

# TROLLEYBUS

Vol. 65 No. 783

October 2026



**The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society**



*Plzeň Celebration  
Newcastle  
Banská Bystrica  
Mariánské Lázně*

# TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the  
British Trolleybus Society

No. 783. October 2026

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# BTS NOTICE BOARD

## Reading Meetings

Held at the Reading District Oddfellows' Hall, 118b Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7NQ. Admission: There is no charge. However, a suggested donation of £3 for BTS/NTA members or £4 for non-members would be appreciated to help cover the cost of hall hire and refreshments. Meetings commence at 19.30. Organised by the BTS. NTA members are welcome.

Meetings Organiser Graham Bilb , 12 Belle Avenue, Reading RG6 7BL. Email [grahamebilbe@btinternet.com](mailto:grahamebilbe@btinternet.com)

## Friday 6 November

- Dave Hall looks back on 125 years of service by Reading Buses. A mixture of digital photos and film of the trams, trolleybuses and buses to 1989 and digital cine thereafter including a couple of quirky films!

## Friday 4 December

- December 2026 A festive review of 2026 (and the last bit of 2025!) from members' slides. Please bring some suitable pictures on a memory stick!

## 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. All meetings commence at 14.30.

Meetings Organiser John Parkin, 59 Beechwood Court, West Street Lane, Carshalton SM5 2QA. Email [trolleybus654@aol.com](mailto:trolleybus654@aol.com).

## Wednesday 21 October

- Jeff Tucker "Brno, Riga, St Petersburg, Sofia, Budapest and Crimea 2000 - 2004, and Prague 2025/6."

## Wednesday 18 November

- Bob Hodges - Films.

## West Midlands Transport Circle

BTS members are invited to attend WMTC 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 14 October

- Lindsay Moore with another of his epic voyages using the English Bus Pass as the main method of travel.

## Wednesday 11 November 2026

- To be advised

## BTS Prize Draws

### August Draw Winners

£50 Simon Guppy (Bristol)

£40 Roger Clark (Abingdon,

Oxfordshire)

£30 Charles Bicheno (Harrow, London)

### September Draw Winners

£50 Francis Terry (Oundle, Northants.)

£40 Keith Manning (Knaresborough,

N. Yorkshire)

£30 Charles Bicheno (Harrow, London)

*Front Cover: The busy trolleybus operation at the Rooseveltova terminus of Banská Bystrica lines 1,3 and 5. From left Škoda 31 Tr 3103 and 3101 on line 1 being overtaken by Škoda 30 Tr 3015 on line 3 and SOR TNB12 3202 on line 5. See article and World News.*

[Gunter Mackinger]

TROLLEYBUS 783

# B T S NOTICE BOARD

## BTS AGM

The BTS AGM is due to be held via 'Zoom' commencing at 19.30 on Saturday 24 October. Full details of how to join the meeting were provided in a notice sent out with the September issue of Trolleybus. If you have mislaid the details please contact the Secretary by email

[btssecretary@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:btssecretary@britishtrolley.org.uk)

## Correction

The upper photograph on page 169 of Trolleybus 782 (September) was incorrectly attributed to Shaun Mattocks and was copyright James Race. My apologies to both James and Shaun for the misattribution. DGC



↑ Glasgow TB78 is seen on a demonstration run at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft's BUT Weekend in August. It was the first opportunity to see TB78 under wires for some time. It is seen passing another BTS vehicle, Huddersfield 619. [DG Chick]

## Letters to The Editor



### Teesside

I thoroughly enjoyed Tony Belton's feature on the Teesside diversion of 1966. His marking of anniversaries never ceases to fascinate. Apparently, some of the trolleybus poles on the diversion were still in situ in 2023.

Also, thanks for another great issue of "Trolleybus."

Colin Allan

## Plzeň Celebrations

Words and pictures by Tom Douce

Plzeň's trolleybus system turned 85 on 9 April, with the celebrations being held 72 days later, on 20 June, to coincide with the event for the 90th anniversary of Škoda trolleybus manufacture.

Historic Škoda trolleybuses operated two free services, west to

Vozovna Karla and eastwards via hlavní nádraží, from 10.15 until 17.28. The evening tours, which required pre-payment, commenced from Černická after 21.00, with photo stops at Božkov and Doubravka before dropping passengers off at hlavní nádraží.



↑ Pardubice 353, a 9 TrHT26 built in 1979, turns from U Trati into Prokopova. The overhead wiring here is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a "Grand Union."

↓ Plzeň 464, a 15 Tr03 built in 1991, turns from Černická into Preslova, on which it will pick up passengers outside the Depo2015 complex.





↑ Plzeň 488, a 21 TrACI built in 2001 is shown on Prokopova.

↓ Teplice 105, a 9Tr HT28 built in 1980, is seen at the Božkov terminus of route 12.



## 60 Years Ago: The final day of Newcastle Corporation's Trolleybuses 1 October 1966

Words and photographs by Tony Belton

Following the closure of Nottingham's trolleybus system on 1 July 1966 came Newcastle exactly three months later. Newcastle was a lovely complex system. The overhead and trolleybuses were well maintained right up to the end; it was very unusual for de-wirements to occur.

The post-war trolleybus fleet consisted of five types of vehicles, illustrated below.

No.1 in the charts was  
Jim Reeves  
with  
"Distant Drums"



↑ Newcastle 460, one of 36 Sunbeam F4s fitted with eight-foot wide MCW bodies that were delivered in late 1948 / early 1949. Numbered 443 to 478, these vehicles were delivered after the first batch of Q1s, although they were numbered before them. In the City Centre, No. 460 crosses from New Bridge Street into Blackett Street, with Northumberland Street crossing from left to right. It is working on route 35B from Walker to Brighton Grove.

Page 191, upper: 490 was one of 20 eight-foot-wide London Transport Q1-style trolleybuses, numbered 479 to 498, that were delivered before 460 above; these were BUT 9641T with MCW bodywork of standard Q1 LT design and blind apertures. Setting off from the Wallsend terminus of route 34 at Park Road is Q1 type 490, working a peak hour journey on route 35B to Brighton Grove. Behind stands 582, one of the final batch of Newcastle trolleybuses, which were of London Q1 design but with standard Newcastle blind apertures.



↓ The third batch were completely different: consisting of 30 seven-foot-six-wide three-axle Sunbeam S7s with Northern Coachbuilders bodies, numbered 499 to 528. These were affectionately known by crews as “coffins” because of the upper saloons’ dark narrow appearance as opposed to the light and spacious Q1 interiors. Seen leaving the roundabout at Denton Burn is Sunbeam no 522, on route from Denton Square to Walker, Church Street.





↑ The next batch to arrive were 50 two-axle trolleybuses. Unusually, the chassis were split between Sunbeam and BUT, although they were all fitted with seven-foot six inch wide Northern Coachbuilders bodywork. 529 to 553 had Sunbeam F4 chassis and 554 to 578 had BUT 9611T chassis. Seen crossing the famous Byker Bridge is Sunbeam number 549, which is approaching the city centre on a cross-city journey on route 35 to Denton Square.

↓ 572 with BUT chassis is seen arriving at Fenham terminus, turning into Bingfield Gardens on Netherby Drive. It will then reverse out into the latter road before commencing a journey on route 36 to Central Station.





↑ The final batch of trolleybuses to be delivered were 50 BUT 9641Ts with MCW bodywork of London Transport Q1 design numbered 579 to 628; this batch had standard Newcastle blind apertures rather than LT style. A scene taken on the last evening of trolleybus operation shows number 599 in Church Street at Walker, about to reverse at the route 35 terminus before making the last ever cross-city journey on route 35 to Denton Square.

↓ No 589 is on the loop at the Westbourne Avenue terminus of route 35c to Delaval Road. No. 599 passing is operating the last ever westbound route 35 journey to Denton Square on 1 October 1966, thus becoming Newcastle's Last Trolleybus!



## Banská Bystrica

Introduction and photographs by Gunter Mackinger

This former rich mining town in Slovakia, the door to the Low Tatras, today has about 73,000 residents and has operated trolleybuses since 1989, although the idea for a trolleybus network dates back to 1935-37. In 2026 the network consists of 8 lines (1 – 8), which perform well in this hilly town. In 2005 the system had to close because of competition with a private motorbus company, but the citizens forced politicians to bring back the

trolleybuses in 2007 and today they are the backbone of urban transport in this smart, historic town.

The 2026 fleet

- 1001 Škoda 14 Tr/1988 historic trolleybus
- 1501 Škoda 15 Tr/1988 historic trolleybus
- 3001 – 3020 Škoda 30Tr/2010-15
- 3101 – 3103 Škoda 31Tr/2015
- 3201 - 3203 SOR TNB12/2017 – 19

↓ One of the three SOR TNB12s, 3202 is seen on line 5's terminus at Tesco on 7 July.





↑ **Banská Bystrica Page 196:** The extensive trolleybus terminal in front of the main railway station with separated arrival and departure platforms. with Škoda 30 Tr trolleybuses 3007 and 3013 awaiting their duty, also on 7 July.



↑ **Mariánské Lázně:** Trolleybus 58 on line 3 overtakes trolleybus 61 on line 7 at Antoničkův Pramen terminus on 24.April 2026"

## Mariánské Lázně

Words and photographs by Gunter Mackinger

If you are tired of diesel or battery buses you should visit the famous spa city in the Czech Republic with only 14,000 residents to take a “trolleybus cure”. Today, eight Škoda 30 Tr trolleybuses (58 – 65) delivered in

2020 operate on 4 lines, no longer with motorbus substitution.

In recent years about half of the catenary has been renewed, facilitating a smooth and quick service working like a clockwork.



↑ Trolleybus 63 on line 3 in Reitenbergerova in front of the Roman Catholic church (built in 1844) and Rudolfův Pramen on 24 April 2026.

↓ On 22 April 2026, trolleybus 63 on line 7 in front of Nové Lázně, one of the most famous spa hotels, built in 1896.



# MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Dave Hall



## The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

British United Traction (BUT) was established in 1946 when AEC and Leyland amalgamated their trolleybus interests. To mark the anniversary, a BUT weekend was held at Sandtoft over the August bank holiday weekend. Apart from the vehicles in service over the weekend, it was nice to see some BUTs, such as Glasgow TB78, Nottingham 493 and Reading 144 which have not operated in service for some time, running on demonstration.

## October Open Days

- **Saturday 17 October Sandtoft & District Railway Launch Day.**
- **Sunday 18 October Isle of Axholme Running Day and Rally.** With visiting vehicles, classic cars, and motorbus tours of the area. This is a Premium event and so the re-admission ticket is not valid on this day.
- **Saturday 31 October Twilight Trolleys (open 11.30 – 18.00).** With atmospheric trolleybus operation after dusk.

## Cardiff & South Wales Trolleybus Project

For many years now regular readers will be aware that the Cardiff & South Wales Project team have been working hard to restore two Cardiff trolleybuses. 243 is a BUT 9641T with East Lancs single-deck body which entered service in 1955, whilst 262 is also a BUT 9641T, with Bruce Coachworks double-deck body which entered service in 1949. The Project took ownership of 262 in 1996 and 243 the following year and they were stored in Barry.

Over the years much work has been carried out to restore both vehicles. However, there have been some trials and tribulations over time, such as having to move home from Barry to a barn at Peterstone, near Newport, in 2001. The biggest setback came in October 2019 when the barn caught fire, which destroyed a motorbus stored there and caused considerable damage to both Cardiff trolleybuses.

Due to Covid restrictions little could be done until September 2020, when



 243 & 262 in the barn at Peterstone following the fire. You can see the devastation the fire caused, including the destroyed bus on the left. [C&SWTP]

both vehicles were moved to their current location in Barry, where they have been making steady progress on their Tuesday and Saturday workgroup ever since. Not only have they repaired the damage caused by the fire but have been continuing with the original restoration work.

Although there is still a lot of work to be done, 243 recently received its first external coat of paint, which makes such a difference and, in my opinion, brings it back to life, as can be seen by the photos. The paintwork will need



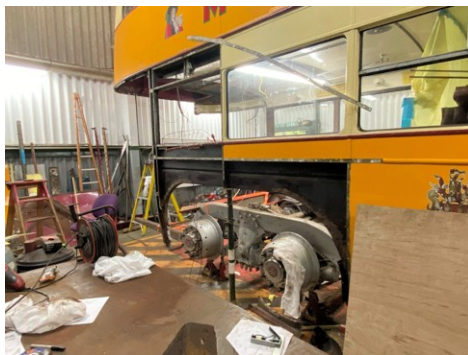
↑ 243 on 29 August 2026 now looking  
 ↓ more like a Cardiff trolleybus!  
 [C&SWTP]



sanding down before a second coat can be applied. I look forward to 262 being given the same treatment in time. DAH

### East Anglia Transport Museum

In the summer of 2022, Newcastle 628, a BUT9641T with a Metropolitan



↑ As can be seen in this November 2022 photo, the rear end was completely removed before rebuilding on Newcastle 628 could progress. [Keith Hopkinson]

Cammell Carriage & Wagon Co. double-deck body (similar to the London Q1 class) was taken out of service to undergo a complete body rebuild at the rear end. At first work continued at a fast pace but gradually, other commitments were given priority and work ground to a halt. The good news is that work has recently restarted and hopefully it won't be too long before we see 628 back in service.



↑ A line-up of BUTs in Sandtoft Square with the same three vehicles plus Bradford 746 and Wellington 82. [Andy Warnes]



## Order your BTS UK Trolleybuses Calendar 2027 Now!

Tony Belton's wonderful selections are featured on the cover and every month. The superb photographs are accompanied by Tony's informative and interesting captions. A great reminder of trolleybus operation in the UK, it is an ideal Christmas present for transport enthusiasts.

Once again, Tony has very kindly paid the printing costs so that every penny of the proceeds of sales will go towards trolleybus preservation and restoration.

Buy the calendar from BTS Sales online, from the BTS sales stand or the Trolley Shop at Sandtoft. The price has been held at £12 for the calendar plus £2 postage.

We have very few copies left, so place your order now! If we receive more orders than we can fulfil we may order another print run. The earlier you place your order, the more likely we are to order more.

## [Shop Introduction – British Trolleybus Society](#)

Or write to BTS Sales 1 Mentmore Road, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 2NY

Please make any cheques payable to "British Trolleybus Society".



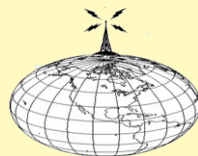
| July 2027 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1         | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13        | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25        | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

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# World News

Edited by Colin Page



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

## **"It's a trolleybus Jim....."**

An event took place at the beginning of August in Arnhem, Netherlands, which in future years may be seen as marking a meaningful change to the way in which we look at and define trolleybuses and how they are used.

Followers of these vehicles are now familiar with service extensions being made to a trolleybus route with no wires and then providing the extended service with the trolleybus powered from its batteries. This is happening in Arnhem. However, at the beginning of August trials have been introduced there with a variation of this concept by running a service along a bus route which hitherto has never had trolleybuses used on it. The key is that a trolleybus runs under overhead wiring already installed for other routes, thereby enabling it to charge its batteries when in motion. Then at the point where this route leaves the wires, it lowers its poles before continuing to its "out-of-town" destination in off-wire battery mode.

Immediately it is seen that this provides the flexibility to provide all routes on the system with a bus running on electricity. The real benefit appears to be that if there are already trolleybus overhead wires in place why not make them available to all the electric buses for every route which runs under them, provided the ebus is fitted with trolleypoles of course! At the same time there is a reduction in

quantity of the need for fixed charging points at depots and termini which just-electric buses require.

Similarities of use of the concept become noticeable elsewhere and begin to make sense. It is probable that operators in Solingen and Salzburg are reviewing use of this mode of operation across their systems. In Esslingen, the announcement to significantly extend the use of "trolleybuses" across the network to other routes with an enlarged fleet but with only small extensions and add-ons of various lengths of overhead must be a real manifestation of this change.

One factor which is now defining a basic difference between an ebus and an imc trolleybus is that an ebus will be carrying sufficient batteries for its tour of duty away from fixed charging points at depots or designated stops, whereas an imc trolleybus carries (typically) half the number of batteries since it can be charged throughout its duty and thus consumes less electricity by carrying less weight.

**".....but not as we know it" as the Star Trekkers might have said.**  
Colin Page

## **AUSTIA Salzburg (762)**

Several days of heavy rain and thunderstorms in early August led to several of the newest HESS vehicles coming to a standstill and as of 18 August up to 35 had been out of service at Salzburg's Alpenstrasse depot. First indications were water ingress to the high-voltage insulators,

but this has been narrowed down to the vehicles' safely-relevant brake insulators.

Salzburg Linien assumes there is a manufacturing or design defect and together with HESS are trying to determine the exact source of the fault. It is now certain that the insulators on all HESS trolleybuses must be replaced involving either the entire assemblies or the individual parts; 17 insulators. The repair method will be chosen based on material availability.

It was expected that all the affected trolleybuses would be back in service by mid-September and the start of the school year.



#### Bulgaria, Burgas

*A member spotted Burgas 13339, a Škoda 26 Tr built in 2014, working on line T1 on 17 August. It seemed that line T2 was not being trolleybus operated.*

*[Branimir Pantaleev]*

### CZECH REPUBLIC Pardubice

On 1 September DPMP extended route 3 in Lázně Bohdaneč from točna via Na Pískách to U Mlýnů without wires.

### ESTONIA Tallinn (782)

In mid-August TLT announced that two new trolleybus routes are to be built. One will head west from the centre along Paldiski mnt (from which earlier services 6 and 7 were withdrawn in 2016 ) while the second will travel eastwards from the centre

along the main thoroughfare of Laagna tee, which has not been served by trolleybuses before. Design work has started and includes substructures and power supplies, with construction planned to start in a year's time and lasting for two years. The published outline map indicates that they will not serve Balti Jaam (Railway Station).

### FRANCE Grenoble

Two lengths of wiring along Av. de l'Eygala between Av. des Ayguinards and Av. de Chartreuse were dismantled between 31 August and 20 September. They were used by the last two routes on the system, 31 and 32 to Meylan, which closed in June 1999.

### LITHUANIA Vilnius (782, 772, 771)

The first of the 81 Solaris 18 Trollinos (with Medcom electrics) was displayed at the factory in Bolechów, Poland at the end of August. Delivery of all to Vilnius is expected by the end of the year. They will enable all the remaining Škoda 14 Tr (55 in service in mid-2026) and 15 Tr (2 in 2026) trolleybuses to be withdrawn. These elderly vehicles are now only used during weekdays. Six 14 Trs will be converted to service trolleybuses; three for spraying and three for ice removal.

Forty-five Solaris T15 3-axle trolleybuses were delivered in 2004 (of which 43 are still in use) and were also slated for withdrawal. It has been decided to retain about twenty, which will be refurbished.

14 Tr 2582, dating from 1985 and originally serving in Prešov until 1993, is to be retained as an historical trolleybus. 15 Tr 2603 from 1991 is also to be saved. It is the last of only five of this type which ran in Vilnius.

### NETHERLANDS Arnhem (782)

Putting detail to the introduction; a newly delivered Yutong U12T 2-axle trolleybus was seen at the beginning of August displaying details for and

running on route 62 which has never been operated by trolleybuses. It runs from Centraal S. to the town of Duiven in the southeast of Arnhem. The understanding is that it was on driver familiarisation and training duties. The trolleybus left CS with trolley poles raised. It is presumed to have travelled under the wires of route 5 (with imc) until Hugo de Groot Straat, where the trolley poles would have been pulled down and then continued in off-wire mode on batteries as an electric bus. Three other routes are also being examined for such use.

Reports on social media indicate that limited use of trolleybuses was being made on “classic routes” in August, mainly on 3 and 7, pending introduction into service of all the Yutong vehicles.

### **ROMANIA Bucharesti (777)**

A tender was issued on 1 September seeking supplies for 100 articulated trolleybuses with imc capability for 20km of off-wire running on batteries. They would enable replacement of the remaining Ikarus 415T and some of the oldest Astra Citelis trolleybuses, as well as increasing the overall size and seating capacity of the fleet. The specification calls for four doors, capacity of 130 (with 40 seated), air conditioning and lengthy warranties including batteries and body life.

Delivery of all is required a year and a half after the first (which must be delivered within ten months of contract award) and with completion by the end of 2028. The 415Ts are used on route 95.

### **SLOVAKIA Banská Bystrica**

Demonstrating the complications of funding can become is the story of how The City of Banská Bystrica (DPMBB) has found a way at the end of July to enable a contract to be signed to purchase seven rigid trolleybuses, funded by the EU. The problem of

disposal of assets acquired with EU funding is at the root. DPMBB does not own the transport operator company SAD Zvolen outright. It has a minority share. Therefore, as it is not the sole owner, it must issue public tenders. The ten-year contract for SAD Z expires at the end of 2030. The first tender in September 2025 was cancelled because only one supplier provided a bid, therefore no competition. The second was issued in December but with only a month to bid. Received bids were then held pending resolution of how the council, as owners, would dispose of these new trolleybuses in the future. This was necessary to enable the funds to be released, by giving assurances so that they would in effect remain with the city when the operating contract comes up for renewal and transferred to the new carrier in 2030. A meeting between the two existing parties was convened at the end of July which confirmed the assurances and amended the contract. Also, this specifies that the city does not become the owner if it no longer operates trolleybuses. The amended contract was expected to be signed on 1 September.

### **SWITZERLAND Lausanne (780)**

From 17 August, the wiring of route 9 was extended westwards from Renes VD to a new terminus at Crissier, Place Centrale, with four additional stops.

### **SWITZERLAND Zurich (782)**

The steel tower structure at Friesenberg, which supports the complicated overhead power lines of trolleybus route 32 and those of the railway line of Sihltal Zürich Uetliberg Bahn AG (SZU), is set to be dismantled by the end of 2026. The railway had two operators, which each had different voltages until four years ago, necessitating off-set wiring and pantographs to collect the differing

currents. The two line voltages were changed to 15kV four year ago when the new structure was built. Besides being labelled a monstrosity by the locals there have been ongoing operational problems in supporting and integrating this overhead with that of the two pairs of 600V trolleybus lines, set at right angles. Removal of the tower has been enabled by removing the trolleybus overhead entirely. Trolleybuses will now cross the railway lines by taking their poles down on each side of the railway and passing under the railway overhead line equipment using battery power. The date set for the tower demolition is 24 and 25 October.

### UKRAINE Sevastopol

A prototype trolleybus with imc made in

running with passengers in Sevastopol since the end of July. It was allocated fleet number 595 and ran not only on trolleybus routes 7a and 10 but on three bus routes 23, 92 and 94. It is possible these could become trolleybus routes in the future.

The operator Sevelektroavtotrans requested the trial even though PK has yet to have delivered any production models in recent times. The request resulted from a failed tender process earlier in the year. This saw three other suppliers provide bids of which only one from the local Solaris representative was feasible but could not be made firm because of the ongoing problematic financial situation of Sevelektroavtotrans.



The Admiral 6281.01 on trial in Sevastopol.

[Sevastopol A.S. Krupoderov Sevelektroavtotrans]

2025 by PK Transportnye Systemy and designated Admiral 6281.01 has been

With thanks to: David Bowler,  
Československý Dopravák

Rear cover upper: Tallinn 6364 is one of the Škoda 32 Trs which were purchased along with 33 Trs to restart trolleybus operation in Estonia's capital city this year.

[Tallinna Linnatranspordi AS]

Rear cover, lower: The first of the new articulated trolleybuses for Vilnius is this Trollino seen at the Solaris premises before delivery. The last of the 1991 Škoda 15 Trs, the only previous articulated trolleybuses operated here, are due for imminent withdrawal. [VVT]

