Günther Pichler GmbH built the traffic lights designed at TU Graz | Photo source Günther Pichler GmbH

CROSSWALK LIGHTS USE AI TO ANTICIPATE POTENTIAL ACCIDENTS

MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

Vienna has installed pedestrian crossing lights that can recognise when a person wants to cross the road

Spotted: Vienna has installed around 200 pedestrian crossing lights that can recognise when a person wants to cross the road. The system was commissioned by Municipal Department 33 of the City of Vienna and developed by a team at the Institute of Computer Graphics and Vision at TU Graz University. It is intended to replace the push-button system, and can adapt to give large groups and people with disabilities more time to cross.

The system uses cameras mounted on the traffic light that have a large visual field. The research team used global movement models and recorded data to develop learning algorithms, which recognise when a pedestrian wants to cross the street. The system then triggers the light to change. Images are analysed locally by on-sight computers and are not saved.

The traffic lights are equipped with a monitoring system that can report faults immediately. They can also work in all types of light and weather conditions. The hope is that the system will not only make crossing safer and faster, but will also allow a smoother traffic flow.

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Takeaway:

Across the European Union, 5,320 pedestrians were killed in road accidents in 2016. That means 21 percent of all road fatalities involved pedestrians. Thankfully, AI and facial recognition technologies are now being adapted to things like street crossings, as this traffic light system illustrates. Springwise has spotted other examples of emerging technologies being utilised to aid in pedestrian road safety, including a crosswalk system in South Korea that warns people who are near an intersection via alarms, LED lights and an app.

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