

Hospital services poised for transformation: San Raffaele Hospital launches drone demonstrations for Flying Forward 2020 project

MILAN, Italy, April 3, 2023 – The [San Raffaele Hospital](#) (Milan, IT) has launched the demonstration campaign of [Flying Forward 2020](#) (FF2020), a research and innovation project funded by the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 programme, which aims to contribute to the development of "Urban Air Mobility". The first demonstration day took place on the 18th of March on the hospital grounds.

The demonstration campaign, developed by the [Center for Advanced Technologies for Health and Well-Being](#), which will take place from March to May 2023, concerns innovative services created using drones for the transport of biomedical materials and safety. In the vision of the FF2020 project, drones are part of a vast digital ecosystem that includes a multitude of organisations, all of which contribute to the implementation of a safe and efficient service. The Hospital participates in the project as a "Living Lab", an environment in which to stage the services of the future by promoting innovation and the development of enabling technologies, with an eye to the advancement of the Italian ecosystem, as well as European. Indeed, the project led to the creation of the necessary physical and digital infrastructure, as well as the growth of experience and know-how, for the future implementation of these services.

The first demonstrator concerns the transport of pharmaceuticals and biological samples. The Healthcare personnel requests a medicine from the hospital pharmacy and a pharmacy staff member places the product in a container anchored to the drone to transport the product exactly where requested. During the demonstration, the drone took off from an internal courtyard of the hospital, adjacent to the pharmacy depot, and carried the medicine to another area of the hospital. In the future, this system will be able to connect clinics, pharmacies and laboratories scattered throughout the city and region, for more flexible, efficient and sustainable transport.

The second demonstrator concerns safety within the hospital, with a scenario that can also be transferred to a multitude of other fields of application. In fact, the personnel in charge of security are able to send the drone by selecting a point on the map, which will be automatically reached by the drone to transmit video footage in real-time, offering situational awareness that can be very valuable in managing an adverse event.



Both demonstrations were specifically authorised by the Italian Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC). For its obtainment, San Raffaele Hospital was advised by EuroUSC Italia, knowledge partner of the FF2020 project.

ABzero, an Italian start-up, spin-off of the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna of Pisa incubated at the Polo Tecnologico of Navacchio, carried out the activities as a drone operator for both demonstrations. In particular, their certified container equipped with artificial intelligence, called Smart Capsule, has been integrated into the intelligent digital system developed by the technical project partner VERSES. This allows drones to achieve greater autonomy in carrying out logistics and monitoring services.

The San Raffaele Hospital is a world-known excellence in patient care and scientific research. Newsweek recently classified it as the third-best hospital in Italy in World's Best Hospitals. The Center for Advanced Technologies for Health and Well-Being manages the research activities of the "city of the future" Living Lab with the collaboration of engineers, designers, psychologists, ethics and communication experts.

The hospital is the third of five FF2020 Living Labs to launch the demonstrators. It was preceded by High Tech Campus Eindhoven and the Municipality of Zaragoza, each with different use cases but also aimed at demonstrating how these technologies can provide useful services for citizens and organisations.

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About FF2020

Flying Forward 2020 (FF2020) is a collaborative three-year research and innovation project funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 programme with grant agreement number 101006828. The project is developing an entire state-of-the-art Urban Air Mobility (UAM) infrastructure by incorporating this new form of mobility within the geospatial digital infrastructure of cities. It includes a governance model and framework, a regulatory framework, a geospatial digital infrastructure, a Digital Toolbox, an Identity of Things (IDoT) scheme, and interoperability frameworks. The solutions developed during the project will be tested in five living labs across Europe: Eindhoven, Milan, Zaragoza, Tartu and Oulu – enabling an open dialogue with stakeholders, end-users and citizens to improve processes and results.

Ultimately, their goal is to have a positive and lasting impact on the quality of life of European citizens and to create sustainable partnerships and cities. For more information, visit www.ff2020.eu.



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