

ESCAPE has just started. The project, kicked-off by the European GNSS Agency (GSA), will develop a new positioning device integrating the latest technologies for the automated driving. It will exploit the characteristics of the new European navigation satellite system, Galileo: high precision, high availability and the maximum reliability.

The path towards the autonomous vehicles passes through the European satellites

An international project coordinated by FICOSA involving six partners across the Europe

Prague, December 21st, 2016 – The future of the autonomous driving is “made-in-Europe”. The European Agency for the global navigation satellite systems (GSA) has kicked-off ESCAPE, a three-year and 5.4 M€ project to exploit the services offered by Galileo, the European satellite navigation system, in the field of the automated driving. ESCAPE will coordinate some of the most relevant industrial and research institutions in Europe to create a positioning engine for safety-critical applications on the road, namely the applications involving highly automated driving.

ESCAPE (European Safety Critical Applications Positioning Engine) is led by the Spanish company FICOSA in collaboration with partners from across Europe: GMV from Spain, Renault and IFSTTAR from France, STMicroelectronics and Istituto Superiore Mario Boella from Italy. All partners are important stakeholders of the value chain in the domain of safety-critical applications for road transportation. By 2019, the ESCAPE consortium will finish the development of an innovative positioning engine tailored to meet the safety requirements expressed by those road transport applications that will involve automation and have the potential to harm or damage people and goods.

The first mass-market GPS+Galileo chipset receiver with multi-frequency capability tailored for the automotive sector is a key element of this innovative positioning device. ESCAPE will enable a high grade of data fusion with different vehicle sensors and the exploitation of key technological differentiators such as the “precise point positioning” service (PPP), the potential use of the Galileo ionospheric model and the provision of an “integrity layer” to assess the degree of trust one can associate to the position information provided by the device. The use of the “integrity layer” is crucial: in safety-critical

applications it is often said to be more important to know whether an information is reliable or not than the precise information itself.

ESCAPE will set a new paradigm among and across the technologies enabling road vehicle automation, following the vision of the companies that joined the project. The main keyword of this new paradigm is “safety-oriented” while the pathway is the integration of multiple sources of positioning information (multiple satellite constellations, multiple signal frequencies, and multiple on board sensors including maps) and high accuracy services.

ESCAPE has been funded under the *Fundamental Elements* programme of the GSA, a new EU R&D funding mechanism supporting the development of EGNSS-enabled chipsets, receivers and antennas, with the major objectives of facilitating the adoption of the European GNSS Systems and improving the competitiveness of the EU industry, by addressing specific user needs in priority market segments.

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