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Three consortia will pilot self-driving shuttles as part of regular traffic in five European cities

The FABULOS procuring partners have awarded three international consortia with contracts for the final phase of the pre-commercial procurement. These consortia will pilot autonomous buses as part of existing public transport systems, and the fleets of three buses each will be piloted in Gjesdal, Helmond, Helsinki, Lamia and Tallinn between April and October 2020.

FABULOS is a three-step pre-commercial procurement (PCP) project that aims to deliver a proof-of-concept for automated last-mile public transport as part of the existing transport system. In the first phase of the PCP, the five consortia chosen for this phase developed a concept and system architecture capable of operating autonomous buses. During the second phase of the PCP, the four consortia successful in progressing to this phase developed prototypes based on their shuttle service solutions. All the consortia were successful in the prototyping phase and received full compensation for their work.

Most promising solutions awarded considerable budgets

The ambitious goal of the third phase of the PCP is to verify and compare the prototype solutions in real-life conditions. Based on an assessment by the Technical Evaluation Committee and the external Evaluator Panel, three consortia were invited to partake in this final phase as follows:

- **The Sensible 4 – Shotl Consortium** comprising two partners: Sensible 4 from Finland and Shotl from Spain. The consortium is utilising the automated Gacha bus from Sensible4 and MUJI.
- **The Mobile Civitatem Consortium** comprising four Estonian partners: Modern Mobility, Tallinn University of Technology, AuVeTech and Fleet Complete. This consortium is building and testing their own autonomous vehicle – Iseauto.
- **The Saga Consortium** comprising four partners: Halogen, Forus PRT and Ramboll Management Consulting from Norway together with Spare Labs from Canada. The consortium will work with one of the established European shuttle manufacturers.

In the third phase, the consortia receive up to 740,000 euros (excl. value-added tax) to validate their prototypes, prepare pilots and implement operational systems.

New AV features validated during the real-life pilots

During the piloting period three different holistic autonomous shuttle service solutions will be tested in five European cities. The pilots will first run in Gjesdal (Norway), Helsinki (Finland) and Tallinn (Estonia) in the spring. During the autumn of 2020, pilots will be launched in Lamia (Greece) and Helmond (the Netherlands).





During the six-month field trials, the functionality, interoperability and security of the autonomous fleets will be assessed. All the pilots will take place in urban settings, but each pilot location has its own special challenges. In Gjesdal, there is a 12% incline due to the mountainous terrain, whereas in Lamia high temperatures must be successfully managed. In the Netherlands the large number of cyclists must be taken into consideration and in Helsinki the route passes the second busiest train station in the country. In Tallinn, the connection to the airport will be improved, leading to challenges with factors such as existing bus traffic.

In all the locations, the shuttle services will be tested to ensure the functionality of remote operability from the control room. Furthermore, the buses must be able to autonomously overtake obstacles such as parked cars. The shuttles are expected to be driverless, and a safety person will only be allowed on board if local regulations require this.

The overall aim of the FABULOS pre-commercial procurement is to accelerate the introduction of new types of automated last-mile solutions entering the European market. Therefore, when the pilots have been finalised, the procuring cities and Preferred Partners will initiate a public procurement of innovation. This follow-up procurement will be a topic of discussion during the FABULOS final conference, which will take place on 26 November 2020 in Helsinki.

Further information:

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FABULOS (Future Automated Bus Urban Level Operation System) is a research and development project to establish and deliver a systemic proof-of-concept for automated last mile public transport as part of the existing transport system of urban areas, based on the use of self-driving minibuses. The FABULOS project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and runs from 1 January 2018 until 31 December 2020. The FABULOS project has partners in Estonia, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal.

