

Ease the City Competition

Breakdown of the 2002 results

The jury

Marie H el ene Massot

Director of Research at the National Institute for Research and Study on Transport and Transport Safety (INRETS), (France), Chair;

Jean-Yves Chapuis

Planner, Vice-President of Rennes M etropole responsible for urban forms (France);

Philippe Chollet

City on the Move Institute (France)

Nicolas Michelin

Architect, Director of the Versailles College of Architecture (France)

Daniel Latouche

Teacher and researcher at the National Institute for Scientific Research (INRS) in Montreal (Canada)

Jos e Manuel Viegas

Professor at the Technical University of Lisbon (Portugal)

Setting the rules, selecting the teams

There were eight multidisciplinary teams, including one Chinese and one Canadian. Our job was to select 3, and nominate one winner.

Sticking to the proposals, the terms of the competition itself

Competition terms

'The study involved **two parts**.

A field **analysis** on one of the three themes proposed: mobility aid services, services relating to multimodality and/or intermodality, the mobility culture as urban tourism.

Based on this analysis, the preparation of **a project or concrete innovative proposals** relating to the problems raised.

This project was to be considered concretely in relation to one of the cities under study. **Reproducibility conditions** were to be presented. Since this was a field study, the added value in your work lies **in your observations and perceptions**; what interests us is your own analysis—and perhaps also your description—of a reality. The photo reportage was to serve a dual purpose: **illustrative**, underpinning your argument, **creative and imaginative**, making the photos part of the presentation process.'

Winners and finalists

Following consideration and examination of your work, three projects rapidly emerged. The three nominated team-projects cover very different domains.

The winners are

Sarah Cohen

DESS Paris Institute of Town Planning,

Mathilde Felix-Faure

3rd cycle DPLG Grenoble School of Architecture

Eric Seguin

3rd cycle DPLG Grenoble School of Architecture

For their project 'Waiting for teleportation ... Pilot groups, inter and multimodal strategies for a city of proximity': Grenoble and Barcelona

broken down by the authors into two proposals:

'Short-circuit' in Barcelona, a project constructed around mobility centres progressively distributed at central points (Punto B), offering information both on ways of 'short-circuiting' standard transport service itineraries and alternative forms of mobility (bicycles and pedestrian routes) to achieve the 'short-circuits'.

'Park-and-ride points' in Grenoble, a project that organises mobility strategically around certain points so that people from around the city can combine their destinations by a system of car-sharing and hitchhiking.

Finalists

Aurélie Ginguene Masters degree in planning – University L. Pasteur at Strasbourg
Maria-Christina Hallwachs Hauptstudium in modern humanities and history – Stuttgart
Nathalie Surmaire: Masters degree in history – University M. Bloch at Strasbourg

For their project

'Accessibility policies in Strasbourg and Stuttgart: prospects for generalisation?'

This project is about European cities harmonising mobility aid solutions for people with physical or visual disabilities, based on a comparison of the existing examples in Strasbourg and Stuttgart. The analysis here is political, looking at 'standardisation', and is approached from the point of view of the systems of agencies.

Anne Douvin Doctorate in town planning – Paris VIII University
Cristina Dulcey Doctorate in social geography – Paris VIII University
France Poulain Doctorate in town planning at the French Town Planning Institute

For their project

'Bus stop' in Nantes is based on the concept of tourists and citizens taking back the urban space for cultural events or leisure activities. This taking-back is achieved by means of 'bus-stops' with the original feature of providing a regular service that is spatially and temporally adaptive, adjusted to the spacetime of 're-creativity' activities.

Eight finalist projects: questions and recommendations

Project : 'Waiting for teleportation... Large pilot groups, inter and multimodal strategies for a city of proximity' Grenoble and Nantes
Winners, Sarah Cohen, Mathilde Felix-Faure, Eric Seguin.

This project breaks down into two proposals:

'Short-circuit' in Barcelona, a project constructed around mobility centres progressively distributed at central points (Punto B), offering information both on ways of 'short-circuiting' standard transport service itineraries and alternative forms of mobility (bicycles and pedestrian routes) to achieve the 'short-circuits'.

'Park-and-ride points' in Grenoble, a project that organises mobility strategically around certain points so that people from around the city can pool their destinations by a system of car-sharing and hitchhiking.

This project, like all the others in fact, is not about implementation. Its strengths lie elsewhere, notably in the intellectual and conceptual posture that underpins both proposals, and in the quality with which the winners have applied their concept-strategies to the problems of the specific territories identified, first in Barcelona, and then in Grenoble.

The concepts common to both proposals are: Large pilot groups, a catchline strategy for Local Mobility. Local Mobility is based on the concept of the 'door-to-door journey', and articulated around mobility services which approaches the travel chain from its smallest and weakest links at the two ends of the chain. The large pilot groups represent a catchline strategy, which the authors consider essential as a way of introducing the 'door-to-door' journey into cities, whether dense or extended. The pilot groups are collective 'test' populations of

people who are open to change and whose behaviour is considered likely to generate a 'spillover' effect on other populations.

In Barcelona, the pilot group is made up of urban tourists, and the 'door-to-door' concept structured around the 'short-circuit' project. In Grenoble the pilot group is a student population living on the outskirts of the city and the door-to-door vector is the 'park-and-ride point' project.

The approach is not simply to identify the specific levers of change but also to define these levers by a strategy of deployment in space and time and across the population. A particularly noteworthy aspect of this study is the remarkable CD-ROM that comes with it. The CD-ROM menu is linked graphically with a Metro line, which intelligently and enjoyably clarifies the base concepts by illustrating their articulation and local application in the territories under analysis. It is a project which needs to be viewed in depth as a source of understanding and debate.

The strength of the project is its intellectual risk-taking, notably with regard to objects such as the 'park-and-ride point', which undoubtedly needs a much more concrete reworking: 'bringing the road into the home' and 'buying a library to insert it into the park-and-ride point', are ideas that need cautious handling. The short-circuit project is much closer to potential application... Information centres, information security and payment are also ideas that are missing in one or other of the projects, which the students might consider in future work.

Project : Accessibility policies: prospects for generalisation ?

Strasbourg and Stuttgart

Contributors, Aurélie Ginguene, Maria-Christina Hallwachs and Nathalie Surmaire

This project is about European cities harmonising mobility aid solutions for people with physical or visual disabilities. The central hypothesis is that 'in order to offer everyone the possibility of independent travel, cities require a uniform and dense system of identical landmarks'. The proposed projects are identified through a comparative analysis of the policies and practices implemented in two cities: Strasbourg and Stuttgart. The analysis is based as much on the conditions of implementation of any policy and more specifically of mobility services for people with disabilities, as on a very precise identification of services that are potentially transposable and therefore capable of generalisation-harmonisation. The yardstick used for evaluating existing services is the chain of transport methods and network continuity, based on a survey of 200 people. The result is clear: a person with a disability can access a low-floored tram but cannot take the train unaccompanied; bus stop access is difficult and dangerous; pedestrian routes for the visually impaired are constantly interrupted and there is no consistency in arrangements for different generations; filling one's car is very difficult with a motor disability; moreover, information on this type of service is both inconsistent and very centralised, since it is expensive to print and to distribute.

The services proposed for transposition-harmonisation-generalisation are: relief maps in both cities, real-time information, guidance lines in both cities, low floors in Strasbourg public transport, mobility advice in Stuttgart, radio systems in petrol stations, and transport on request in Strasbourg.

The means the team identifies to extend these services uniformly to both cities, is to establish standards of accessibility and information to facilitate movement. The standards should be European, like the cultural space in which we live today.

The young team's pamphlet is concise, precise and motivating, and the summary, accurate as it is, perhaps fails to do it full justice. Its achievement is to have identified and examined the factors that favour the emergence of a consistent policy of mobility services: first, it requires political will and policies which are not a quick fix for existing systems, but include disability planning as an integral element in the transport chain; then, there needs to be coordination between the different players: the diversity and multiplicity of agencies involved would seem to be detrimental to the overall coherence of arrangements/services. A single agency is required to centralise proposals and act as a relay, especially for the associations. As we would say nowadays, participatory democracy needs to be orchestrated.

What is attractive in this project is the maturity with which the team introduces the political factor: none of the other projects ventured onto this ground, which is the heart of the matter. Moreover, no other project used comparative analysis and the duality of the two cities so effectively to construct their argument. Obviously, there is a lot to say about generalisation through standards, which in fact gets little coverage: standards can be a lever but also a powerful obstacle, since consensus can be a long and tricky process, with inequalities between the players. The cost of application of a large-scale standard also needs to be considered.

Project : Bus stop

Nantes and Bruxelles

Contributors, Anne Douvin, Cristina Dulcey and France Poulain

The 'Bus stop' in Nantes is based on the concept of tourists and citizens taking back the urban space for cultural events or leisure activities. This taking-back is achieved by means of 'bus-stops' with the original feature of providing a regular service that is spatially and temporally adaptive: the bus routes are adjusted to the spacetime of 're-creativity' activities on the territory of Nantes (the city and its outskirts). The proposed service runs every 20 minutes and provides a different number of stops distributed across the territory: however, the baseline is three permanent and unchanging town-centre stops, which give the proposed service an essential regularity and reliability. The service is fun, a big bus decorated on the outside with Nantes 'Petit Lu', and designed inside like a living room ... there are all sorts of ideas to give the service a specific identity associated with the city and its role.

The strength of the project lies in the idea itself: the theme of 'using bus routes as a way of livening up the city', is completely original. In addition, the strengths of this project are the depth of the analysis and the quality of the method for making the 'bus stop' idea work. We particularly noted the concern for comprehensiveness in listing and classifying the cultural events which would give the idea its foundations: the survey method used in constructing 'standard' itineraries is very heuristic and relatively easy to implement. We observed that Brussels was excluded from the analysis, so that the comparative element in constructing the service was lacking.

Nonetheless, it seems unlikely that the leisure activities available across the territory of Nantes would be sufficient to support a year-round regular service. The jury suggests that the team should calibrate the service more precisely with the potential leisure/tourist activities in the city, and also rework the concept around a pool of more diversified and smaller vehicles, notably taxis and minibuses. The issue of financial, political and pricing viability needs to be considered. The political dimension of the project awaits elaboration.

Project: Culture of Mobility

Dalian and Hangzhou

Conducted by Wang Xiaokun, Huang Li, Zhong Shan Feng

The team produced a very interesting study of two Chinese cities, **Dalian and Hangzhou**, based on the formalisation of so-called 'four-stage' traffic prediction models. The study simulated a redistributed traffic flow strategy for organising tourist routes and evaluating the impact on current radial road saturation levels. The entire project was very well structured, and the mapped presentation of the before-after model outputs is excellent, as is the iconography.

Project: Two European ports in the throes of change: new urbanity, new mobilities,

Marseille and Gdansk

Pierre-Emmanuel Cauet, Anna Dabrowska, Xavier Desjardins

The photo reportage is visually stunning, magnificent and extremely sensitive. Using this reportage, the authors give us the history of the two ports and their transport networks through the development documents and the finished buildings. Between the eastern city, with its many ageing public transport networks which have somehow to be bolted to and orchestrated with the swift and inevitable rise of the private car, and the southern French city which has plastered its centre and port with urban motorways and is seeking to prioritise public transport, the issues of intermodality and multimodality seem fundamental, notably as part of a policy of revitalising the old harbour districts.

It is a fine subject.

Project: City mobility and sustainable development for better quality of life for all -Mobility aid systems -

Coimbra and Grenoble

Laurie Arthaud, Nabila Bouakil and Sandra Guinand

Within the project for bringing mobility services to people with reduced mobility, the authors of this project have shown themselves highly motivated in their approach to finding measures or innovations that could make the city accessible to this population. They analyse two cities, Grenoble and Coimbra, which resemble each other in their geographic contours and strong tourist and student presence. Grenoble has gone some way in this type of innovation, and is used as an example for the other city, Coimbra, which is behind in this respect. The diagnosis is based on two films of young adults in wheelchairs. These are used as the basis of proposals for Coimbra, which establish a synergy within the context of an overall development plan. In the end, the proposals are fairly standard (tramway, lift, electric vehicles, road layout), but show a genuine investment in the problems of 'transport and urban development' in Coimbra.

Project: Intermodality and multimodality -

Montreal and Vancouver

Sabine Courcier, Paula Negron-Poblete, Hocine Serdoukh

In the country where the automobile rules, the authors look at intermodality and multimodality policies and achievements in two North American cities. The analysis does not seek to be comprehensive, but focuses on the way the bicycle, already a major presence, is integrated into the cities's mobility culture (employer programmes, tourist itineraries) and into the transport chains (bus, taxi, boat). The authors begin by describing the two cities, and then analyse and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the existing structures in relation to the general characteristics of the networks, their performance and management. Following this analysis, they propose a 'different vision of bicycle travel'. The project puts forward two proposals: the creation of a cycling map of Montreal, in which access to the centre of Montreal is redesigned around a future network of cycle routes which would create a synergy between the urban landmarks, the bus and Metro stations, and the principal routes around Montreal. The second proposal is a manual for decision-makers, representing not only the existing solutions but also their impact. The key idea of this manual is to show decision-makers, by means of examples, that integrating the bicycle is not always as complicated and expensive as they might think.

Project: Reintroducing the car into the city -

Lille and the Dunkerque Coast – Ostende

Fiona Meadows, Frédéric Nantois, Jean-Louis Violeau

The argument is impressionistic, intended to provoke, and somewhat confusing to read. However, it is never neutral, and the questions these young architects and sociologists ask are not lacking in relevance and understanding. Their aim is to question the car-as-object, an object that has become so common, and yet has not changed while everything around it has (lifestyles, networks, urban forms). Given that the car will continue to represent one of the myths of our modernity, it is vital that it should be questioned, so that it can be reintroduced into the city without the 'sterile dichotomies' which separate the 'quiet districts' from the 'main roads'. However, the aim is not to reintroduce the car into already saturated city centres, but rather to introduce the dimension of large urban scale into the car. So, given that the urban condition is inescapable, the car needs new roles to play. The project consists of an experimental system of urban tourism and is based around two elements: the principle of constrained travel (designed to evince and implement travel strategies) and the URL [local resource unit] vehicle (registered trademark); conceived sometimes as a tool and as a travelling recreation place for young people, or for adults in another project, ... sometimes, as here, as both a living space and tool open to emerging urban tourist practices Think of it as a revival of the 'mobile home', and you won't be far wrong.