Joining forces for a Europe where automated driving works for people

Two Horizon Europe projects are bringing together their work on human-vehicle interaction, driver understanding and societal readiness for the next generation of automated mobility.

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Automated driving is not only a question of what a vehicle can do. It is also about whether the person behind the wheel understands what the system is doing, what it expects from them and when they need to take back control.

This shared challenge is bringing AutHUMate and SENSEI together, two Horizon Europe sister projects working to make the interaction between people and automated vehicles safer, more understandable and better adapted to different drivers. The two projects have started exchanging knowledge and perspectives while their research is still taking shape, creating an opportunity to learn from each other from the outset rather than only comparing results at the end.

Both AutHUMate and SENSEI are exploring how people interact with Level 2 and Level 3 driving systems, but from complementary perspectives. Their work looks at questions that are increasingly relevant as automated functions become more sophisticated: How should a vehicle communicate with drivers with different levels of experience? How can people learn what a system can – and cannot – safely do? And how can researchers assess whether drivers genuinely understand automation rather than simply trust or like it?

Coordinated by RWTH Aachen University, AutHUMate is developing an approach that combines information about the driver and the surrounding traffic situation to adapt what the vehicle communicates, when it communicates and how. Its planned work also includes game-based learning and training within the vehicle, helping drivers recognise system capabilities and limitations and avoid both underuse and overreliance.

SENSEI, coordinated by the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE), is developing adaptive interfaces and personalised training through co-design with diverse driver groups. It will assess its solutions in simulators and real-world pilots across four European countries, alongside work on societal readiness and recommendations for industrial uptake.

For both projects, starting the dialogue early creates an opportunity to exchange approaches while key research and design choices are still being developed. This includes how interfaces can respond to different levels of driver experience, how training can prepare users for unfamiliar situations, and how researchers can evaluate whether automated systems are genuinely understood.

Societal readiness is also an important dimension of both projects. This means examining how proposed technologies respond to people's expectations and concerns, including trust, inclusion and transparency, throughout development. User involvement is intended to inform design decisions and subsequent evaluation.

With both projects in their first year, these initial exchanges provide a foundation for identifying areas where cooperation can add value as the research progresses. Possible next steps include discussions of research methods and coordinated public communication; specific joint activities will be agreed between the consortia.

By connecting their complementary perspectives from an early stage, AutHUMate and SENSEI aim to strengthen the knowledge base for automated driving systems that are designed not only around technological capabilities, but also around the people expected to use them.

About the projects

AutHUMate runs from April 2026 to March 2029 and is coordinated by RWTH Aachen University. Grant agreement number 101269748. Its research addresses adaptive human-technology interaction, driver training and societal readiness for Level 2-3 vehicle systems.

SENSEI runs from June 2026 to May 2029 and is coordinated by UNIMORE. Grant agreement number 101267365. It addresses safe, inclusive and transparent human-technology interaction for automated mobility. Project information: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101267365

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