

Press release

Versailles, 11 February 2019

Mobile Hyperplace Project

Autonomous and connected vehicles:

What are the impacts on our mobility and the way we live tomorrow?

The emergence of the autonomous, connected electric vehicle, and the excitement it is generating (similarly, the public and private investment that it is attracting), has been a very powerful catalyst for all of the innovation and developments already in progress in the mobility sector. The *Mobile Hyperplace* research/action project, conducted by the Institut pour la Ville en Mouvement-VEDECOM (IVM) with the support of a multidisciplinary international hub, aims to identify and research the various current developments and practices in mobility activities, beyond the simple transportation of people or goods, in order to gain a better understanding of the radical changes in progress in the mobility sector, to define the specifications of the new spaces resulting from the arrival of multifunctional hybrid vehicles, to identify the development potential for autonomous connected vehicles and to conceptualise the mobile hyperplaces of the future, urban microspaces or urban developments.

IVM organised February the 7th a day of meetings, gathering together more than 170 participants, with the aim of presenting the initial results of this large-scale project. The agenda includes: debate and discussion sessions, film projections, micro-workshops, presentations, etc.

Observe society in order to innovate

With the support of its network of partners in Latin America, China, Africa and in Europe, the IVM international research hub has identified no less than 250 mobility activities: from an African mobility scooter equipped with a Wi-Fi system to the experimental mobile abattoir in Sweden, not to forget the new types of cinema or mobile media libraries. The project involves a team of researchers and experts from a very diverse range of fields for observing and analysing the different mobility applications: geographers, architects, urban planners, sociologists, etc. As a result of observing the current practices, lifestyles and consumerism, the project objective is to reveal the unexpected urban forms generated by new interactions between spaces, mobility solutions, connectivity solutions and activities. It also aims to predict possible splits caused by the generalisation of autonomous connected vehicles (ACV), vehicles for mobile activity which may henceforth contribute to redefining everyday locations.

The mobility of tomorrow: activities, sociality and interaction

With the benefit of all observations made in various territories, the international research hub is launching the second project phase. The challenge is to test equipment in partnership with local stakeholders and territories and to conceptualise the urban situations, urban microspaces and mobile

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hyperplaces of the future. If it can be said that the new functionalities offered by smartphones have not only enhanced the telephone but have now overtaken the telephony function in terms of focus, then it is likely that with autonomous vehicles, the transportation function will be overtaken by a multitude of activities: work, sport, entertainment, etc. By freeing us from the obligation to drive, the autonomous connected vehicle is changing our relationship with time in travel (which will no longer be “lost”) and our relationship with space in these new vehicle types (the interior equipment of which requires rethinking).

“The autonomous connected vehicle, as we call it, could be the trigger for far-reaching change in the mobility sector. Mobile hyperplace is a collaborative project that tackles mobility issues beyond the simple transportation of people and goods”, explains Mireille Apel-Muller, Director of the Institut pour la Ville en Mouvement. “One of the project objectives is to invent autonomous and connected vehicle applications when the focus is not primarily travel but on-board activity”, she adds.

According to Philippe Watteau, Managing Director at VEDECOM, in his closing address, “the obsession with movement, such is the new focus, the new opportunity and the new freedom provided by autonomous mobility which is targeted, at a level beyond that of the technology, by the VEDECOM Institut pour la Ville en Mouvement’s Mobile Hyperplace programme through the radical development of the issue of new applications of autonomous mobility.”

About VEDECOM

VEDECOM is an institute for energy transition (ITE) founded on unique cooperation between firms in the automotive and aviation sectors, mobility ecosystem infrastructure and service operators, academic research bodies and Ile-de-France local authorities. The role of VEDECOM is to forge closer ties between academia and industry. The institute helps them to achieve a high standard of innovation in the area of mobility and, in particular, in electric vehicles, autonomous and connected vehicles and shared energy and mobility infrastructure and services. As part of the French government’s PIA future investment plan, VEDECOM receives €54 million in funding. Its founding members are Cetim, ESIGEELEC, ESTACA, IFPEN, IFSTTAR, PSA Group, Renault Group, Safran, UVSQ and Valeo. End of 2017 key figures: 50 members and partners, three research fields and one training programme, 15 R&D projects, 12 European projects, more than 250 publications, 35 patents, 23 proprietary software programs, 70 theses, 200 employees and a commercial innovation subsidiary, VEDECOM Tech, founded in February 2017.

About the City on the Move Institute

Created in 2000, the City on the Move Institute (IVM in French) distinguished itself with its iconoclastic, anticipatory and innovative approach to urban mobility. For more than 15 years, it has been developing international researches and actions in order to contribute to the emergence of innovative solutions.

IVM organizes interdisciplinary scientific exchanges, and social, organizational, scientific, technical and cultural field experiments around its main axes of reflection:

- Fostering autonomous mobility for individuals and social groups facing specific problems;

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- Highlighting the quality of the places and times of movement;
- Contributing to the development of cultures of urban mobility and civilities

Since 2016 it is now part of VEDECOM. Within this new organization, the City on the Move Institute is exploring the relations between technological change and the mutations of the urban territories, in their social, architectural and cultural dimensions.