

# Malaga Is Going Green And Driving Europe Forward..

28/02/2021

Spanish News, Spanish Tit-Bits



Self-driving vehicle can interact with traffic lights and is the first project of its kind in Europe

A new driverless electric bus has begun operating in the southern Spanish city of Málaga, in the first such project in Europe.

The bus, which began running on Saturday, is equipped with sensors and cameras and links Málaga's port to the city centre on an 8km (five-mile) loop it does six times a day.

"The bus knows at all times where it is and what is around it," said Rafael Durban Carmona, who heads the southern division of Spanish transport company Avanza, which leads the public-private consortium behind the project. It could "interact with traffic lights" that were also equipped with sensors that alert the bus when they turn red, he told Agence France-Presse.

The bus uses artificial intelligence to improve its "decisions" based on data recorded along the route. The 12-metre (39ft) vehicle, which looks like a normal bus, can carry 60 passengers and was developed by the Spanish company Irizar.

Other driverless pilot projects already exist in Europe, but none of them involves a regular-size urban bus that runs on a

normal street with other vehicles. Despite the advanced technology, there is a driver at the wheel to take control if necessary since Spanish law does not currently allow vehicles to operate without drivers.

“We put it in automatic mode and it runs completely autonomously,” says Cristobal Maldonado, the driver.

The project received funding from the Spanish government and was coordinated with several universities.

Last month, Singapore launched a self-driving bus trial with passengers booking through an app and the bus taking them around Singapore’s Science Park, a hi-tech business hub, during off-peak hours. China has also tested driverless taxis in several cities.

**REF Guardian**