WCTRS NEWSLETTER

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Highlights from the 17th World Conference on Transport Research, Toulouse 2026

Prof. Marc Ivaldi | Director of the WCTR, Toulouse 2026

The global transport research community came together in Toulouse this July for the **17th World Conference on Transport Research, hosted by the Toulouse School of Economics (TSE)** and **Toulouse Capitole University**.

Held every three years, the conference marked a special milestone in 2026: 50 years of WCTR, and a return to a European campus after several editions held elsewhere.

More than 1,500 participants gathered over four days to exchange ideas, present research and discuss the challenges shaping the future of transport. Researchers, policymakers, industry representatives and academics came together across a wide range of topics, from logistics and engineering to digital technologies and operational research. As the European capital of aeronautics and aerospace and a major mobility hub, Toulouse benefits from an ecosystem linking academic research, industry and public institutions, a regional context that helped the event bring together leading transport organisations such as Airbus, SNCF and Air France.

The week's programme combined presentations, debates and technical tours.

Setting the theme: deglobalisation and fragmentation

The conference opened on 6 July with an International Session on "Transport and Supply Chain Policy Responses to the Deglobalising and Fragmenting World," attended by Professor Tae Hoon Oum, President of the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS). Three presentations developed the theme: "Building Resilient Transport Systems," "Deglobalisation, Tariffs, and Chokepoints," and "Aviation at a Crossroads: Freedoms of the Air and the Future of Global Connectivity."

Opening ceremony

The conference was formally launched on 7 July, with addresses from WCTRS President Tae Hoon Oum; the Mayor of Toulouse, Jean-Luc Moudenc; the Vice-President of the Occitanie Region, Nadia Pellefigue; the Deputy Mayor of Toulouse responsible for transport, Maxime Boyer; the President of Toulouse Capitole University, Hugues Kenfack; the Director-General of the Jean-Jacques Laffont Foundation, Karine Van Der Straeten; the Director of the Toulouse School of Economics, Victoria Barham; the Chair of the WCTRS Scientific Committee, Lóri Tavasszy; the WCTR 2026 Conference Director, Marc Ivaldi; and WCTRS Co-Secretary General Giovanni Circella.

General Plenary Session

The General Plenary, also held on 7 July, featured two keynote addresses. Jean Tirole, Honorary President of TSE and 2014 Nobel laureate, spoke on "Global Disorder, Industrial Policy, and the Transport Sector." Moshe Ben-Akiva, Professor at MIT, spoke on "Transportation Demand: From Prediction to Personalisation with Actionable Heterogeneity."

Industrial Insights

The Industrial Insights round-table discussions, sponsored by WCTR 2026 partners and held during the lunch breaks, covered "Global Air Transport: Can Sustainability and Fair Competition Be Aligned?", "How can urban mobility innovation drive the decarbonisation of our cities?", "Rebalancing Urban Space: Reducing Car Use in Favor of Public Transport and Cycling", "Technological, Industrial and Economic Challenges of Dynamic Charging for Future Mobility", "Can we save the climate without data and the economy?", and "Pioneering Sustainable Mobility: The Strategic Edge of Southern France." The sessions were held in the presence of WCTR 2026 partners Air France-KLM, EIT Urban Mobility, VINCI, Egis, Transdev and the Occitanie Region.

Celebrating 50 years and imagining the next 50

A major highlight of the week was the 50th Anniversary Session on 9 July, which looked back at the major advances in transport research over the past five decades and outlined the challenges ahead. The session also honoured the winners of the "Manifesto for the Future of Transport Research" competition, which invited young researchers to imagine the next fifty years of transport research through a manifesto and a video.

The WCTR community meets again in three years!!

WCTR 2026 Scientific Activity Overview: Interaction with WCTRS Scientific Committee Chair- Lori Tavasszy

Professor Lori Tavasszy is the Chair of the WCTRS Scientific Committee (SCC). Here is his response to some questions about the recently concluded WCTR 2026 in Toulouse, France.

1. Which topics emerged during the conference?

I can mention three categories of findings: new hot topics, new frontiers in classical topics, and interesting methodological developments.

- Starting with the **hot topics**, we see that decarbonization is still a dominant theme for many studies which, unfortunately, in today's world is not trivial. As expected, resilience against disruptions is receiving increasing attention, be it from the new geopolitical landscape, Covid-19 or the effect of new technologies. In this latter category, AI is being debated well. Together with suitable computing architectures (e.g. edge, GPUs), AI allows an unmatched speed of model evaluations and allows us to connect to a vast infrastructure of sensors. This brings digital twins radically closer. At the same time, the data hunger of AI applications creates processing and energy challenges.

- Turning to the **new frontiers in classical topics**, in several niches new results have come forward that provide nuance. Let me give a couple of examples. First, High-Speed Rail has shown plateauing demand in some regions, which may dampen large-scale extension ambitions. Second, in air transport, it appears that low-cost carriers are not driving out incumbents but do create lower general price levels. Third, in maritime technology, as in road transport, circularity of vehicles/vessels and components, in particular for electrification, is developing quickly. Fourth, there has been much discussion on the influence of politics and related governance arrangements on transport planning and appraisal. Fifth, the attention is shifting from passively assessing distributive effects to actively seeking fair arrangements: a change in the ethics of policymaking. And sixth, sustainable finance is emerging as an important part of the discussion on funding of infrastructure.

- On the **methodological developments**, I was happy to see renewed attention and active calls for a stronger position of qualitative & mixed-methods research – not just as the first step towards quantitative modelling, but as empirical work that has its own place to understand the world and to design improvements. We also see

increased applications of advanced causal inference methods, and of course an important role for explainable AI.

2. What is next for the Scientific Committee?

We are preparing the WCTR issue of Elsevier's Transport Research Procedia, and 26 special issues in different scientific journals. Almost 600 authors will receive a letter from us about publishing their paper in Procedia, and well over 400 will be invited to submit their work to a journal. The reviews will be conducted after the Summer break.

3. Do you have any general thoughts on the conference?

Overall, it has been a great meeting of minds where we have worked in unison and with passion to curate the contents. The atmosphere was amazing, as always at WCTR. I congratulate the Toulouse team on the 2026 edition of our conference and thank them for their fantastic hospitality! Then, we will turn to look forward, working with the Brisbane team towards the 2029 WCTR!

Jules Dupuit Prize 2026 Awarded to Yoshitsugu Hayashi

Announcement by Alain Bonnafous (Chairman of Dupuit Prize Sub Committee) at Awarding Ceremony, Toulouse

Alain Bonnafous
Chairman of the Dupuit Prize Sub-Committee

I would first like to remind you that our colleagues Marc Gaudry (from the University of Montreal) and Antti Talvitie (from the University of Helsinki) initiated the Jules Dupuit Prize at the 1992 Conference in Lyon and persuaded the Finnish Ramboll Group to sponsor it every three years. Today, the prize is sponsored by the WCTRS.

I would like to extend my warmest thanks to Krishna Rao, Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, and to Hideki Nakamura, Professor at Nagoya University, for their contribution, which led our Sub-Committee to a unanimous decision despite the very high level of the competitors.

As confirmed by the Steering Committee, **the 2026 Jules Dupuit Prize is awarded to Yoshitsugu Hayashi**.

Dear Yoshi, I will be very brief in reminding your position regarding the three requirements of this prize.

First requirement: **“A record of outstanding scientific work; a significant reputation in transport policy”.** Every researcher knows your contributions once they have addressed the topics of Transport and Land Use, of Value Capture (I am thinking of your seminal paper from 1988), of Sustainable Transport or of Quality of Life.

Second requirement: **“A reputation for truly international activity including involvement in global networks”.** Besides your involvement in relations with The World Bank or the ITF, it should be emphasized that you are an Executive Committee Member of the Club of Rome Board (the only one among WCTRS members).

Third requirement: **“Particular contributions to and reputation within WCTRS”.**
Because you are, Yoshi, the only member of WCTRS taking all the scientific and managerial duties of the Society, it would take too long to list them all. I will simply highlight a lesser-known role: at the first World Conference in Rotterdam in 1977, half a century ago, you were a student attendee.

Congratulations, Yoshi, on this magnificent and long journey, and above all, thank you.

Message from the Laureate of Jules Dupuit Prize Winner- Yoshitsugu Hayashi

Yoshitsugu Hayashi

My research life began in the mid-1970s, in the laboratory of my mentor, Professor Hideo Nakamura, at the University of Tokyo, where I built a land use–transport model, CALUTAS, to assess the effects of a planned road-rail bridge crossing Tokyo Bay on mitigating Tokyo's growing population by relocating it to Boso Peninsula on the opposite shore. I joined ISGLUTI (the International Study Group on Land Use – Transport Interaction) as its youngest member, marking my entry into international collaborative research.

My work has focused, first, on modeling the effects of transport infrastructure on land-use change, urban sprawl, and land value increase, as well as on local and global environmental impacts; and second, on the countermeasure policies these effects call for, such as environmental taxation, value capture, and smart-shrink methodologies for compact cities. This work ultimately led me to the QOL Accessibility Model, which reframes the evaluation of transport infrastructure and urban compaction — shifting from an efficiency-based assessment grounded in national and regional GDP growth to a sufficiency-based assessment grounded in individual Quality of Life, one capable of measuring progress toward the SDGs' principle of "leaving no one behind".

Besides this academic work, I went on to assess the effects of real-world megaprojects — including the Bay Bridge and the Tsukuba Express in Tokyo, the inauguration of an urban rail network to relieve Bangkok's notoriously severe traffic congestion, and India's High Speed Rail linking Mumbai and Ahmedabad, 500 km apart, among others.

Reaching beyond transport research, I have continued to advocate the importance of mitigating emissions from transport at side events of the UNFCCC COP, and, since 2015, as a Full Member and Board Member of the Club of Rome — known for its report "The Limits to Growth" (1972) — through which I pursue human well-being and global sustainability.

WCTRS has been my life. From my first participation as a Ph.D. student at the inaugural Rotterdam conference (1977), through hosting the 5th conference in Yokohama (1989), while being deeply involved in the operational management of the WCTR Society, to the 17th conference in Toulouse (2026) — across the full 49 years of this journey, from the founding era of the society to its evolution into today's foremost academic forum in the field — WCTRS has continually shown me a dazzling, dreamlike world.

It is with great honor that I now receive the Jules Dupuit Prize, WCTRS's highest award, and I offer my deepest gratitude to the wonderful colleagues who have walked this path together with WCTRS, and also to the Dupuit Prize Subcommittee.

WCTRS Subway Efficiency Task Force Held Successful Special Session at WCTR 2026

The **WCTRS Subway Efficiency Task Force** held its special session, **"The 2nd Triennial Report and Panel Discussion,"** on **9 July 2026** during the **WCTR 2026 Conference in Toulouse, France**. Chaired by **Prof. Kun Wang** of **The Hong Kong Polytechnic University**, the session brought together researchers, industry experts, and subway practitioners to present the latest findings from the Task Force's global subway benchmarking project, recognize top-performing subway systems, and discuss future directions for research and practice.

The session opened with remarks by **Prof. Tae Hoon Oum**, President of the WCTR Society and Founding Chair of the Subway Efficiency Task Force. Reflecting on the Task Force's establishment in 2021, Prof. Oum emphasized the

importance of developing internationally comparable measures of subway system efficiency while accounting for differences in network characteristics, urban context, and operating environments.

Prof. Kun Wang then reviewed the evolution of the benchmarking initiative. Building on the inaugural report presented at WCTR 2023 in Montreal, the second triennial report substantially expanded both the geographical coverage and the underlying database, providing updated benchmarking results for the 2021–2024 period.

Dr. Shuli Liu of Beijing Jiaotong University (BJTU) presented the main report, summarizing the data collection and benchmarking results. Drawing on data from **101 subway systems across five continents**, the report represents one of the Task Force's most comprehensive global subway benchmarking exercises. The analysis revealed substantial regional variation in operational efficiency while identifying subway systems that consistently achieved outstanding performance throughout the 2021–2024 period. The Task Force also acknowledged the significant contribution of the **BJTU research team**, led by **Prof. Hongchang Li**, which conducted the efficiency analysis underpinning this round of benchmarking.

Based on the benchmarking results, the Task Force announced the Outstanding Subway Operating Cities for the 2021–2024 period:

- Asia: Hong Kong
- Australia/Oceania: Sydney
- Europe: Copenhagen
- North America: Toronto
- South America: Santiago

A highlight of the session was the **acceptance remarks** by **Mr. Carlos Melo**, Planning and Customer Officer of **Metro de Santiago**, who shared practical insights into Santiago's operational experience and reflected on how benchmarking can support continuous improvement in subway management and service delivery.

The session concluded with an engaging panel discussion featuring **Prof. Tae Oum, Prof. Pierluigi Coppola, Prof. Giovanni Cirella, Prof. Gopal R. Patil, Prof. Yiping Le, Prof. Xiao Luo and Dr. Kyungtaek Kim**. Drawing on perspectives from academia and industry, panelists explored both methodological and policy issues arising from the benchmarking results. Topics included the challenges of international data collection and comparability, the role of benchmarking in supporting evidence-based management, and opportunities for strengthening collaboration between researchers and subway operators.

Beyond methodological discussions, panelists also examined several regional issues in greater depth. They considered why some smaller European subway systems, such as Copenhagen and Oslo, consistently achieve high efficiency; how rapidly expanding systems in China and India can balance operational efficiency with network expansion and service accessibility; and what factors may explain performance differences among subway systems in Japan, South Korea, and mainland China. Participants agreed that global benchmarking should serve not only to recognize high-performing systems, but also to facilitate knowledge exchange, encourage continuous improvement, and support more informed urban transport policy.

Overall, the successful session highlighted the growing role of the WCTRS Subway Efficiency Task Force as a global platform for collaborative research on subway performance. The session attracted strong interest from conference participants and sparked lively discussion on the future of international subway benchmarking. Looking ahead, the Task Force will continue to expand its global database, deepen collaboration with subway operators worldwide, and further refine its analytical framework to support more efficient, resilient, and sustainable urban rail systems worldwide.

Special Note: The WCTRS Subway Efficiency Task Force welcomes researchers and subway professionals who are committed to contributing to the development of a global subway benchmarking database. We particularly encourage experts who can support international data collection and comparative analysis to join our collaborative network. Through expanding global participation, the Task Force aims to strengthen the quality, coverage, and long-term sustainability of international subway benchmarking research.

Special Edition: WCTRS-Y 2026 in Toulouse

We are delighted to share this special edition highlighting the activities and memorable moments from WCTRS-Y 2026 in TOULOUSE. In this edition, we look back at the key WCTRS-Y activities and celebrate the contributions and achievements of our young researchers throughout the conference. Bringing together young researchers from across the world, WCTRS-Y 2026 provided opportunities for knowledge exchange, networking, collaboration and professional development across the transport research community.

Held as part of the 17th World Conference on Transport Research and the 50th Anniversary of the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS), this year's WCTRS-Y activities explored the theme:

"Transportation planning and policymaking under deep uncertainty: addressing unpredictable factors like technological development, climate change, conflicts, and economic shifts to ensure resilient and sustainable mobility for all"

WCTRS-Y 2026 provided a vibrant platform for young researchers to share their work and engage with leading scholars in transport research.

All Photos and videos from the conference are available in our Photos WCTR-Y 2026 - OneDrive collection. Visit the gallery to relive the highlights and memorable moments from Toulouse.

1. A Note from the WCTRS-Y Mentor

The WCTRS-Y team would like to express our sincere appreciation to **Prof. Rosario Macario** for her continued mentorship, encouragement, and support for the WCTRS Young Researchers' Initiative.

Message from Prof. Rosário Macário

The WCTRS-Y Conference was once again a successful event, fully organised by young researchers who worked with great commitment to engage the highest number of participants ever recorded at these events. The papers received were of high quality, and participation throughout the sessions was highly active and engaging. The conference once again demonstrated the added value of this educational initiative, through which young researchers gain valuable experience and develop the skills required to organise an international academic conference.
Congratulations to the entire WCTRS-Y team for this achievement.

Best Regards,
Rosário Macário
WCTRS-Y Mentor

2. A Note from the WCTRS-Y Conference Chair

Serving as the WCTRS-Y Conference Chair (Activity I) has been an immensely rewarding journey of building, learning, unlearning, and working together. This edition was particularly special because, with the support of the wider WCTRS community, we were able to introduce several firsts for WCTRS-Y.

For the first time, Best Paper Awards with monetary prizes were constituted specifically for WCTRS-Y Young Scholars. With the invaluable support of Prof. Giovanni Circella, we connected with Elsevier, leading to the establishment of three monetary Best Paper Awards. Beyond recognising excellent research, this initiative was an important step towards giving the work of Young Scholars greater visibility and encouragement within the international transport research community.

We also organised the WCTRS-Y Manifesto Competition, encouraging Young Scholars to move beyond conventional academic presentations and articulate bold ideas for the future of transport. With the encouragement and suggestions of Prof. Marc Ivaldi and the generous monetary support of the Toulouse School of Economics, three prizes were awarded. Importantly, the winning manifestos were given visibility during the 50th Anniversary Celebration of WCTRS at the main Conference, bringing the voices and ideas of Young Scholars directly to the wider WCTRS community.

Another important milestone is the development of the Conference Proceedings to be integrated with that of the WCTRS. The proceedings will be taken forward in the coming months, providing a further platform for documenting and disseminating the research presented by our Young Scholars. I am particularly grateful to the WCTRS Scientific Committee, including Prof. Lóránt Tavasszy, and everyone supporting us in taking this initiative forward.

We also wanted the conference to look beyond publications and awards towards the longer-term journeys of Young Scholars. The Career Development Session-cum-Valedictory Ceremony, complemented by our career-

development survey, created an opportunity for early-career researchers to reflect on their aspirations, challenges, and pathways towards becoming future leaders in transport research. The generous participation of senior scholars made this an especially meaningful conclusion to the WCTRS-Y programme.

Behind these milestones was an enormous collective effort. From reviewing papers and organising sessions to managing communications, awards, logistics, media, and last-minute changes, the conference was itself a learning experience. We experimented, we made mistakes, we learnt, we unlearnt, and we improved together. For me, that process represents an important part of what a Young Researchers' Committee should be; a space not only for showcasing polished research, but also for learning how to build and lead an academic community.

I extend my sincere gratitude to our WCTRS-Y Mentor, Prof. Rosário Macário, our senior WCTRS colleagues, the Scientific Committee, Toulouse School of Economics, Elsevier, our reviewers and award juries, and every member of the WCTRS-Y organising team. Most importantly, I thank every Young Scholar who submitted a paper, presented their research, participated in the Manifesto Competition and career-development activities, or simply brought their ideas and enthusiasm to Toulouse.

The conference may have concluded, but several of the initiatives started here are only beginning. I hope that the awards, proceedings, career-development activities, and the greater visibility created for Young Scholars become foundations that future WCTRS-Y teams can strengthen further.

This was a conference organised for Young Scholars, but more importantly, built with and by Young Scholars. I hope we leave behind not simply the memory of a successful event, but a stronger platform for those who come next.

Ann Mary Varghese, Ph.D.
WCTRS-Y Conference Chair
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

3. Celebrating Our Award Recipients

We are proud to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions of young researchers at WCTR 2026. This year, we were delighted to present awards recognising creativity, engagement, research excellence, and participation in the WCTRS-Y community.

🏆 Manifesto Competition

The WCTRS-Y Manifesto Competition invited young researchers to share their vision for the future of transport research and contribute ideas that address the complex challenges facing mobility and society. Congratulations to our Manifesto Competition winners and all participants for their inspiring ideas and contributions!

The competition was judged by Prof. Rosario Macario, Prof. Yoshi, Prof. Fusun, and Prof. Gopal

The awards were sponsored by Prof. Marc Ivaldi and TSE, with the following prizes:

- First Prize: EUR 1,500
- Second Prize: EUR 900
- Third Prize: EUR 600

Meet the winners:

🥇 **First Prize —Predicting the unpredictable: Uncertainty as a state of the art in transport research**

Denise Beil | Lander Jacobs | Mylena Cristine Rodrigues de Jesus | Yubing Lei |

🔗 Read the full manifesto: First Prize

🔗 Watch the video: First Prize

🥈 **Second Prize — Seamless Jakarta 2076: An Inclusive Gamified Ecosystem for Sustainability Wellbeing and Mobility Transport For The Next 50 Years**

Dian Nur Afalia | Harun Din Haq | Anas Fadhilah Ramadhan | Siti Hajar Aswad

🔗 Read the full manifesto: Second Prize

🔗 Watch the video: Second Prize

🥉 **Third Prize — FROM FLATLAND TO FULL SPECTRUM. Liberating Transport Research Across Dimensions, Geographies, and Time Horizons**

Mohammad Tamim Kashifi | Jingxiao Wu | Ankunda Ampereza | Md. Masud Ahmad

🔗 Read the full manifesto: Third Prize

🔗 Watch the video: Third Prize

📄 **Best Paper Awards**

The Best Paper Awards recognise outstanding research presented by young researchers during WCTR 2026. Congratulations to the recipients for their excellent research contributions!

The judging panel consisted of Prof. Rosario Macario, Prof. John Preston, and Prof. Marc Ivaldi

The awards were sponsored by Elsevier, with prizes of:

- First Prize: EUR 1,800
- Second Prize: EUR 1,000
- Third Prize: EUR 700

Best Paper Award Recipients:

🥇 First Prize — [Shahiq Ahmad Wani / Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur / Disutility and Disparity: Modelling Perceived Commute Durations and Mobility Equity in South Asian Cities – A Case of India]

🥈 Second Prize — [Yihang Bai, Yitao Yang, Manon Prédhumeau / School of Geography, University of Leeds / Who Detours and Who Gets Stuck? Heterogeneous Behavioural Adaptation under Traffic Disruptions]

🥉 Third Prize — [Simon Werschmöller / Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main / Relocating to a car-reduced neighbourhood shapes travel behaviour. Evidence from a quasi-longitudinal study analysed with propensity score matching]

✈️ **Travel Bursary Awards**

The WCTRS-Y Travel Bursary Awards supported young researchers in attending and participating in WCTR 2026, helping to facilitate greater international participation and exchange within the young researchers' community. Sponsored by Prof. Marc and TSE, Université Toulouse Capitole. Congratulations to all the Travel Bursary recipients!

Travel Bursary Awardees: Ish Kumar, Oscar Nieto, Neba C Tony, Nilanjan Paul, Mahmut Mollaoglu, Dilwaiz Ali, Zeynab Piroizrahi, Ann Mary Varghese, Maria Camila Lopez, Shahana Avathkkatti

4. WCTRS-Y Welcome Session

The WCTRS-Y 2026 programme officially commenced on 6 July 2026 in Toulouse, France, with a Welcome Session bringing together young transport researchers, senior scholars, and members of the wider WCTRS community. The session set the tone for the conference by highlighting scientific excellence, international collaboration, and the importance of creating meaningful opportunities for the next generation of transport researchers.

The session was opened by Dr Ann Mary Varghese, WCTRS-Y Conference Chair, who welcomed participants and introduced WCTRS-Y and the programme of activities planned for the conference. The opening provided an overview of the technical sessions and wider initiatives designed to encourage research exchange, professional development, networking, and stronger engagement of young researchers within WCTRS.

Prof. Rosário Macário, WCTRS-Y Mentor, delivered the Welcome Address, reflecting on the vision of WCTRS-Y and its role in empowering emerging transport researchers. She emphasised the importance of building an inclusive and supportive international community in which young scholars can develop their research, networks, and academic careers.

In his Presidential Address, Prof. Tae Hoon Oum highlighted the important role of young researchers in shaping the future of transport research and the continued development of WCTRS. His remarks encouraged participants to actively contribute their ideas and perspectives to the Society and the broader transport research community.

Representing the host community in Toulouse, Prof. Marc Ivaldi warmly welcomed the young researchers to WCTR 2026 and encouraged them to make full use of the opportunities provided by the conference, not only through presenting their research, but also through engaging with fellow researchers and senior scholars and building lasting international connections.

Prof. Lóránt (Lori) Tavasszy addressed the importance of scientific excellence and continued scholarly engagement. He highlighted opportunities for publication and encouraged participants to view their involvement in WCTRS-Y as the beginning of a longer-term relationship with the WCTRS research community.

The session concluded with a Vote of Thanks by Dr Ann Mary Varghese, followed by housekeeping announcements and the transition to the technical sessions. The Welcome Session provided an inspiring opening to WCTRS-Y 2026, reinforcing its central objective: to create a platform where young transport researchers can present their work, develop professionally, build international networks, and become active contributors to the future of WCTRS and transport research globally.

The Welcome Session and programme highlights can be viewed through the WCTRS-Y LinkedIn updates.

5. WCTRS-Y Sessions

A total of **44 final papers** were included in the programme, with **9 dedicated research sessions** that provided young researchers with a platform to present their latest work, receive feedback, and engage in discussions with peers and senior scholars.

At the full-paper stage, each paper was reviewed by one senior SIG-level head or professor-level senior researcher, in addition to reviews from two young scholars.

6. From Young Researchers' Ideas to the WCTRS 50th Anniversary

One of the highlights of WCTRS-Y 2026 was the opportunity for young researchers to contribute to the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS).

Through the Manifesto Competition, young researchers were invited to reflect on the future of transport research and articulate their vision for addressing emerging challenges in mobility. The winning manifestos were presented and recognised during the **WCTRS 50th Anniversary Session**, giving the ideas and perspectives of the next generation of transport researchers visibility within the wider international research community.

7. Career Development Session and Valedictory Ceremony

Building an Impactful Career in Transport Research

The WCTRS-Y programme concluded with a dedicated career development session cum valedictory ceremony, bringing together young researchers and distinguished leaders from the international transport research community. Under the theme:

"From Early-Career Researcher to Global Research Leader:
Building an Impactful Career in Transport Research"

The session explored career development, building research impact, navigating international academic networks, and developing a meaningful career in transport research.

The session featured insights and reflections from distinguished speakers:

- Prof. Maria Attard
- Prof. Giovanni Circella
- Prof. Rosario Macario
- Prof. Geetam Tiwari
- Riadh Khelil (Elsevier Representative)

The session also featured:

🏆 Announcement of the WCTRS-Y Best Paper Award

👏 Recognition of the WCTRS-Y Organising Committee

8. WCTRS-Y 2026 Organising Committee

The successful delivery of WCTRS-Y 2026 was made possible through the collective efforts of an international team of young researchers and volunteers.

Conference Chair

Ann Mary Varghese - Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

Sessions Chair

Carlos Granada - University of Antwerp

Shahana Avathkattil - Indian Institute of Technology Bombay
Chonghao Zhang - Tongji University

Conference Organising Volunteers
Camila Domenighini - University of Antwerp
Kailin Chen - Imperial College London

Papers' Referees
Ish Kumar - TERI School of Advanced Studies, New Delhi, India
Carla De Oliveira Nascimento - Molde University College
Luigi Castagna - Politecnico di Milano

Media Tools
Anisa Fauzi Ratnasari - LISER/University of Luxembourg
Fabio Danilo Cristiano - University of Naples Federico II

Thank you to the WCTRS-Y community.

As we look back on WCTRS-Y 2026, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the programme, from our mentors and senior scholars to our speakers, reviewers, session chairs, organising volunteers, award sponsors, participants, and the wider WCTRS community.

We hope that the conversations started during WCTRS-Y 2026 will continue to grow into new collaborations, research partnerships, and opportunities across the global transport research community. The energy, curiosity, and enthusiasm of young researchers made this year's programme truly special.

WCTR 2026 Manifesto: Predicting the Unpredictable: Uncertainty as a State of the Art in Transport Research

What will transport systems look like in 2076? More importantly, how should transport research can respond to potential challenges and identifies opportunities over the long term?

These are the central questions explored in the WCTR 2026 Manifesto, **Predicting the Unpredictable: Uncertainty as a State of the Art in Transport Research**, prepared by Denise Beil, Lander Jacobs, Mylena Cristine Rodrigues de Jesus, and Yubing Lei for the **WCTRS 50th Anniversary Manifesto Competition**. Rather than attempting to forecast a single future, the manifesto treats uncertainty itself as a starting point and makes it a core principle of transport research.

The manifesto presents three plausible long-term scenarios for the world of 2076:

- **The Fragmented World,** where climate crises, geopolitical tensions, and economic instability lead to increasingly fragile transport systems.
- **The Drifting World,** where today's trends continue with gradual improvements but without major systemic disruptions or transformative breakthroughs.
- **The Cooperative World,** where international collaboration, technological innovation, and sustainable governance create resilient, integrated, and equitable transport systems.

Rather than predicting which future will emerge, these scenarios encourage researchers to consider how current research choices may influence future transport systems and research agendas. Which future unfolds, the authors argue, depends on the direction each of six key drivers takes, and on how they interact: climate, geopolitics, infrastructure, economy, technology, and social context.

A central message of the manifesto is that transport research should no longer be designed around assumptions of stability. Instead, researchers must embrace uncertainty by developing methods and evidence that remain analytically useful regardless of which future arrives. This shift requires moving beyond traditional approaches focused solely on efficiency and demand forecasting toward research that prioritises resilience, adaptability, and equity. This does not imply a loss of analytical rigour. It means being explicit about assumptions, testing findings across divergent conditions, and building models that reveal their own limits.

To support this vision, the manifesto proposes three guiding principles:

- Design research for uncertainty rather than a single expected future.
- Prepare for collapse while building for cooperation, rather than concentrating research on the middle trajectory.
- Give equity deliberate research attention in every future, rather than treating it as a best-case luxury.

The authors further identify five research directions for the uncertain future:

- Building infrastructure for unpredictable futures.
- Transforming logistics and supply networks beyond efficiency.
- Measuring and protecting mobility as a right.
- Governing transport systems and shaping behaviour.
- Governing AI and digital infrastructure for public benefit.

As WCTRS celebrates fifty years of advancing transport research, this manifesto serves as both a reflection and a call to action. It reminds us that transport systems are not simply technical networks to be optimised, but social, political, and environmental ones, shaped by decisions about who has access, who bears the cost, and who is left behind.

The future of transport cannot be predicted. But it can be shaped: by the questions researchers choose to ask, the communities they include, the governance they help build, and the priorities they set today.

The full text and videos of winning teams are available **here.**

SIG B5 – Freight Transport Modelling: An Unconference at WCTR 2026

SIG B5 (Freight Transport Modelling) hosted an "unconference" session, where participants were invited to discuss freight modelling in a future context of digital twins and AI. Will freight modelling as we know it be obsolete? Or perhaps even more important than ever?

A group of new and old freight modellers met in the early morning session (which was moved outside for a more inspiring environment and slightly lower temperature). Many different perspectives on AI and Freight modeling where brought into the dialogue, which started conversations also beyond the session. We look forward to continue these conversations online until we meet again at the next WCTR conference!

Sushant Sharma, Lori Tavasszy, Anna Pernestål

B5 SIG Chairs

SIGF4 : International Case Studies on Quality of Life (QOL) IMPACTS OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AT WCTR 2026

The WCTR 2026 Special Session "**International Case Studies on Quality of Life Impacts of Sustainable Transport**" was organised by WCTRS SIG-F4 in collaboration with the International Group on Sustainable Transport and Livability (IGSTL), and held on 9 July 2026 in Toulouse, France.

Chaired by Prof. Ashish Verma (Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru), with Ms. Ann Das as rapporteur, the session presented evidence from India, Vienna, London, Montréal and Bangkok on how transport policy, accessibility, equity and street design influence quality of life.

Guest Speaker: Prof. Guenter Emberger, TU Vienna

Vienna's Path to Livability: Sustainable Transport Policy as a Driver of Quality of Life

Prof. Guenter Emberger of TU Vienna described how Vienna raised the share of public transport, walking and cycling to 74% through decades of affordable public transport, traffic calming, active-mobility investment and comprehensive parking management. His central point was that sustainable alternatives must be reinforced over time and must reclaim public space. The main obstacles, he argued, are political and institutional rather than technical, and climate adaptation and disaster resilience are becoming increasingly urgent additions to the agenda.

"Long-term policy consistency, not isolated individual measures, produces true urban transformation."

Guest Speaker: Dr. Abhilash Chandra Singh, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Can accessibility measures be used to capture qualitative impacts of transport?

Dr. Abhilash C. Singh presented a London study on access to education, examining what changes when accessibility includes the quality of both the journey and the destination. He emphasised that conventional measures overestimated accessibility by around 8% on average when air pollution and crime were omitted. The wider message was that an opportunity cannot be considered fully accessible if reaching it exposes people to unsafe, unhealthy or stressful conditions, or if the destination itself is unsuitable or of poor quality.

"Regional accessibility planning needs to take qualitative factors into account, not just travel time"

Guest Speaker: Prof. Martin Trépanier, Montreal Polytechnic

Gender Differences in Public Transport Trip Components

Prof. Martin Trépanier examined public-transport in-vehicle speeds through the intersecting effects of gender, income, trip purpose and household type. Men's journeys were approximately 1 km/h faster on average, with the gender difference more pronounced among lower-income travellers. Shopping trips were slower than return-home and work trips, while household structure created further variations. Women experienced slower journeys in most household groups, although the pattern reversed among single-parent households.

“ There is differences in differences”
“Women typically take a greater proportion of slower trips”

Guest Speaker: Prof. Kazuki Nakamura, Meijo University

Exploring Perceived Walkability in Sustainable Street Design Scenarios - A Virtual Experiment in Bangkok

Prof. Kazuki Nakamura of Meijo University used virtual Bangkok street scenarios to test how setbacks, street widening, vendors and smart small vehicles affect walking. The study connected willingness to walk with safety, comfort, physical and mental health, and life satisfaction. It also showed that vendors can enrich street life only when adequate pedestrian space is protected.

“Walkability improvement can contribute to quality-of-life enhancement through positive perceptions of streets.”

Guest Speaker: Prof. Ashish Verma, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru

Understanding Quality of Life (QoL) impacts of Sustainable Transport: Case Studies from India

Prof. Ashish Verma concluded with Indian case studies on the Transportation Quality of Life Index, integrating mobility, environmental, health and accessibility dimensions and evaluating alternative sustainable-transport scenarios. Presented alongside evidence linking rising GDP per capita with rapid motorisation in many countries, he asked whether India can achieve economic growth and improved living standards without following the same car-dependent pathway. He also discussed transport’s direct and indirect contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including health, safety, accessibility, environmental quality and sustainable urban development.

“Can India saturate car ownership at a much lower level and decouple vehicle ownership and use from the standard of living?”

Key Outcomes

- Quality of life should become a core measure of transport performance, assessed through health, safety, accessibility, environmental quality, equity and well-being.
- Sustainable mobility requires coordinated and sustained policy, as Vienna's combination of investment, parking management and long-term political and institutional commitment showed.
- Accessibility and equity must be examined beyond conventional averages, since London found accessibility overstated by around 8% when journey conditions were ignored, and Montréal found unequal journey speeds within a single network.

- Street design can influence health, mode choice and happiness, with the Bangkok experiment linking walkability to safety, comfort and adequate for both pedestrian movement and community activity.
- Economic growth need not result in equivalent growth in car dependence, with the Indian case studies demonstrating how sustainable transport scenarios can be evaluated through a measurable quality of life framework.

Closing discussion

Across the five perspectives, the session established that sustainable transport is not simply about moving people more efficiently, but about improving how people experience mobility and urban life. A closing discussion on applying Vienna's lessons to Jakarta and other rapidly growing cities underlined that successful policies cannot be copied mechanically: they must be adapted to local institutional, economic and urban conditions.

Collectively, the session called for transport planning that is people-centred, evidence-based, and measured by its contribution to healthier, safer, fairer and more liveable communities.

European Aviation Conference 2026: Lift or Drag? Taxes, Subsidies, and Sustainable Aviation

Shaping Global Transport Leaders: The C-MAT MSc. Maritime or Air Transport Management at University of Antwerp and Antwerp Management School

In a world where the smooth flow of goods and people across the globe is more vital than ever, the Master in Maritime and Air Transport Management offered by Antwerp Management School (AMS) in collaboration with C-MAT (Centre for Maritime and Air Transport Management) at the University of Antwerp stands out as a forward-looking, industry-aligned program that prepares the next generation of transport leaders.

Anchored in the heart of Europe's transport ecosystem, this one-year, English-taught advanced master's program equips students with deep strategic, operational and analytical understanding of maritime and air transport sectors, two of the most critical pillars of global mobility and trade.

A cutting-edge, integrated one-year MSc Program, with 30 years of expertise

The Master in Maritime and Air Transport Management offers two specialized tracks:

- **Maritime Transport Management**, focused on the global shipping industry, maritime and port economics and business, maritime supply chains and logistics.
- **Air Transport Management**, designed around aviation logistics, airport and airline management and strategy, revenue management and the broader air transport value chain.

Both tracks share a core emphasis on strategic leadership, sustainable and digital innovations in transport and real-world applications through business simulations like the Maritime or Airline Business Games.

The program also includes international excursions and company visits, most notably to **London**, offering students first-hand exposure to organizations such as industry bodies, port authorities, terminals, aviation associations, airlines and airports in Europe and global logistics firms.

Triple crown accreditation: a mark of global quality

Choosing this Master means joining a globally recognized institution. Antwerp Management School, through University of Antwerp – Faculty Business & Economics, is **Triple Crown Accredited** - one of the top ~1% business schools worldwide holding accreditation from all three leading international bodies: AACSB (US), AMBA (UK), and EQUIS (Europe). This hallmark reflects excellence in teaching quality, internationalization, research and industry relevance across AMS's master's portfolio

International outlook, career and PhD opportunities

With an international cohort and globally relevant curriculum, graduates leave prepared for careers across private sector firms, consultancies, regulatory bodies and international organizations. Many alumni take on roles in transport, logistics, aviation and maritime services, consultancy and research, often within months of finishing the program.

The program also fosters personal development through electives, such as **Research Methodology** for those drawn to analytical work, or **leadership-focused modules** that sharpen soft skills essential for management roles. For students aspiring to academic research or highly analytical careers, the program can serve as a stepping stone to doctoral studies. Graduates may **progress to a PhD** at the University of Antwerp's Department of Transport and

Regional Economics, where a formal doctoral research track is available in transport economics, regional economics and related fields.

Prefer to focus on just one topic? Join an executive masterclass

The two-week block courses Maritime Economics & Business, Port Economics & Business and Airline Management & Strategy are also open as standalone executive masterclasses. In two intensive weeks, you learn from leading academic experts from Belgium and abroad, hear directly from C-level guest speakers and get inside access through exclusive company visits. No full-year commitment, just the expertise you need.

Interested in knowing more about the full-time program? Rewatch our online info session (click here).

Interested in joining the full-time program?

The next edition starts on September 7th, 2026, in Antwerp. Applications are still open for EU candidates (non-EU candidates can enroll in September 2027).

Follow us on LinkedIn.

YUCEL CANDEMIR (1939-2026)

We regret to inform you that our colleague Prof Yucel Candemir from ITU Istanbul passed away.

Yucel was a very active and dedicated member of WCTRS, participating in STC and SCC and chairing the unforgettable 2004 WCTRS Conference, with the support of Fusun Ulengin and their active team.

Afterwards, he organised several seminars, with the support of WCTRS, and made significant contributions to all educational activities within WCTRS; he successfully secured the support of the Turkish professional association for our initiatives.

Yucel was a strong and generous character, a warm-hearted man who loved his country, faithful to his principles throughout his life, trustworthy, sincere, kind and supportive to his friends. Yucel actively supported young researchers and younger colleagues from ITS, introducing them to the international research environment and building bridges in the academic world.

On behalf of WCTRS members, we express our deepest condolences to his family and close friends. We will miss Yucel Candemir!

Rosário Macário, WCTRS President

Membership of the WCTRS

The World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS) provides a forum for the interchange of ideas among transport researchers, managers, policymakers, and educators from all over the world from a multi-modal, multi-disciplinary, and multi-sectoral perspective.

Every three years, the Society holds the World Conference, where leading transport professionals from all countries and areas convene to learn from one another. WCTR Toulouse will be held from 6th-10th July 2026.

In addition to our Special Interest Groups, which facilitate research activities and the exchange of ideas in 42 topic areas, the WCTRS has a number of Task Forces that conduct research into emerging issues in transport and aim to bridge gaps between research and policy-making.

All academics, practitioners, students, and interested individuals are invited to apply to become an individual member of the WCTRS. You can apply to join at any time by completing this online form and paying your membership fees here.

The benefits of membership include:

- Access to a truly international network of transport academics and practitioners, which is the only such worldwide network, with over 1000 experts interested in transport research from over 80 countries.
- A wide variety of Special Interest Groups (SIGs), each dedicated to a specific academic topic, from mode-specific policy and modeling to solutions for climate change and disaster resilience. The full list can be found on the SIGs webpage.
- A free online subscription to the Society's two Journals: Transport Policy and Case Studies on Transport Policy.
- Online access to the proceedings of past conferences.
- Liaison with some 30 partner journals, which publish the best conference papers.
- Outreach to international organizations such as the International Transport Forum, World Bank, and UNFCCC conferences.
- WCTRS Young Initiatives, including the WCTRS-Y Conference, grants awarded to young researchers, and dedicated newsletters and job information.
- Opportunities to contribute to the planning of a future World Conference through participation in Special Interest Groups and other Society activities.

More details: Click here

Useful Information and Links

1. **WCTR 2026 – 17th World Conference on Transport Research, Toulouse, France (6–10 July 2026)**
   For details : Click Here
2. **WCTRS – Young Researchers' Initiative (WCTRS-Y)**
   Opportunities for academic growth, networking, and professional development for early-career researchers
   For details : Click Here
3. **Transportation Research Procedia on World Conference on Transport Research - WCTR 2023 Montreal 17-21 July 2023**
   Open Access
   For details: Click Here
4. **Publications by SIG A4-Handbook on High-Speed Rail and Quality of Life and Frontiers in High-Speed Rail Development**
   Both books are free to download.
   For details: Click Here
5. **Urban Mobility Research in India Transport: Selected Proceedings from the Research Symposium of the 16th Urban Mobility India Conference & Expo 2023**
   For details: Click Here
6. **A new Transport Research and Education Network to help ESCAP member States achieve sustainable transport**
   For details: Click Here

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Case Studies in Transport Policy

WCTRS book series - For details, visit: **link**

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