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## **T2M 2019: Public transport as public space**

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As public transport continues to be studied primarily by engineers and planners, who rely on the dominant economic and technocratic readings and approaches, it remains peripheral in the social sciences and humanities literature. Yet, public transport embraces intense and intimate sites for encountering cultural diversity, facilitating social integration and negotiating public space. It is a site of encounters that shapes perceptions of others and can add to collective experience (Paget-Seekins & Tironi, 2016), conviviality and “intercultural dialogue” (Koefoed et al., 2017), acting as a site of everyday multiculturalism (Lobo, 2014) and micro-encounters (Purifoye, 2015). At the same time, public transport is entangled with processes “of differentiation and exclusion” (Wilson, 2011: 635), which could result in “racialisation, stigmatisation and intolerance” (Koefoed et al., 2017). This session aims to explore the public space dimension and potential of public transport in different cities around the world considering the historical development and difference of public transport vehicles and systems, as well as attending to the cultural and political diversity across countries and regions. In this way we expect to position public transport at the frontline of considering what is, can be, or should be public in the city. Examining public transport in conjunction with diverse conceptualisations of public space and publicness the session aims to expand the existing understanding of public spaces through historical, political, social and cultural account of everyday mobilities and public transport spaces. Public transport potentially confronts citizens with social diversity, speaking to them of different types of ownership, surveillance, subversion, interaction and transformation of social norms. Thus, it is also important to pay attention to the historical shifts and futures of public transport—including the so-called sharing and platform economies as well as self-driving mobilities—and the ways they affect the publicness of public transport.

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