

# Flying cars and no more pilots in flight revolution: Airbus

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Pilotless aircraft, flying electric vehicles and bespoke air cabins are the future of flight, Airbus said Thursday.

Paul Eremenko, the European plane-maker's chief technological officer,

painted a picture of skies buzzing with new flight forms at the RISE tech conference held in Hong Kong.

Airbus is already testing out what it calls a "module" cabin concept—passenger planes being tailored to different demands.

"You can imagine on a flight to Vegas, you might have a casino module," said Eremenko.

"Or in a more general sense, you may have a sleeping module and you go and pay 50 bucks an hour to have the ability to sleep in a sound-proof, climate-controlled area," he added.

Eremenko said Airbus had been working on the project for a year already, including user trials.

Airbus has also been working on a self-piloted flying car, the Vahana, with testing on a full-size prototype to be done by the end of the year.

"Our goal really is to open up the third dimension in cities and we believe that the time is right," said Eremenko, describing the growth of mega-cities, increasing congestion and technological developments as factors fuelling the development of electric short-hop flight travel.

Pilotless [flight](#) was also on the cards, he said, playing down safety fears.

"We believe the first autonomy will come in the domain of urban air mobility where the vehicles are smaller and there are fewer occupants," he said, adding it was easier to fly autonomously than to drive autonomously.

"That, I have fairly high confidence that we will get to in single-digit years," he said, adding the problem was not a technical one but of social

acceptance.

Artificial intelligence was the main focus of the sprawling RISE conference, which Wednesday included a debate between two lifelike disembodied robot torsos on the future of humanity.

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