



## ETC emerged online as the world closed its doors

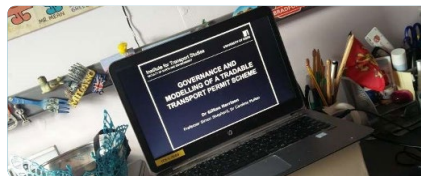
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by Pierluigi Coppola

[pierluigi.coppola@polimi.it](mailto:pierluigi.coppola@polimi.it)



# AET prevails during time of uncertainty

Dear fellow AET Members,

2020 has been a year of uncertainty for the Association and difficulties for all of us due to the health emergency and the diffusion of the contagions in Europe. It should have been the first year that our Conference took place in Italy, at the Polytechnic of Milan, and, it was indeed the first year the conference was held on-line.

In March, when we understood that ETC 2020 could not have been organized in presence, neither in Milan or elsewhere, after few initial moments of scepticism we decided not only that the conference should be organised, but it had also to keep the usual multi-seminar approach, still being 'a meeting place for policy makers, researchers and practitioners in transport in order to contribute to the debate on mobility and transport in Europe'. This is our mission as the Association for European Transport.

Thanks to the enthusiasm and the spirit of our Directors, our staff and Programme Committees, today, we can say that our effort has been rewarded. In facts, we had more than 500 delegates online and 1000 delegate-days in about 80 sessions. Overall, the conference was attended by almost similar number of people as in the previous years, very well-rated and more than 70% of delegates stated that they are likely to attend again next year.

I would like to mention the keynote session on 'Forecasting in Times of Uncertainty' by Luis (Pilo) Willumsem, and the one on the "Emerging topics of transport research in Europe" with the outstanding participation of Italian Minister of University and Scientific Research, Gaetano Manfredi and the Hungarian Minister of Innovation and Technology, László Palkovics.

For the next year, at the time of the publication of our Call for Contributions, it is not possible to be sure how things will be in September 2021. The Association is committed to the continuity of ETC and has decided to hold it online, extending the number of days over which the conference is held. The multi-stream format will remain but with fewer sessions each day. It is also planned to offer more networking opportunities and some virtual tours over the weekend.

I am confident that blending our traditional approach with new ingredients will make ETC even more than in the past, unique among transport European conferences, a premier event of its type providing great opportunities for knowledge exchanging and forming professional relationships.

**Take Care, Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy 2021!**



# System Dynamics at the European Transport Conference

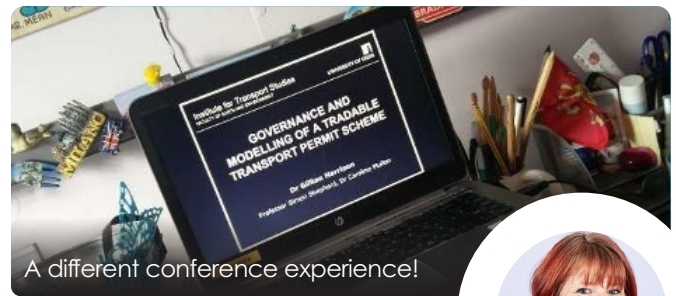
The European Transport Conference was held virtually due to the COVID restrictions. Being on the 'System Dynamics' programme committee, it was a valuable experience to be involved in the discussions about how the transitions online should take place. In all, and to much praise to the efforts of the organisers, the conference was a success and went smoothly from the point of view of a participant.

The SD theme is relatively new to ETC and supported by the System Dynamics Society Special Interest Group in Transportation. The concept of 'system dynamics' as a specific methodology is yet to be fully understood by a wider audience, so having the opportunity to engage with the transport community at such a large event is one much appreciated.

There were 7 presentations given over three sessions, showcasing a wide range of applications of SD to transport research and practice. Abstracts and submitted papers can be viewed at <https://aetransport.org/past-etc-papers/search-all-etc-conference-papers>.

The topic of the first session was 'Urban Mobility', was chaired by Gillian Harrison and included a feasibility study of a tramway in the city, which set out the advantages of using SD for complex transport projects that require economic, social and environmental assessment, developing a Causal Loop Diagram that incorporates the key concerns of stakeholders (Giovanni Acciaro, Andrea Bassi). Next was an educational simulation game addressing children to take interest in system dynamics as well as transport policy (Paul Pfaffenbichler).

'Future Mobility' was the theme for the second session, chaired by Jonatan Gomez-Vilchez of European Commission. A SD model of a tradable transport permit schemes was shown, built around a governance framework with complex ethical considerations and involving multiple decision-making actors (Gillian Harrison). Next was a SD tool that captures the uptake dynamics and interactions between electric, automated and shared vehicles,



A different conference experience!

by Gillian Harrison  
[G.Harrison@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:G.Harrison@leeds.ac.uk)



including a user-friendly interface for use by policy makers (Nikos Papakatsikas). The final presentation outlined a method of the qualitative analysis of interviews regarding integrated mobility solutions, which has been used to develop a Causal Loop Diagram (Astrid Guehnemann)

Astrid Guehnemann chaired the final session on 'Decarbonisation'. First was a SD model to understanding the impact of supply side mechanisms on EU average new car CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (Jonatan Gomez-Vilchez), followed by a study re. the impact of the introduction of driverless and electric trucks (Claudia Andruetto)

All three sessions led to interesting discussions around the engagement of both the public and policy makers with SD as tools for simple simulation and visualisation. As an SD practitioner, there is a responsibility to understand their needs at the start of the engagement process in order to develop an effective approach ensuring that the stakeholder is provided the correct level of information for their requirements. A simple frontend visualisation may be adequate for some who do not require understanding of the internal system complexities, rather some idea of cause (an input they make) and effect (the output they see).

Building on this, another key discussion point was the restrictions that COVID have imposed in collecting data, feedback and engagement in model development. The direct impact that COVID itself is having on transportation systems across the world could affect any transport related research being carried out at present. Innovative approaches to overcome these barriers must not only focus on the communication between different stakeholders and avoiding a poorer quality of data, but also consider the opportunities that may be offered. Development of online methodologies may open up SD model engagement to a wider audience than has been possible before and create new insights and approaches for more holistic model building.



# European Transport Conference (ETC) 2020



The socially-distanced Conference Team ensured smooth running of ETC 2020 at the IT Hub

by Sally Scarlett  
[sally.scarlett@aetransport.org](mailto:sally.scarlett@aetransport.org)



ETC has faced a number of challenges but these are now seen as trivial in the face of the pandemic of 2020. The planning process was well under way and the abstracts had been submitted and mostly selected, when it became clear that it would not be possible to hold the conference at the Politecnico di Milano. The Board of the Association took the bold decision that the conference should go ahead online and, with the great support of potential speakers and the Programme Committees, the programme planning continued and the conference was launched in May. It was a step into the unknown but, in the early months of the pandemic, we were all getting used to online meetings and the vagaries of the various platforms and software available.

From a location in the English Midlands, the IT hub was established, and more than 80 sessions were delivered over three days in September. The format of the conference was similar to what is usually offered so we had three intense days of sessions, running 9 or 10 in parallel each day. The technology mostly worked well and, it seems

from anecdotal evidence and emails received, that most delegates enjoyed and benefited from the experience although it is acknowledged that everyone prefers the networking opportunities offered by an actual conference.

Of the delegates, 32% were women. It is the aim of the Association to achieve a gender balance close to 50% and there is now a Working Group of the Council dedicated to achieving this. There was a session during ETC entitled Women and Men - aren't we all equal? ETC programmes in the future will include more sessions on the broad topic of gender balance and inclusion.

The online version of the conference allowed some to participate who would otherwise have found it impossible, so it was possible to showcase the benefits of ETC to a wider audience and there has been an increase in membership as a result.

Attendance numbers were consistent with previous years – more than 500 delegates registered, and they generated more than 1000 delegate days. The largest delegation was from the UK but 9 countries had attendance in double

figures: Italy, The Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, Austria, France, Norway, Belgium and Sweden.

The Association has been successful in recent years in offering a platform during ETC for other networks and groups. In 2020, the conference was delighted to host a session organised with the SOCIETÀ ITALIANA DOCENTI DI TRASPORTI (SIDT) on Research and application perspectives in transportation in Italy and Europe: emerging topics. This session included presentations from Gaetano Manfredi, Minister (Ministry of University and Research, Italy) and László Palkovics, Minister (Ministry for Innovation and Technology, Hungary).

There was also a session on Growing and improving transport planning skills in Europe, organised by The Transport Planning Society. There were two presentations and a discussion: Transport Planning as a profession and the role of Professional Bodies by Stephen Bennett – Chair, Transport Planning Society and Transport Planning skills development in the UK and Ireland by Keith Buchan - Skills Director, Transport Planning Society in the UK.

We are looking forward to the next ETC 2021. The call for contributions has already started and is mentioned on page 9 of this AET Newsletter.

### Comments from Programme Committee Chairs & Session Chairs



I want to congratulate the ETC2020 with the organisation of the online conference. It was my first ETC conference and online conference. I liked the content of the sessions and the technical support. The technical support was always right on time in the 'meeting room' offering assistance to the speakers and chair in pleasant way.

Although we all have liked to be in presence in Milan with the AET President Pierluigi Coppola, the ETC2020 as a digital event is already a landmark. More, the ETC2020 showed to be an outstanding European digital event in the transport domain. Great work. Well done!

I would like to thank you and congratulate you for the great organisation of the ETC2020. For one more year, ETC was a great conference!

I was wondering whether ETC could provide the same value through the internet than it does in person. I had slight doubts, but to my astonishment it did. That unique ETC factor I love was definitely there. So thank you all for the organisation and your efforts in supporting us.

My impression was positive, there was a real ETC feeling to it!



### Interesting stats from ETC 2020

Delegates  **500+**

Delegate days  **1,000+**



More than **30** different countries represented



## COVID19 Conversations

by Conall Mac Aongusa  
[covid19@aeitransport.org](mailto:covid19@aeitransport.org)



Looking back on 2020 it has been a hard and challenging year for all of us – only one year ago no one had heard of the coronavirus and only a few months later the whole world has been turned upside down by the COVID19 pandemic.

Our COVID19 Conversations Initiative began amongst a small group of AET members back in April of this year to connect AET members during those dark confusing early days, to share experiences, stories and views on COVID19 and how it was impacting our lives and work. Quite soon the initiative developed into something bigger where we developed our online presence through the AET website and published papers from members, recorded interviews and started to host online webinars to discuss COVID19 experiences and impacts on transport.

We had three successful webinars over the summer months where we heard about the experiences and impacts in Spain, Netherlands, UK, Switzerland and heard perspectives on traffic demand, mobility patterns, tourism impacts, pedestrian modelling, data analysis and cycling.

Since ETC in September we launched an ambitious Autumn/Winter 2020/21 schedule of Webinars where we are co-hosting webinars once a month with our various ETC Programme Committees. This allows the AET members to get directly involved in hosting, presenting, and participating in our webinars. The webinars are recorded and the archive of past webinars and other materials is available for members through the AET website: [aeitransport.org](http://aeitransport.org)

In October we co-hosted with the Intelligent Mobility Programme Committee, the November webinar was co-hosted by the Railway Policy and Planning PC jointly with the Local Public Transport PC. The

Freight and Logistics Programme Committee co-hosted the December Webinar and this drew a record attendance and led to another lively discussion which continued well past the allotted hour.

A unique and attractive feature of our webinars on the first Thursday of every month is that at the end of the formal discussion we keep the cameras open thereby allowing all webinar attendees to join in and continue the discussion and catch up with new and old friends and colleagues.

We are already planning more webinars well into 2021 – starting with an exciting Critical Issues debate on 7th January on the theme of “Evidence, Power and Money in Transport’s Pandemic Response”. It should be a lively start to the new year. We’ll be publishing our full programme for future events in 2021 quite soon on the AET website.

My thanks to the COVID19 Conversations Working Group for their sterling work and continued support in getting the Initiative, the webpages, and the webinars up and running.

As with many other things this year and especially in AET we have learned quickly how much we can do with collaborative voluntary effort! Members are invited to submit data, reports, news articles, images, studies, presentations and links to relevant websites for their country, transport industry sub-sector or topic of interest. It would be great to get feedback from AET members wherever you are!

Please submit all material via the following e-mail address: [covid19@aeitransport.org](mailto:covid19@aeitransport.org).

I wish you and your families a happy Christmas and holiday season and a safe and healthy New Year.

Conall Mac Aongusa  
 Chair of COVID19 Conversations Working Group

# AET Internal Affairs

AET welcomes newly elected Council and Board Members

## AET Council

by Olga Feldman,  
Council Chair

[Olga.Feldman@arcadis.com](mailto:Olga.Feldman@arcadis.com)



Every year we hold Council elections. Council members are usually elected for three years, with one third of the Council standing down for re-election each year. The Council is the representative body of the AET and helps the AET Board to shape strategic decisions and new initiatives.

Special thanks to the Council members who did not seek re-election, Graham Ellis and Angela di Febbraro, and I welcome the re-elected members: Michael Bach (UK), Jan Francke (NL), James Odeck (NO), Luigi dell'Olio (IT), Peter Snelson (UK) and I am happy to get to know the new members:



Ines Kawgan-Kagan (DE): I love the atmosphere and that you are always welcome to bring in your ideas. I enjoy the ETC and would like to pay back this feeling by supporting and volunteering in the AET and shaping the future of the conference.

András Munkácsy (HU): After attending several ETCs and being a programme committee member since 2017, I have the impression that this conference is a unique meeting point. What is more, AET is a big family with a long tradition and great values. I want to support AET in maintaining or even improving its high standards and to strengthen the representation of my region in the Association.

Petra Schaefer (DE): Being an AET Council member gives me the opportunity to interact more closely with interesting people of the business as well as fellow researchers from across Europe. I would like to help to connect researchers and practitioners to common projects and being part of an international and interdisciplinary research community. I also think that students should be part of this community from an early stage of their education.



## AET Board

by Pierluigi Coppola,  
AET Board Chair

[pierluigi.coppola@polimi.it](mailto:pierluigi.coppola@polimi.it)



The AET Board Directors are appointed by the Council. They are accountable to AET members through the Council, and at the General Assembly, for developing the Association and the European Transport Conference.

Recently, we have had some turnover in the AET Board.

We would like to thank for their contributions in the past years, Ms Christina Marolda and Dr. Enrica Papa who completed their mandate this year. I am sure they will be able to keep contributing to the Association and in the Conference Programme Committees and task forces!

On the other hand, I am pleased to welcome Conall Macangousa in our team, a valued member of AET for a long time and also the initiator of the COVID-19 conversations.

## AET Ambassadors

by Fulvio Silvestri,  
AET Ambassador for Italy  
[fulvio.silvestri@uniroma2.it](mailto:fulvio.silvestri@uniroma2.it)



AET Ambassadors are fully committed to promoting the Association and the ETC in several European countries. They also act as a liaison between Programme Committees and academia in their countries to develop topical issues for the upcoming ETC2021.

In recent months, two meetings have been organised with the support of the AET Board, and the activities have focused on the initiatives of the Task Forces on Subway Efficiency Benchmarking and on Gender Balance. The Gender Balance Task Force is also working on a special issue for the journal 'Sustainability' that collects the proceedings of the ETC2020 sessions.



by Gisela Gräfin von Schlieffen  
[G.Schlieffen@rmv.de](mailto:G.Schlieffen@rmv.de)

# AET Marketing & Membership

We look back to a challenging year, changes in one aspect led to changes elsewhere, soon we recognised how interdependent and interconnected we used to live.

These challenges also impacted AET, and together we gained so much experience while our homes turned into international conference centres.

Despite these conditions our AET family is growing in the global world which almost became a digital village this year. We welcome our new members, let us help each other and work together!

Merry Christmas and a happy & healthy New Year!

Gisela Gräfin von Schlieffen

## New Organisation Members



NET Engineering S.p.A. is an Italian engineering company wholly owned by NET Engineering International, an independent European group of design and integrated services in the field of pure engineering of mobility and infrastructure.

The professional activities of NET Engineering S.p.A. include the fields of Rail & Road Infrastructure design, Structural engineering design, Traffic & Transport Planning, Road safety, Project financing schemes, EU projects (TEN-T, INTERREG, IEE, LIFE), Environmental Engineering and work supervision.

Current NET Engineering field of activities are mainly focused on Feasibility studies and design for strategic public transport infrastructures (railway, tramway, Bus Rapid Transit), accessibility studies and detailed design for relevant intermodal transport hub (airports, railway stations, ports), urban regeneration and master planning.

NET Engineering supports start-up initiatives in Italy and Germany, promotes a sustainable approach through the application of Envision protocol for green infrastructures, is sensible to innovation in the field of infrastructure monitoring and network vulnerability.

[www.net-italia.com](http://www.net-italia.com)

## New Individual Members

-  David Meunier, FR
-  Mahsa Ramezanghomi, IR
-  Wolfgang Scherr, DE
-  Alagar Gandhi, IN
-  Bhuvanachithra Chidambaram, DE
-  Francesco De Fabiis, IT
-  Nikos Moreau, FR
-  Pedro Londono, US
-  Enrique Sanchez, ES
-  Thomas Valentini, IT
-  Naveen Kumar Meena, IN
-  Živana Luković, RS
-  Wei Ma, CN
-  Songsu Son, KR
-  Michael Flynn, UK
-  Cormac McKay, IE
-  Michael Morrissey, IE
-  Velvet Basemera-Fitzpatrick, US
-  Charis Chalkiadakis, GR
-  Piotr Gołębiowski, PL
-  Gustav Bösehans, DE
-  Michal Rataj, PL
-  Michele Simoni, IT





# European Transport Conference 2021 Online from 9th to 15th September



**CALL FOR PAPERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

## THE 49<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

Annual Conference of the Association for European Transport  
09 - 15 September 2021: Online

WHERE RESEARCH, POLICY, AND PRACTICE IN TRANSPORT COME TOGETHER

**Call for Papers Announced,  
Deadline for Abstracts: 08 February 2021**

by Sally Scarlett  
[sally.scarlett@aetransport.org](mailto:sally.scarlett@aetransport.org)



In 2021, the European Transport Conference will be held online and the dates will be extended from 9 to 15 September. The Association is committed to the continuity of ETC and has decided to extend the number of days over which the conference is held and to hold it online.

The multi-stream format will remain but with fewer sessions each day. It is also planned to offer more networking opportunities and some virtual tours over the weekend.

Depending on the evolving situation, it may be possible to offer some actual seminars in Milan during the dates of the Conference. Milan remains the planned destination of the conference in 2022 and 2023.

The main themes for the conference have been identified:

1. COVID-19 and the Consequences
2. The Climate Emergency
3. Inclusion and Diversity

In addition, each Programme Committee sets its specific topics outlined their dedicated call for contributions.

The Programme Committees in place for the 2021 Conference are:

- Global Trends Impacting Transport
- Planning for Sustainable Land Use and Transport
- Transport Models
- Data
- Transport Economics, Finance and Appraisal
- Intelligent Mobility – Management and Operations
- Local Public Transport
- Rail Policy and Planning
- Freight and Logistics
- Young Researchers' and Practitioners' Forum

The 2021 conference will also include a session on 'Growing and improving transport planning skills across Europe' organised in conjunction with the UK Transport Planning Society. The Call for Papers is available on the AET website.

Get started and we look forward to receiving your abstracts by 8th February 2021.

Find further details on our [website](#).