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PRESS RELEASE

TRACE successfully demonstrates Intermodal Bike-Drone Logistics in Italy

The TRACE project has successfully completed the Italian Pilot A on 22nd of June, 2026, demonstrating an innovative intermodal delivery scenario that combines cargo bikes and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to support sustainable and efficient last-mile logistics.

The demonstration was carried out by the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE) through the HiperLab research group, together with DIFLY, providing the UAV technology and expertise, validating the integration of aerial and ground logistics assets within the TRACE platform.

Originally planned to take place between two hospital facilities, the demonstration was adapted following external operational constraints that prevented the use of the originally selected flight area. Thanks to the flexibility of the TRACE platform and the collaborative effort of the project partners, an alternative operational scenario was designed while preserving the main objectives of the pilot.

The demonstration started with a cargo bike transporting the payload from the University Hospital of Modena. Based on the transport plan generated by the TRACE platform, the route was optimized while considering operational constraints, including restricted and no-fly areas, allowing the identification of a safe location for drone operations. Once the cargo reached the designated transfer point, the UAV successfully completed the aerial segment under Visual Line of Sight (VLOS) conditions before the payload was transferred back to the cargo bike for the final delivery phase.

The successful execution of the bike-drone-bike intermodal mission demonstrated the capability of the TRACE platform to coordinate heterogeneous transport assets, generate feasible multimodal transport plans, and adapt logistics operations to real-world constraints.

Pilot A represents an important milestone for TRACE, validating the integration of ground and aerial mobility solutions and highlighting the potential of intermodal logistics to improve the efficiency, flexibility, and sustainability of future urban and regional delivery services.

Watch the official demonstration video of the TRACE Italian Pilot A and see how the bike-drone intermodal logistics scenario was successfully implemented:
https://youtu.be/y5PHlqMzPbE?si=NdrnIRX9nE_w2VIE



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TRACE at a glance

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Project Duration: 3 years (Start Date: 1 June 2023)

Project Coordinator: National Kapodistrian University of Athens

Website: <https://trace-horizon.eu/>

TRACE Consortium

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20. AV LIVING LAB, INOVATIVNE TEHNOLOGIJE DOO, Slovenia
21. ONE LESS VAN SRL, Italy
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- 26. FONDAZIONE ISTITUTO SUI TRASPORTI E LA LOGISTICA, Italy
- 27. CSEM CENTRE SUISSE D'ELECTRONIQUE ET DE MICROTECHNIQUE SA - RECHERCHE ET DEVELOPPEMENT, Switzerland
- 28. UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW, UK



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