

[SPECIAL SESSION]

THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY IN LATIN AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

Transportation has been a main concern in the agenda of most countries of the world for at least a century, despite the different nature of the problems faced in distinct parts of the globe. Many issues are common to all countries, although sometimes occurring at different times. In contrast, many other are different because they are essentially context-dependent. Among other things, the geographical proximity and cultural inheritance contribute to produce quite similar situations regarding the mobility conditions. That is certainly the case found in Latin America, in which several countries have strong historical connections with Portugal and Spain, which were the countries that established most settlements in South and Central America during their colonial periods. As a consequence, several problems of mobility are akin, and so must be the alternatives for solution. A first condition to benefit from that particular situation is to get acquainted with both successful and unsuccessful initiatives of the neighbor countries, in order to learn from one another. That is essentially the idea behind this special session, which puts together transportation experts from five different Latin-American countries aiming at attracting a large audience from other neighbor countries and also from other parts of the world. The variety of topics treated by the speakers shows the interconnectivity and complexity of the central issue. While the contribution from Venezuela discusses the role played by massive transportation systems in promoting sustainable urban mobility, the Argentinean speaker talks about a myriad of urban problems and the expansion in the use of bikes, motorcycles, and home services such as taxis or middle capacity transport. Based on the experience of the new system of public transport Transantiago, the speaker from Chile tries to identify some variables about travel conditions by comparing information from the 2001 Origin Destination Survey with mobility surveys realized in users' homes. A view from Central America is brought by a speaker from Costa Rica, who discusses the need of considering not only the traditional aspects of transportation planning, but also mobility, accessibility and social inclusion of the citizens, as well as the environment

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preservation, all under a systems approach. Brazil has two contributions in the session. The first one discusses feasible alternatives to the private car. The second one shows the importance of research networks, such as the Ibero-American Trip Generation Hub Study Network, in the search for common solutions to the problems of sustainable urban mobility in the continent and in the world. The session can help out to consolidate existing cooperation projects. Moreover, it will hopefully foster new partnerships for the promotion on sustainable urban mobility in Latin America.