

**Electromobility – an opportunity and a threat for economies and the labour market in
Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries.**

Extended abstract for the 65th ERSa congress in Sofia, Bulgaria (25-28.08.2026)

One of the strongest sectors of the economy in Central and Eastern European countries, responsible for hundreds of thousands of jobs, is the automotive industry. It consists of many Foreign Direct Investments that are car assembly plants, but also lots of foreign and domestic producers of car components and parts (Domanski et al. 2024).

The automotive sector is currently undergoing a significant transformation towards electromobility, which involves a gradual shift away from traditional petrol and diesel engines towards low- and zero-emission drives (Dyba, 2023). Driven by ecological, technological and regulatory factors, this shift creates significant challenges and has positive and negative effects on economies and job markets, especially in regions that are highly dependent on the sector. (Figure 1).

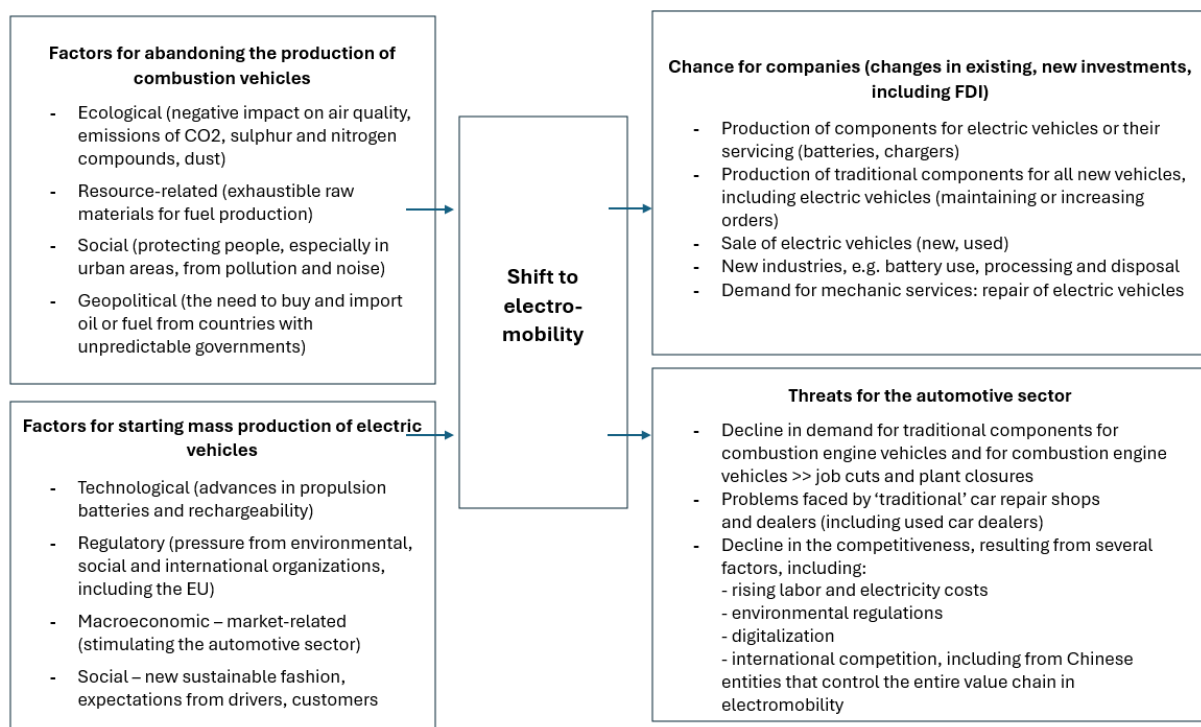


Fig. 1. Conditions and possible effects of the shift towards electromobility – conceptual framework

Source: own elaboration based on systematic literature review (see: Dyba, 2025).

The aim of the presentation is to discuss the opportunities and threats that electromobility presents to the economies and labour markets of Poland and Central and Eastern Europe.

New investments and plants have recently emerged, producing new electric vehicles and components for them, particularly batteries, as well as equipment for servicing them, such as chargers. The market for selling and servicing electric vehicles is opening up, as is the possibility of processing and recycling used batteries.

Conversely, many plants producing traditional vehicles and components for them, especially those related to combustion engines, are closing down or reducing their workforce. The future of jobs in companies dealing with the import and repair of used cars is also uncertain. The competitiveness of the European automotive industry is under threat from a number of factors, including rising labour and electricity costs, environmental regulations and imports of cars and car parts from China, which have significantly lower production costs and control the entire electromobility value chain, Pavlinek 2023).

Preliminary research on this topic was carried out in Poland in 2025 (Dyba, 2025). This involved a statistical and spatial analysis of sold production, the number of companies, and employment in electromobility-related sectors of the economy (Fig.2., C29 – vehicles and parts, C27 – electric appliances, including batteries and chargers).

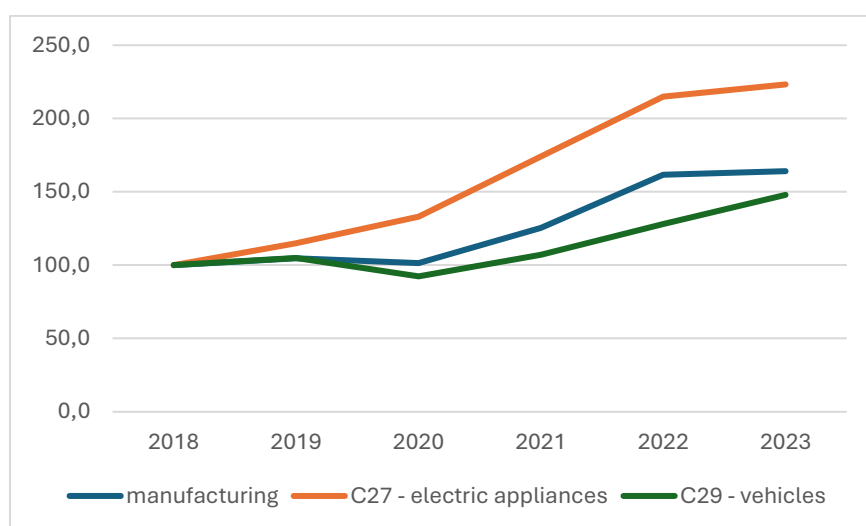


Fig. 2. Dynamics of sold production in Poland in the years 2018-2023.

Source: own elaboration based on Central Statistical Office in Poland.

Although the data up to 2023 was optimistic, 120 suppliers strictly related to combustion engines operated in Poland this year. This segment of the automotive supply chain comprised six engine plants, as well as parts for engines, transmissions, thermal management, fuel pumps and fuel tanks. These suppliers employed 52,000 people, and it was estimated that 17,000–23,000 jobs could be lost by 2030.

The study revealed the potential for uneven spatial effects of the transformation under investigation: traditional manufacturing regions in south-western Poland, which have an advantage due to their proximity to export markets in Western Europe and their good transport infrastructure and manufacturing traditions, are more susceptible to change (see Fig. 3).

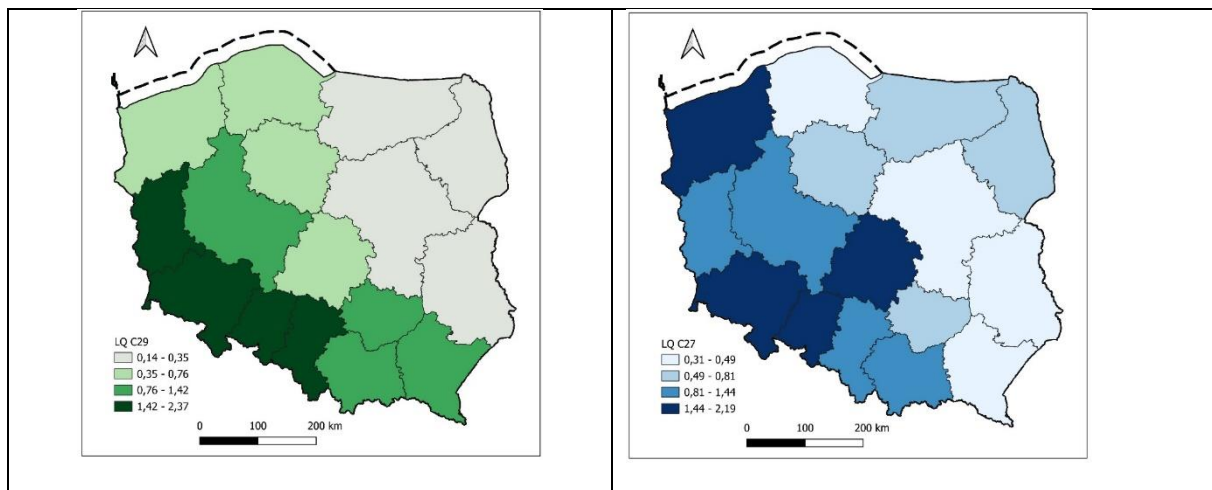


Fig. 3. Share of employment in C29 and C27 related to total share in employment

Source: own elaboration based on Central Statistical Office in Poland

Moreover, case studies were used to present examples of companies that have successfully exploited the trend towards electromobility in their development. These included the histories and strategies of OEMs such as Solaris Bus & Coach in Bolechowo (Greater Poland region), a rapidly growing bus manufacturer, and LG Energy Solutions in Kobierzyce (Lower Silesia region), the largest producer of Li-ion batteries for electric cars in Europe. The investigation revealed many positive effects on local economies in terms of employment (including migrants) and related sectors.

The investigation also examined examples of threats in the form of production plant closures associated with traditional combustion engines, or reductions in employment in some of these plants. These included FIAT Poland Powertrain, for example, which produced over 7 million engines for petrol cars at its Tychy plant (in the Silesia region) between 2003 and 2024, before laying off 870 workers in 2024. These examples demonstrate the significant disruption in Poland's automotive sector and the need for employment policies.

The next stage of the analysis involves extending the investigation to include other selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia). All of these countries are characterised by strong but uneven automotive sectors. The analysis of existing sources, such as statistical data and industry reports, will present trends in the production of vehicles and electrical equipment (including batteries and chargers for electric vehicles), as well as employment in relevant sectors of the economy in Central and Eastern Europe. The research plan involves also 30 interviews (IDIs or TDIs) with industry stakeholders: representatives of associations, large companies and industry or job market experts.

Finally, scenarios will be formulated to illustrate how regional economies and labour markets can effectively adapt to the trend of electromobility, with the aim of providing a clear understanding of the potential impact of this significant development. The presentation at the ERSA congress in Sofia in August 2026 will facilitate discussion of the emerging conclusions from the study and the draft paper on the presented topic.

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