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Towards future innovative transport: visions, trends and methods

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Towards future innovative transport: visions, trends and methods

This issue of Transportation Research Procedia includes some selected and revised articles presented at the 43rd European Transport Conference (ETC) organized by the Association for European Transport (AET), from September 28th to September 29th 2015, at the Campus Westend of Goethe-University in Frankfurt, Germany.

The ETC is a major annual event where European transport practitioners and researchers come together to keep abreast of policy issues, research findings and best practices across a broad spectrum of transport topics: from advanced modelling for passenger and freight transport to appraisal methods; from sustainable planning to public transport and rail case studies. Uniquely in Europe, the Conference provides a forum for those engaged in research, policy and business in transport, bridging the gap that often arises between theory and practice.

In 2015, out of about 240 articles presented at the Conference, 75 papers were first short-listed by respected members of the transport profession in Europe for publication in this issue. Each of these papers was then peer-reviewed by experts in the related field. At the end of the review process, a total of 19 papers were accepted for publication based on their quality and on their relevance to the main themes of interest to all working in transport planning, identified by the Conference Programme Committee.

The selected papers share the common aim of understanding how to plan, manage and design mobility and transport, to move towards a future that addresses current challenges such as resource scarcity, transport-related externalities, institutional barriers, etc., and promotes long-term well-being for society and the planet.

The paper by Ortegon and Tyler [1] conceptualizes a preferable future vision as a set of principles that ought to characterize policy, design and operations of future mobility, and identifies potential pressure points, barriers and triggers for change. In a context of rapid change and great uncertainty, opportunities may come from the “technological challenge”. An examples is given by self-driving cars (or autonomous vehicles) that have recently generated significant attention and discussion. While it is recognized that a number of technical and legal issues need to be solved, widespread adoption of self-driving vehicles is increasingly considered to be inevitable. However, the long-term direct and indirect effects of this technology, and the net