

Uber's CEO Wants to Fix Your Commute

Amid resistance from European lawmakers, Uber Technologies Inc. founder Travis Kalanick called on local regulators to promote the financial incentives car owners could benefit from if they were to pick up a neighbor and share their ride to work.

"We can turn every car into a shared car -- the next frontier is the Uber commute," CEO Kalanick said Monday at a conference in Brussels. "Is there a way that someone could pick up a neighbor on the way to work? We have the technology for it, but there are also regulatory frameworks we have to work with. Why can't these folks get a little more incentive?"

Kalanick said he met with regulators at the European Commission earlier in the day to talk about how cities

can solve problems like traffic, parking, and having too many cars on the roads.

"We're making our case but also learning what it's going to take to bring our kind of innovation to many cities here in Europe," Kalanick said at the conference, organized by think tank Lisbon Council. "I got my first course in speaking European this morning at the European Commission."

Thousands of people are car-pooling with UberPool in San Francisco and 19 cities in China, Kalanick said. "Imagine if the 300,000 Brussels citizens driving into work this morning could pick somebody up and make a small profit from doing it," Kalanick said. "More people would carpool, we'd have less congestion, the air would be less polluted, we'd all live in a better place. The city doesn't even have to use taxes to make it happen."

China Drive

In China, Uber is seeking to catch up to local rival Didi Chuxing, which has launched in hundreds of cities and this month got \$1 billion in backing from Apple Inc.

"China's an expensive place and it takes a lot of

funds," Kalanick told reporters after the conference about Apple's investment. At the same time, "there's a lot of funding in this environment because there's so much progress on the other side."

Uber's profits can help fund its expansion into new markets and products, Kalanick said. When asked whether the company needs to go back to investors to raise more money, Kalanick said "We'll keep you posted on that."

China's Didi, already backed by Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Tencent Holdings Ltd., is valued about \$26 billion after the latest round of \$3 billion, including Apple's contribution, people familiar have said. Uber has been valued at \$62.5 billion and is the biggest ride-sharing app globally.

European Stalls

Uber's initiatives to expand into new services outside its traditional chauffeured-car business have faced steep regulatory hurdles in Europe. The company suspended its UberPop business, which lets unlicensed drivers use their own car to pick up riders for a cheaper fee, in Sweden this month amid legal challenges. The service had faced a similar fate in France and the Netherlands earlier.

While Uber has been dragged to court over UberPop, it has argued the service isn't illegal and has called on lawmakers to update the regulatory framework to adapt it to the chauffeured-car industry, which has expanded vastly beyond taxis.

Meanwhile local rivals including Spain's Cabify, backed by Rakuten Inc., and France's Chauffeur-Prive, backed by La Banque Postale's XAnge, are adding to existing pressure by taxis and other local players. They're catering to bankers, lawyers and corporate customers to stand out from Uber.