



**POPPY**

## **POPPY START-UP SOON TO LAUNCH NEW CAR SHARING SERVICE IN ANTWERP**

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As of January 2018 Poppy, a young start-up, will provide a new mobility solution with its own 'free floating car sharing' service in Antwerp. The start-up works with a fleet of 100% electric Volkswagen e-Golf and Audi A3 g-tron (powered by natural gas-CNG). Poppy is the result of a corporate venture between Antwerp entrepreneurs Alexander Van Laer (25) and Moos Tits (29) with D'Ieteren Auto.

### **Use vs. ownership**

Poppy cars will be in the streets of Antwerp from January 2018. The start-up will nonetheless not make use of designated stations, but will apply the 'free floating' principle. 'Poppy users will find a car within walking distance in Antwerp and a few Antwerp districts,' according to Poppy's co-founder and CEO Alexander Van Laer. 'The cars can be dropped off in any public car park in Antwerp.'

'Today nearly everyone owns a car, but the majority of the population does not use it on a daily basis. With Poppy we provide users with the option to choose a car based on their needs at a specific time, which is not only easier, it is also much more economical,' according to Van Laer. 'Poppy users unlock the car on their smartphone and pay by the minute. Fixed costs for fuel, parking, maintenance and insurance are a thing of the past. This sharing economy has given rise to a movement, whereby use beats ownership.'

During the testing period, which runs until the end of this year, the fleet will consist of 20 Volkswagen e-Golf (100% electric) and 10 Audi A3 g-tron (powered by CNG or natural compressed gas). From January 2018 the complete fleet of shared vehicles in Antwerp will increase to 350 cars, of which 200 Volkswagen e-Golf and 150 Audi A3 g-tron.

In the meantime, the city of Antwerp is enthusiastic about the new player on the market. 'Your own car often just sits in front of the door, whilst a shared car is used more intensively. A single shared car will rapidly replace five to ten private vehicles. Fewer cars in the city will result in less parking pressure and fewer traffic. Shared vehicles, together with other types of shared mobility, play an important role in the city's mobility vision,' according to the Alderman for Mobility Koen Kennis.

### **Corporate venture between young entrepreneurs and D'Ieteren Auto**

'As a market leader on the Belgian automotive market, D'Ieteren Auto confirms its ambition to offer innovative mobility solutions, which meet customers' needs. Obviously Poppy's ambition extends beyond Antwerp. The aim is to gradually roll out the concept of sustainable car sharing to other cities in Belgium,' according to Dirk Joos, Director of Lab Box, the recently founded division within D'Ieteren Auto, whose mission includes the promotion of sustainable mobility solutions by means of partnerships or support to start-ups such as Poppy, among others.

In the meantime D'leteren Auto is proud of its innovative approach by means of corporate venturing. 'Our company is delighted with the collaboration and the massively positive dynamic resulting from the creativity and versatility on the part of entrepreneurs such as Van Laer and Tits and its clout as a market leader. Poppy operates as a start-up, but does rely on the human and financial capital from a large organisation,' according to Dirk Joos.

*Poppy starts its pilot version today with the intention to roll out for the general public in Antwerp in January 2018. For further information please go to [www.poppy.be](http://www.poppy.be).*

### ***Press invitation***

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*On Sunday September 17<sup>th</sup> at 03.00 pm, the press is warmly welcome at the Poppy stand at the car-sharing show in Antwerp (Meir, 2000 Antwerp). The Poppy team will be available to answer further questions and will organize a demonstration of the Poppy application in the presence of Koen Kennis, Alderman for Mobility.*

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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