

UITP World Congresses and Exhibitions: A bit of history

The International Association of Public Transport will hold its 58th World Congress and Exhibition in Vienna, 7-11 June 2009. What is the background to this event that today has become a 'must-attend' for the global public transport community?

Major milestones along the road of UITP's advance



UITP held its very first Congress in Berlin in 1886, one year after the founding of the organisation. Berlin led the way to 57 other Congresses up to today, bringing together all public transport actors and mobility experts every two years.

	<p>The Brussels Congress in 1922 and the Rome Congress in 2005.</p> <p>From the very beginning, the organisation and success of UITP Congresses relied fully on the active contributions from all members.</p>	
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The birth and growth of the exhibition

UITP first started to organise exhibitions in the 1960s, and, starting with the 1971 Congress in Rome, has always held an exhibition in conjunction with the Congress. Since the 1970s the exhibition has rapidly developed to become the leading global business place for urban and regional passenger transport, with participation from all major rail integrators and bus manufacturers, leading component and technology firms, the service industry and other public transport players.

The Congress programme through the years

	<p>THE HIGH cost of horses' maintenance was one of the first questions discussed at UITP's Congress in 1886. The themes of the Congresses have obviously evolved with the developments of the public transport sector, but they have always tackled the 'hot' issues of the time – technical, commercial or operational – from an international perspective.</p>
<p>The social programme of the Congress is a tradition that dates back to the earliest years.</p>	<p>At the beginning of the 20th century, today's current issues were already on the agenda, such as town-planning in relation to tramway lines and a proposal for uniformity in the compilation of statistics, as discussed in Brussels in 1910.</p>
	<p>The 1920s brought reports on the one-man operation of tram-cars, motor bus services, and the link between transport and city planning. The topic of private transport – motor cars – was introduced for the first time at the Warsaw Congress in 1930.</p>

From the post-war period the themes of the Congresses ranged from electric power transmission and fundamental subjects like economics and rolling stock design to traffic congestion – a hot issue already in 1955. Issues on the programme in the 1970s included marketing, environment, the energy crisis in 1975 and public authorities' participation in transport costs. The transport situation in Latin America, India, Africa and Hong Kong was at the heart of the debates at the Congress held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1983.

In the last decade, debates have expanded from the quality of service for passengers to making public transport attractive by using future technologies and the major role of the sector for an urban and congestion-free 21st century.

The focal theme of the coming World Congress in Vienna next year will be 'Public transport: Making the right mobility choices'.

In the current context of climate change, congestion, traffic paralysis, air quality concerns and the energy debate, it is beyond doubt that all cities need a good public transport network. In recent years, the big question for city planners has therefore shifted from whether to invest in public transport, to which public transport mode is most appropriate.

This is a very complex investment choice. In some cases infrastructure and equipment must be installed from scratch; in others decisions must be taken to renew, extend, change or complement the existing range of mobility services.

"Making the right choice of transport system for a city has never been more vital or more complex. There is no 'one size fits all' strategy or decision-making process. What our Congress will do however is to help stakeholders make informed and appropriate mobility choices," stated UITP Secretary General, Hans Rat.

For more information about UITP's 58th World Congress and Exhibition, visit <http://www.uitp.org/vienna2009/>. Journalists can find out how to register on <http://www.uitp.org/vienna2009/news/registration-en.cfm>.

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As UITP grew in stature the host countries of the Congresses and Exhibitions came to acknowledge its importance. The 50th anniversary of UITP was celebrated in 1935 in Brussels in the presence of King Leopold III. The President of the Club of Rome, Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan was a keynote speaker at the Rome event in 2005 and demonstrated his commitment to the Rome Manifesto.

The UITP Congress and Exhibitions: an international forum

A selection of UITP World Congress logos over the years



Milan
1889



Paris
1900



London
1902



Vienna
1904



Milan
1906



Munich
1908



Brussels
1910



Oslo
1912



Brussels
1922



Paris
1924



Barcelona
1926



Rome
1928



Warsaw
1930



The Hague
1932



Berlin
1934



Paris
1959



Copenhagen
1961



Vienna
1963



Tel Aviv
1965



Barcelona
1967



London
1969



Rome
1971



The Hague
1973



Nice
1975



Montreal
1977



Helsinki
1979



Dublin
1981



Rio de Janeiro
1983



Brussels
1985



Budapest
1989



Stockholm
1991



Sydney
1993



Paris
1995



Stuttgart
1997



Toronto
1999



London
2001



Madrid
2005



Rome
2005



Helsinki
2007



Vienna
2009

Full list of Congresses/Exhibitions

1886	1 st International Congress BERLIN
1887	2 nd International Congress VIENNA
1888	3 rd International Congress BRUSSELS
1889	4 th International Congress MILAN
1890	5 th International Congress AMSTERDAM
1892	6 th International Congress HAMBURG
1893	7 th International Congress BUDAPEST
1894	8 th International Congress KÖLN
1896	9 th International Congress STOCKHOLM
1898	10 th International Congress GENEVA
1900	11 th International Congress PARIS
1902	12 th International Congress LONDON
1904	13 th International Congress VIENNA
1906	14 th International Congress MILAN
1908	15 th International Congress MUNICH
1910	16 th International Congress BRUSSELS
1912	17 th International Congress OSLO
1922	18 th International Congress BRUSSELS
1924	19 th International Congress PARIS
1926	20 th International Congress BARCELONA
1928	21 st International Congress ROME
1930	22 nd International Congress WARSAW
1932	23 rd International Congress THE HAGUE
1934	24 th International Congress BERLIN
1937	25 th International Congress VIENNA
1939	26 th International Congress ZÜRICH/BERNE
1947	27 th International Congress MONTREUX
1949	28 th International Congress STOCKHOLM
1951	29 th International Congress EDINBURGH
1953	30 th International Congress MADRID
1955	31 st International Congress NAPLES
1957	32 nd International Congress HAMBURG/BERLIN
1959	33 rd International Congress PARIS
1960	34 th International Congress COPENHAGEN
1963	35 th International Congress VIENNA
1965	36 th International Congress TEL AVIV
1967	37 th International Congress BARCELONA
1969	38 th International Congress LONDON
1971	39 th International Congress ROME
1973	40 th International Congress THE HAGUE
1975	41 st International Congress NICE
1977	42 nd International Congress MONTREAL
1979	43 rd International Congress HELSINKI
1981	44 th International Congress DUBLIN
1983	45 th International Congress RIO DE JANEIRO
1985	46 th International Congress BRUSSELS
1987	47 th International Congress LAUSANNE
1989	48 th International Congress BUDAPEST
1991	49 th International Congress STOCKHOLM
1993	50 th International Congress SYDNEY
1995	51 st International Congress PARIS
1997	52 nd International Congress STUTTGART
1999	53 rd International Congress TORONTO
2001	54 th International Congress LONDON
2003	55 th International Congress MADRID
2005	56 th International Congress ROME
2007	57 th International Congress HELSINKI
2009	58 th International Congress VIENNA