

Finnish electric buses serve as mobile testing platforms in the Helsinki region

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Finnish electric buses will soon be acting as development platforms for smart mobility services in the Helsinki region, used for boosting the creation of new user-centric solutions and product development of businesses.

The Living Lab Bus joint project, coordinated by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland and launched at the beginning of 2016, uses the Finnish electric buses acquired by Helsinki Region Transport as concrete development and testing platforms for businesses to validate their solutions in a real use environment. The buses can be used for testing user-oriented smart services and technologies, ranging from user interfaces and passenger services to sensors and transport operators' solutions.

"The goal is to create a new type of everyday development environment for accelerating the product development of businesses by means of agile experiments, in close cooperation with end-users and research institutions. Potential new solutions include easy-to-use passenger feedback solutions, automated passenger counting, and automated road condition observations," describes VTT Project Manager Raine Hautala.

"Helsinki Region Transport expects the project to provide a flood of fresh ideas that will bring joy to passengers and make bus travel more appealing. Developing smart mobility services may be the order of the day, but Helsinki Region Transport is equally drawn to innovations designed to go in the cabin space," says Reijo Mäkinen, Director of the

Transport Services Department at Helsinki Region Transport.

In addition to the Helsinki region, the City of Tampere is also participating in the project, exploiting the results in its own [public transport](#) development.

The project supports the creation of new services for transport service users and providers, and the business operations of companies are promoted by accelerating the cost-effective introduction of new solutions. The Living Lab Bus acts as a display window for showcasing Finnish expertise, while also increasing the attractiveness of public transport and cooperation between various players, as well as producing new research information on the needs of public transport users and service developers.

Identifying utilisation interests and needs of various players associated with implementing and using the development platform and setting some common rules for the operations are scheduled for spring 2016. After that, the project will be expanded by bringing in new players, who will utilise the platform in their development activities.

Provided by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland

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