

The Bus as Space of Encounters

Scientifique

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Conference session

Date de début : 9 Janvier 2022 17:30

Lieu :

In a qualitative research project relating to the mobility practices of families located in socially vulnerable neighborhoods in Sweden, the bus has surfaced as pivotal in and for the families' daily life. Interviews have been carried out with families (adults and children) in neighborhoods in three Swedish middle-sized municipalities. For many families living in socially vulnerable areas, the bus is vital as an everyday mode of transport. Many are employed in societally vital functions (care, transport and education) in the public sector. Further, many families choose schools outside their neighborhoods, which entail travel by bus to school. The residents are dependent on public transport for commuting to work or to upper secondary schooling.

In this session we will analyse and discuss experiences of the bus as a stigmatized space, but also a space that enables new spheres.

During the pandemic, the bus quickly became a stigmatized space in public debates and have been the subject for various restriction. Young people in general were accused of free-riding and riding the bus "for fun and amusement", thus contributing to crowding and infection. Simultaneously, the informants live in areas perceived as violent and unsafe. We seek to investigate how research participants negotiate the double stigmatization of their neighborhood and their primary mode of transport. Which mobility strategies are employed? What are the discursive and practical implications for how public transport is perceived and used?

During this thematic session/workshop we wish to discuss and engage with theories of equality and mobility justice and transport poverty by exploring what a bus is for the users. By using visual and textual material, the aim of the workshop is to creatively assemble the material into e.g. a short film, personas, a map, a collage or mind map, etc. This "product" can then be used to display the multitude of different

everyday experiences of what a bus is in the bus riders' perspective, and thus counter hegemonic discourses on public transport and its users. It can also be used to bring forward the everydayness and relationality of mobility, hence confronting technocratic, fragmented and idealized/top down versions of reality.

Session organisers: Dag Balkmar, Associate Professor, Örebro University, dag.balkmar@oru.se; Malin Henriksson, Senior Researcher, Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute, malin.henriksson@vti.se; Tanja Joelsson, Associate Professor, Stockholm University, tanja.joelsson@buv.su.se

How to submit: if interested, please submit a short description of your contribution (250-300 words), specifying its format (e.g. paper, presentation, video, audio), and including a short bio (max. 150 words) by 10th December 2021. Please mention the short title of the session to which you are submitting in the subject of your email.

Please submit contributions all these four addresses: dag.balkmar@oru.se; malin.henriksson@vti.se; tanja.joelsson@buv.su.se;

putspace.conference@gmail.com

About the conference The conference is organised as part of PUTSPACE, a research project led by academics at Tallinn University, Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography in Leipzig, Åbo Akademi University in Turku and Université Libre de Bruxelles. Both the conference and the project explore what makes public transport a type of public space, and for whom.

As public transport continues to be explored primarily by engineers and economists, its publicness remains understudied. Yet, public transport embraces intense and intimate sites for encountering cultural diversity, facilitating social integration and negotiating public space. It reflects political ideologies, social relations and conflicts, allowing for the reproduction or resistance to configurations of power. Put simply, public transport is at the frontline of contesting what is, can be, or should be public in the city.

The conference aims to gather diverse contributions that humanise and politicise knowledge about public transport by exploring narratives, experiences and contestations of public transport.

— Call for Contributions —

The conference is more than a typical academic event. Alongside academic researchers, it will gather public officials, policy experts, activists and artists. It

embraces roundtables, panel discussions, workshops, art interventions and academic presentations. We welcome contributors from diverse fields related to the humanities and social sciences, including (but not limited to) history, anthropology, cultural studies, literary studies, political sciences, geography and spatial/urban planning. In all the sessions the use of visual materials and presentations is strongly encouraged over "classic" PowerPoint slides.

We are currently looking for contributions to seven open sessions organised at the conference. You can find the list of sessions at <https://putspace.eu/brussels-2022/>, or download the call for contributions under this link: https://putspace.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Putspace-Conference-Brussels_CfP.pdf

If interested, please submit a short description of your contribution (250-300 words), specifying its format (e.g. paper, presentation, video, audio), and including a short bio (max. 150 words) by 10th December 2021. Please mention the short title of the session to which you are submitting in the subject of your email.

Your proposal should be sent to the session organisers as well as putspace.conference@gmail.com.

Informations pratiques :

The conference is free of charge, and there is no participation fee. Besides the conference activities, the participants are offered free lunch and coffee breaks. However, they need to organise and cover the accommodation and travel on their own. The organisers will provide individual travel bursaries covering accommodation and/or travel expenses up to 250€. To apply for the bursary, please send an email titled "Travel bursary" directly to the event organisers at putspace.conference@gmail.com. Specify your motivation to obtain the bursary as well as your current work status, as the bursaries are intended for participants with low, precarious or no income. The event is organised as part of the PUTSPACE project, which is financially supported by the HERA Joint Research Programme, co-funded by AKA, BMBF via DLRPT, ETAg, and the European Commission through Horizon 2020.

For any questions you may have regarding the event, please contact the organisers at putspace.conference@gmail.com