

3.9.1967 The day Sweden switched sides of the road

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PASSAGES

ARCHITECTURE FOR FLOWING AND CONNECTING SPACES

Raffaella Cavallaro
Nicolò Chierichetti (eds.)

International Conference
September 24–26th, 2025
Politecnico di Milano

Book of Abstracts

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Conference Proceedings
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Editors | Curators

Raffaella Cavallaro
Nicolò Chierichetti

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ARENA

Welcome to *Passages* International Conference at Politecnico di Milano, Department of Architecture and Urban Studies.

Passages aims to investigate notions of space for mobility in contemporary architectural discourses. How architectural design can contribute to reimagining spaces to overcome functionalist engineering limitations, also considering the ecological, climate and social impacts of mobility spaces as something more than mere built objects?

This conference aims to unveil the potential of architectural design and research tools to enrich unconventional discussions about mobility in urban and periurban contexts, its spatial configurations and experiential qualities. Although mobility is intended as a framework, the discourse will focus on the spaces above, below, in-between, and to the sides of the ordinary boundaries of architectures of flow, as well as on the spaces of new forms of movement.

Raffaella Cavallaro
Nicolò Chierichetti

Politecnico di Milano
September 2025

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Forms of mobility based on emerging technological developments, explored from an architectural point of view, offer innovative perspectives on the logistics and circulation of people and goods.

The twentieth century saw the emergence of visionary scenarios that explored alternative approaches to movement, mobility and time, anticipating future developments and transforming spaces. Under the pressure of a changing world and the emergence of contemporary challenges, they are becoming a tangible reality. Pioneering projects – from the utopian past to advanced scenarios for the future – aspire to conceptualize the integration of cutting-edge technologies into everyday space, more integrated with blue and green infrastructures.

«Transformation of mobility networks will redefine how people move through the city [...] to create urban corridors that allow seamless movement between work, living, and leisure, integrating high-speed transit, slow mobility, and pedestrian-friendly environments » (Cavallo et. al., 2018).

pioneering scenarios, futuristic visions, logistics, advanced air-mobility, alternative mobility

Evolution

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Evolution

BETWEEN

UTOPIA AND

HISTORY

SESSION CHAIR:

Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi

Assistant Professor, DASTU

"Stockholm streets on the first day of right traffic: 3 September 1967". Photo credits DigitalMuseum.



3.9.1967

The day Sweden switched sides of the road

Eugenio LUX

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On the morning of Sunday 3 September 1967, Sweden enacted one of the most ambitious infrastructural and socio-technical transformations in its history: the shift from left- to right-hand traffic, also known as *Dagen H* or *Högertrafikomläggningen* (lit. "the right-hand traffic reorganisation"). The event mobilized an unprecedented range of design, planning, and communication strategies - spanning urban spaces, rural roads, signage systems, vehicle components, and public transport networks, as well as the collective psyche of an entire nation--including the popular song *Håll dej till höger*, *Svensson*. This proposal considers *Dagen H* as more than a logistical feat; it suggests to read the event as a design experiment at the scale of the nation, a performative reprogramming of public space grounded in the values of the *folkhemmet* (the Social Democratic welfare state policy, 1932-1976). Within this framework, mobility is not treated as a neutral flow but as a spatial, political, and symbolic construct - designed, rehearsed, and performed. This contribution aims at rethinking infrastructures of movement beyond engineering rationality, by framing *Högertrafikomläggningen* as a prototype of spatial transformation where architecture, planning, and communication merged into a coordinated national choreography. Particular attention is given to the often-overlooked design aspects: temporary signage, gloves and decals, public education campaigns, redesigned intersections and bus stops, tramline conversions, bus adaptations, and reconfiguration of road markings and signage. These elements suggest an expanded field of architectural agency -one that inhabits the in-between spaces of infrastructure, design, governance, and daily life. Drawing on archival material, visual culture, and the rhetoric of modernity in mid-20th-century Sweden, the text questions how design mediates large-scale behavioural change and reflects on the temporality and adaptability of infrastructural systems.

swedish-welfare-state, swedish-mobility, swedish-right-day, swedish-traffic, swedish-infrastructures

Braae E., R. G. (2025). *Architecture and Welfare: Scandinavian Perspectives*. Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag.

Norén, F. (2019). H Day 1967 - An alternative perspective on "propaganda" in the historiography of public relation. *Public Relations Review*, 45 (2), 236-245.

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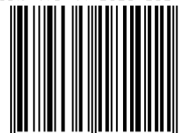
« *Ceci n'est pas une conférence sur la mobilité* »

As infrastructures of movement often prioritize technical efficiency, they risk neglecting the qualitative and experiential dimensions of space, an oversight that architectural thinking is distinctively positioned to address. Architecture offers a special perspective to address this gap, particularly in light of SDG 09-Industry, Innovation and Infrastructures and SDG 11-Sustainable Cities and Communities, and in reference to the principles of the EAAE Charter.

By engaging with mobility through a transversal approach, the conference explores how architectural design can contribute to reimagining spaces to overcome functionalist engineering limitations, also considering the ecological, climate and social impacts of mobility spaces as something more than mere built objects.

Through the examination of design methodologies and prototype case studies, the conference attempts to unveil the potential of architectural design and research tools to enrich unconventional discussions about mobility in urban and peri-urban contexts, its spatial configurations and experiential qualities. Although mobility is intended as a framework, the discourse will focus on the spaces above, below, in-between, and to the sides of the ordinary boundaries of architectures of flow, as well as on the spaces of new forms of movement. The conference «Passages. Architecture for Flowing and Connecting Spaces» invited contributions which critically address the role of Architecture in the Shaping the spaces of mobility, and in their interference, around the sessions of “Intersection”, “Collateral” and “Evolution”.

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