

Volvo to test full-size driverless bus in Singapore

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Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Singapore and Volvo Buses unveil their first full size autonomous electric bus in Singapore March 5, 2019. REUTERS/Edgar Su

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Sweden's Volvo Buses and Singapore's Nanyang Technological University (NTU) on Tuesday unveiled a full-size autonomous electric bus for testing this year in the city state.

High-density Singapore has been encouraging the development of driverless technology in hopes that its residents will use more shared vehicles and public transport.

Tests with one bus on the university campus could begin in a few weeks to months, before moving to public roads after regulatory approvals, NTU President Subra Suresh told reporters.

He hoped the tests could be extended to public roads in a year. A second bus will undergo tests at a city bus depot.

The 12-metre (39 ft) vehicle can carry up to 80 passengers and is the world's first full-size, autonomous electric bus, Volvo and NTU said.

"This is the type of vehicle that real operators would use and that's why it is a milestone," Håkan Agnevall, president of Volvo Buses, told reporters.

Singapore ranked No. 2 globally in an index that assesses countries' openness and preparedness for autonomous vehicles, according to a recent report by KPMG.

The city-state is hoping to deploy autonomous buses on public roads in three different districts from 2022. (<https://reut.rs/2H0mEGE>)

(Reporting by Aradhana Aravindan; editing by Darren Schuettler)