

Experience of travelling in France with an EV

Car type: Kia Niro EV

Battery capacity: 64.8 kWh

Year: 2024

Maximum fast charge rate 80 kW

Although average consumption is shown on the latest app report as 3.72 m/kWh the reported range when 100% charged shows over 300 miles instead of the likely mixed driving range of 285 miles, and I seemed to achieve this.

Having used the car for a few months in the UK with most charging done at home, we decided to try a road trip in France. We had noticed an increasing number of charging points during previous trips in a petrol car. The various apps reported plenty of charging stations and so we decided to give it a go.

The attached spreadsheet shows the details of the journey. Points to note:

1. Although the general recommendation is to charge to 80%, this is impractical on a long journey. Where it was convenient we charged to 100%. There were 3 places where this was convenient: at 2 hotels that had charging points (where charging could be left for several hours or overnight); at a convenient village location where the car could be left for 2.5 hours and retrieved on foot.
2. At every charging point we used an Electroverse card, supplied by Octopus Energy. Rather than using the app (an additional complication and forcing a reliance on a mobile phone) we used the actual card. This was very convenient because the cost is charged to a nominated credit card or Octopus account without the need for a second card.
3. Most of the charging points worked smoothly. To cancel the charge it was necessary to tap the screen with the Electroverse card. This worked everywhere except for the Relais Dentelle rapid charger, which continued to charge beyond 90% and would not disconnect. I called the help line and someone answered in English within a minute. She wanted the reference code of the charging post, but there was none, so I described the location and she found it. She found that all the chargers had now stopped responding and that she would have to send a technician. I managed to stop charging by setting the car DC charge maximum to 80%.
4. On the whole it seemed more efficient to run the battery down to 30%-40%, then charge to 80%. At a rapid charger we achieved the highest charge rate up to 80%, then the rate slowed, sometime to a trickle. This tied in with our experience of charging boat batteries. With a battery management system the boat charge would start at a bulk charge, then reduce to absorption, and finally to trickle when nearing capacity. Of course, to be able to do this you need confidence that the next charger will be in range and available, but that is a judgement on the day.
5. Every charging point bar one was available when we arrived. The worst location was Relais Dentelle, with 2 slow and 2 rapid chargers. On the outbound journey was had to use the slow charger, but this was not inconvenient as we stopped for a lunch break. On the return journey we had to wait about 30 minutes for any charger to become free.
6. If you have time to spare a cross country route is sometimes better. Several of the supermarkets that we passed on side roads had good charging facilities with no-one waiting.
7. The cost overall was much cheaper than in the UK. The average cost was about £0.43 per kWh, compared with anything from £0.50 to £0.80 in the UK. The fuel cost with our previous petrol car would have been 50% higher than we paid for electricity.

8. It was essential to plan ahead using any convenient app. We used a combination of the Electroverse app and the in-built car sat nav, that showed nearby charging stations. We were travelling in mid July, before the holiday season got into full swing. My guess is that in August during busy daytime periods there might be a queue for some chargers. In these circumstances it might be better either to travel across country or come off for 1-2 motorway junctions and find some local re-charging. It's possible that there might be the benefit of a nice local restaurant.
9. Overall it was a relatively easy and low cost experience. There was some slight anxiety about motorway availability and so we charged earlier than needed in these cases.

Date	Ignition time	End time	Distance (km)	Distance (m)	Time (m)	Route	Miles driven	Re-charge amount kWh	Price (€) per unit	Total cost	Time stopped	Provider	Location	Notes
15-07-2025	07:19	08:51	91	57	91	Home to Portsmouth								Left home at 100%
15-07-2025	09:04	09:14	0	0	9									
15-07-2025	16:48	16:52	0	0	4									
15-07-2025	16:52	16:54	0	0	1									
15-07-2025	16:54	17:43	23	14	48	Le Havre to Honfleur		18.06	€0.50	€9.04	Overnight	Total / Electroverse	Hotel	Charge to 100%
15-07-2025	17:47	17:50	0	0	3		70							
17-07-2025	09:34	09:56	13	8	22	Honfleur to Amboise								
17-07-2025	10:08	11:36	122	76	88									
17-07-2025	12:27	14:31	82	51	124			20.80	€0.50	€10.40	0:40		Motorway	Charge to 80%
17-07-2025	19:06	19:07	0	0	0		197	36.00	€0.46	€19.80	Overnight	Room charge	Hotel	Charge to 100%
18-07-2025	12:13	12:23	2	1	10	Local Amboise								
18-07-2025	13:23	13:30	1	1	7									
18-07-2025	13:30	13:30	0	0	0		2							
19-07-2025	09:53	11:58	158	98	124	Amboise to Vailly-sur-Sauldre								
19-07-2025	13:01	13:02	0	0	1									
19-07-2025	15:38	15:39	0	0	1		98	26.10	€0.46	€11.90	2:30	Virta / Electroverse	Public square	Charge to 100%
21-07-2025	10:32	11:06	30	19	33	Vailly to La Gelinière								
21-07-2025	11:11	11:21	6	4	9									
21-07-2025	11:32	12:13	48	30	41	La Gelinière to Ouireham								
21-07-2025	12:34	13:32	89	55	58									
21-07-2025	13:48	14:20	37	23	31			23.77	€0.59	€14.03	0:30	Ionity / Electroverse	Motorway	Charge to 80%
21-07-2025	14:55	16:44	149	93	109									
21-07-2025	17:06	17:06	0	0	0			15.69	€0.62	€9.73	0:50	Total / Electroverse	Motorway	Unit faulty on leaving. Charge to 92%
21-07-2025	18:00	19:23	119	74	83									
21-07-2025	20:50	21:08	0	0	18									
21-07-2025	21:33	21:37	0	0	3		297							
22-07-2025	06:32	07:57	80	50	84	Portsmouth to home	60							Arrived home at 40%
Totals				0			724	140.42		€74.90				
				0						£65.13				
				0		Petrol equivalent				£94.13				

