Innovative on-demand shared ride service to launch in Europe: Mercedes-Benz Vans sets up joint venture with US start-up Via

- Mercedes-Benz Vans initially invests 50 million US dollars in new joint venture with Via
- Daimler Mobility Services additionally joins in as a strategic investor in Via
- Fusion of Via’s technology with the engineering of Mercedes-Benz Vans creates the perfect match for efficient, affordable and sustainable on-demand shared rides
- Through the joint venture, Mercedes-Benz Vans and Via will bring Via’s on-demand shuttle service, already successful in New York, Chicago and Washington D.C., to European metropolises
- London will be the first city to launch the joint service this year
- The joint venture will also partner with public transit operators across Europe, licensing Via’s On-Demand Shuttle Operating System to enable cities to significantly improve mobility while reducing congestion without incurring any additional infrastructure costs
- Long term strategic cooperation to design and build vans optimized for on-demand shared rides, including integration of Via’s software with on-board vehicle sensors, electric drive, and autonomous driving

Stuttgart - Mercedes-Benz Vans is entering the ride-sharing market. To this end, the van division of Daimler AG is setting up a joint venture with the US startup company Via. Unlike other ride-hailing companies, Via has focused on developing, from the ground up, a scalable and on-demand shared ride solution. The corresponding joint venture agreement was signed today in Stuttgart. The intelligent Via algorithm supports smart public transport, enabling a dynamic mass transit system that reduces traffic volume in urban areas. The fusion of Via’s technology with the engineering of Mercedes-Benz Vans creates the perfect match for efficient, affordable and sustainable ride-sharing. As part of the cooperation, Mercedes-Benz Vans is initially investing 50 million US dollars in the new joint venture, while Daimler Mobility Services is additionally joining in as a strategic investor in Via. Mercedes-Benz Vans will be joining Via’s board of directors.
Headquartered in New York, Via’s successful shared ride service in New York, Chicago, and Washington D.C. provides over 1 million rides per month, and its revolutionary technology is licensed by partners around the world.

On-demand shared rides with vans for more efficient urban transport

Together, Mercedes-Benz Vans and Via aim to introduce on-demand shared rides to the European market. Via’s revolutionary technology is changing the way people get around cities. With Via’s intelligent shared rides, passengers headed in the same direction are matched with a single van, increasing vehicle utilization while relieving the strain on inner-city roads. London will be the first city to launch the new joint service this year. Other European metropolises will soon follow.

Deeper cooperation an important step towards implementation of future strategy adVANce

"On-demand ride-sharing offers many new ways of making city traffic efficient, needs-based and sustainable – especially when it involves the use of spacious, safe and comfortable vans," says Volker Mornhinweg, Head of Mercedes-Benz Vans. "Via is one of the most successful providers in the growing ride-sharing market while Mercedes-Benz Vans has the fitting vehicles that are being continuously optimised for this job. By deepening our cooperation with Via, we are thus taking the next logical step in the context of our strategy for the future and are expanding our range of new mobility services." The cooperation is another milestone of the adVANce strategy of Mercedes-Benz Vans focussing on the transformation from a vehicle manufacturer to a provider of holistic van system solutions. The investment is part of the Daimler strategy focussing on pioneering innovations and digitization, especially in the four future fields of Connectivity (Connected), Autonomous driving (Autonomous), Flexible use and Services (Shared & Services) and electric drive systems (Electric).

"With our mobility services like car2go, mytaxi and moovel we are already today reaching more than 15 million customers worldwide. As one of the leading providers of digital mobility services our investment in Via is a logical step to expand our portfolio according to our customers' needs", says Klaus Entenmann, Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler Financial Services AG. "We are thus further expanding our digital mobility services. We have the financial resources that are required for this growth path."

"We are delighted to have Daimler Group on board as investor and strategic partner. Combining Via’s technology with the exceptional design and engineering of Mercedes-Benz Vans is ideal for our vision of offering efficient, affordable, sustainable, and comfortable shared rides everywhere," says Daniel Ramot, co-founder and CEO of Via.
"Having completed over 20 million rides, we at Via know that having the right vehicle is crucial for providing the best customer experience. We are excited to expand our successful partnership with Daimler, which began in 2015, and collaborate on developing the optimal vehicle for the future of mobility," says Oren Shoval, CTO and co-founder of Via.

The Via vision: Dynamic routes, virtual bus stops

Via is re-engineering public transit – from a regulated system of rigid routes and schedules to a fully dynamic, on-demand network that provides an innovative supplement to existing transportation networks. Passengers request rides through a mobile app, and Via’s sophisticated algorithm instantly finds a vehicle that best matches the passenger’s route, allowing for quick and efficient shared trips without detours that take riders out of their way.

New joint venture set to establish on-demand shared rides in Europe

Mercedes-Benz Vans and Via have been successfully cooperating since 2015. The joint venture between Mercedes-Benz Vans and Via will operate as a new entity with headquarters in Amsterdam. The joint goal is to bring on-demand shared rides to the European market. The joint venture will not only launch its own service in European cities, but will also license Via’s proprietary technology - the On-Demand Shuttle Operating System - to third parties, such as transport service providers and local public transit operators. By enabling vans to be dynamically routed between thousands of virtual bus stops distributed across the city, this innovative approach to public transit helps reduce traffic volume in cities without requiring the construction of costly new infrastructure.

Strategic partnership to further develop the mobility concept

As part of their long term strategic partnership, Mercedes-Benz Vans and Via will in the future cooperate on the further development of intelligent mobility, including optimizing the design of a Mercedes-Benz Vans vehicle for shared ride use. The models mainly used will be the Vito Tourer (up to nine seats) and the V-Class (up to eight seats) being continuously optimised for this intended use. Beyond developing advanced software and sensors, another focus lies on autonomous driving and the use of the locally emission-free battery-driven electric Vito.

About Via
Via is re-engineering public transit, from a regulated system of rigid routes and schedules to a fully dynamic, on-demand network. Via’s mobile app connects multiple passengers who are headed the same way, allowing riders to seamlessly share a premium vehicle. First launched in New York City in September 2013, the Via platform currently operates in New York City, Chicago, and Washington DC, providing over a million rides per month, and is growing rapidly. Via also licenses its revolutionary on-demand transit technology to transportation operators globally. For more information, visit www.ridewithvia.com.
This document contains forward-looking statements that reflect our current views about future events. The words “anticipate,” “assume,” “believe,” “estimate,” “expect,” “intend,” “may,” “can,” “could,” “plan,” “project,” “should” and similar expressions are used to identify forward-looking statements. These statements are subject to many risks and uncertainties, including an adverse development of global economic conditions, in particular a decline of demand in our most important markets; a deterioration of our refinancing possibilities on the credit and financial markets; events of force majeure including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, political unrest, armed conflicts, industrial accidents and their effects on our sales, purchasing, production or financial services activities; changes in currency exchange rates; a shift in consumer preferences towards smaller, lower-margin vehicles; a possible lack of acceptance of our products or services which limits our ability to achieve prices and adequately utilize our production capacities; price increases for fuel or raw materials; disruption of production due to shortages of materials, labor strikes or supplier insolvencies; a decline in resale prices of used vehicles; the effective implementation of cost-reduction and efficiency-optimization measures; the business outlook for companies in which we hold a significant equity interest; the successful implementation of strategic cooperations and joint ventures; changes in laws, regulations and government policies, particularly those relating to vehicle emissions, fuel economy and safety; the resolution of pending government investigations or of investigations requested by governments and the conclusion of pending or threatened future legal proceedings; and other risks and uncertainties, some of which we describe under the heading “Risk and Opportunity Report” in the current Annual Report. If any of these risks and uncertainties materializes or if the assumptions underlying any of our forward-looking statements prove to be incorrect, the actual results may be materially different from those we express or imply by such statements. We do not intend or assume any obligation to update these forward-looking statements since they are based solely on the circumstances at the date of publication.

If you have any questions, please contact our Investor Relations Team:

**Bjoern Scheib**
Tel. +49/711-17-95256

**Lutz Deus**
Tel. +49/711-17-92261

**Christian Crusen**
Tel. +49/711-17-97778

**Rolf Bassermann**
Tel. +49/711-17-95277

**Julian Krell**
Tel. +49/711-17-99320

**Edith Callsen**
Tel. +49/711-17-97366

**Daniel Eichele**
Tel. +49/711-17-92104

**Johannes Schmalzriedt**
Tel. +49/711-17-70314

**E-mail:** ir.dai@daimler.com