

NEWS

From the hallway to the street

How autonomous vehicles drive today, what makes them safe, and what the next steps are.

20 July 2026, Tobias Engl



Shortly after midnight, the departure hall belongs to the machines. A cleaning robot traces its path across the polished floor, swerves around a forgotten luggage cart, and resumes its route. No one is guiding it. At Munich Airport, such machines routinely make their nightly rounds, covering about 2,500 square meters per hour.

During the day, another autonomous vehicle travels through the same terminal. Since August 2025, the airport and Lufthansa have been testing two self-driving wheelchairs from the manufacturer WHILL in the Terminal 2 satellite. A passenger with limited mobility selects their gate on the display; the wheelchair rolls there on its own still accompanied by a service staff member and then returns to the station on its own. Sensors maintain a safe distance, and the speed remains a gentle 3.5 kilometers per hour. This transforms on-demand assistance into a measure of independence.

As different as the devices may be, their inner workings are similar. Lasers and cameras map the surroundings, a position sensor tracks the vehicle's location, and a control system determines whether to proceed, accepting only approved, safe tasks. This same logic has long been in use on roads and sidewalks.

In early June 2026, Uber and the AI company Autobrains announced plans to deploy a fleet of Level 4 driverless taxis in Munich, powered by NVIDIA technology. A test vehicle is already on the road in the city; the commercial launch is expected later this year. These vehicles operate without human intervention but are limited to a designated area, such as within the Mittlerer Ring.

In Hamburg, autonomous technology has already made its way into dinner time. For Rewe, small, six-wheeled delivery robots from Starship roll along the sidewalks at just under six kilometers per hour, passing trash cans and stopping at red lights. Twelve cameras, radar, and depth sensors map the surroundings, while AI handles the steering; quietly and without emissions, the robot finds its way to the front door all on its own.

Above all, it is the regulations that open the door. Since 2021, Germany has permitted Level 4 autonomous driving under the Road Traffic Act, subject to an approved operating area and technical remote monitoring; even small delivery robots are legally considered vehicles and require registration. Inside buildings, IEC 63327 and ISO 13482 ensure the same level of reliability, along with the CE mark and the GS seal. In 2027, the European Machinery Regulation will replace the old directive.

This is where ScreenWay comes in. An autonomous machine should be easy to understand: it should show what it's doing, announce where it's going, and blend into its surroundings. ScreenWay reads its status openly and transmits commands only through the verified interface; the display and voice remain local, and the data stays on-site. This way, autonomy doesn't mean a loss of control, but rather time saved.

The cleaning robot returns to its station, the wheelchair waits for the next guest, the taxi makes its rounds, and the delivery person brings dinner. Four machines, one motion: calm, controlled, matter-of-fact.

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