenchuk

A new tender has been issued for 18 new trolleybuses, with funding to be provided by the European Investment Bank.

On 19 August 2024 trolleybuses started running on another new line in Kremenchuk. Line No. 18A connects the city centre with the mountainous part and the Molodizhny microdistrict, passing the First City Hospital, Mariupol Heroes' Street, Avtokrazivskyi Boulevard, and Svobody and Lesya Ukrainka Avenues. Twelve return journeys are provided each day. This increased the number of battery-powered trolleybus lines to eight: 1, 5A, 6A, 7, 11A, 15B, 18A, 26A and 28A.

Trolleybus 032 started regular service from 07 March 2025 with its newly-added battery pack. 29 Bogdan T70117 trolleybuses from 2018 have now had battery packs fitted since 2020 and are available for the eight lines. In addition, there are eight BKM 321 trolleybuses (041 to 048) fitted with battery packs, meaning more than half of the 67-unit fleet now have additional battery drive.

With thanks to: Československý Dopravák, Plzenské trolejbusy, Škoda Group, Sustainable Bus Trolley:motion

Page 99, upper: Brno 3059, which was one of the three Škoda 21 Tr trolleybuses to operate a special tour after the last of the type had been withdrawn from service. This photograph was taken on 4 September 2024 at Brno hlavní nádraží (main station). [DG Chick]

Page 99, lower: The delivery of new Škoda 33 Trs to České Budějovice will see the end of Škoda 15 Tr operation. Nine of the type remained earlier this year, including two members of the batch which was purchased for the return of trolleybus operation in 1991 after a twenty-year break. The current system is the third to have operated here, there having been a Mercédès-Électrique-Stoll installation from 1909 until 1914 and then a conventional system from 1948 until 1971.

One of the first batch of 15 Trs, No. 02, is seen in the depot yard on 20 April 2018. [DG Chick]



Above: Adnan Šteta (right), Minister of Transport in the Government of Sarajevo Canton, is seen signing the contract for the procurement of 10 new Solaris Trollino 18 trolleybuses with Solaris Sales Executive Director, Kepa Mandikute (left). [Solaris]

Below: Existing bus services in Usti nad Labem are to be converted to trolleybus operation to reduce carbon emissions. On 25 March a ceremony was held to mark the first stage of the construction of a new line in Vystupní Street, with representatives of construction companies Chládek and Tintěra, Pardubice, a.s. and DP Usti nad Labem. [DP Usti nad Labem]





Rear cover: Linz System Expansion

Upper: Van Hool trolleybus 230 leaving the new Hafenportal terminus of line 46

Lower: Trolleybus 232 crossing the harbour railway on the way to Froschberg on the new part of Line 46 near Hafenportal terminus.

[Gunter Mackinger]

