

Spain: Numerous low-cost fuel stations to open in Galicia

Petroprix, Autonet&Oil and Gas Expres expect to start soon with their projects after years of management and bureaucratic obstacles.

The 'low cost' gas station business is making its way into Galicia, where several companies plan to open numerous refuelling points after overcoming the bureaucratic obstacles that have hampered its development in the Galician region. The industry ensures that fuel prices will be cheaper due to competition from these stations.

In addition to the city of Vigo, openings are planned in Redondela, Tui, Porriño, Vilagarcía de Arousa, Pontearreas and Pontevedra, as reported by Atlántico.

Petroprix will open 10 petrol stations this year, the most imminent openings being in Burela (Lugo) and in A Grela (Coruña), which will be added to those that the Andalusian company already owns in Santiago, Narón, Carballo and Cambre, where it opened last week. Autonet&Oil has also opened a site in Coruña and will build three more in Vigo, Redondela and Lugo. Gas Expres, a company also linked to the association of automatic low-cost service stations (Aesae), intends to enter Galicia with two gas stations in Lugo and Santiago, planned since 2017.

Numerous executives of these companies lament in comments to Atlántico that Galicia "is one of the most complicated markets to enter, even being one of the communities with the most expensive fuels", says the general manager of Autonet&Oil, Marcos Moure. "There are many obstacles, it is a hermetic and difficult market, it seems that there is no interest in us to settle," according to Jorge Pomar, founding member of Gas Expres and the association Aesae. If this continues, the expansion director of Petroprix, Juan Carlos Santiago, considers that "Galicia could cease to be a priority area for investment".

The investment in an automatic gas station ranges between 300,000 and 600,000 euros each. Today there are eight automatic low-cost service stations undergoing, as confirmed by the Consellería de Industria de Galicia a Atlántico.

The Government of Galicia is finalizing a decree to facilitate the opening of this type of gas stations. To end the numerous obstacles in this regard, it recently approved a best-practices document by consensus with the National Securities Market Commission (CNMV).