

Call for papers - Cosmobilities Conference 2012

GOVERNING MOBILITIES

Lausanne, October 31st – November 1st, 2012

Aspirations of seamless and universal mobilities are a hallmark of social and economic life at the beginning of the 21st century. As systems of governance relying upon particular forms of governmentality developed in western societies to more effectively and productively propagate and sustain the emerging capitalist system and manage its socioeconomic disjunctures, mobility has become a matter of special concern. A set of interlocking rationales, apparatus, institutions, roles and procedures of governance have come to sustain powerful `mobility regimes` justifying, stabilizing, naturalizing, controlling and disciplining particular forms of mobilities characterizing contemporary social, economic and political life in the north Atlantic rim.

Nowadays the modern society is more than ever a “society on the move”. The development of transnational mobility systems across the world involving huge networks of transport and communication infrastructures such as airports, roads, trains, shipping and mobile communication have enabled the flow of people, money, objects, and information at an unprecedented scale. In this process massive social, economic, political and environmental processes, connecting specific social groups, places and regions and disconnecting others, are activated. Thus Motility, referring to entities’ capacity to be mobile in social and geographic spaces, is becoming increasingly important.

But the logic, form and versatility of these new, emerging mobility regimes still need to be thoroughly described and understood. Hegemonic mobility regimes such as global transport, urban and regional, corporate mobility regimes are being intensely contested and challenged by the realities of global risks, economic crises,

demographic changes and alternative utopias pursued by various social actors. Controversies around climate change, for example, evidence that the cosmopolitization of societies, the potential for mobility afforded by multiple, interlocking and networked transport and communication infrastructures and the idea of a global market, critically rely upon unsustainable use of resources and increasingly fragile mobility systems.

This conference focuses on the question of which systems of governance are involved in these processes and how they are evolving as a result of these trends at a time when the future looks less and less like the past. In contrast to mainstream scientific literature and studies on transport and mobility dominated by works on travel and commuting, in this conference we propose to examine the governance of individual and collective actors' mobility projects. In modern societies, where discourses lauding spatial and social mobility seem prevalent, this conference aims to understand critically how public policies consider the coexistence of different types of mobility projects, and inequalities linked to this diversity.

The conference is co-organised with the MSFS' (Mobilités spatiales, fluidités sociales) francophone conference. Joint session(s) will take place October 31st. The call for papers for the MSFS conference will soon be available at <http://lasur.epfl.ch/>

Abstracts of no more than 350 words should be submitted electronically to Dr Hanja Maksim (hanja.maksim@epfl.ch) and Dr Emmanuel Ravalet (emmanuel.ravalet@epfl.ch) by April 5th.