

# **Transformative Urban Transport and the Making of an Urban Regional Mode of Governance: The Case of Paris and the Ile-de-France Region**

Written by Charlotte Halpern and Patrick Le Galès

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**Transforming Urban Transport – The Role of Political Leadership**

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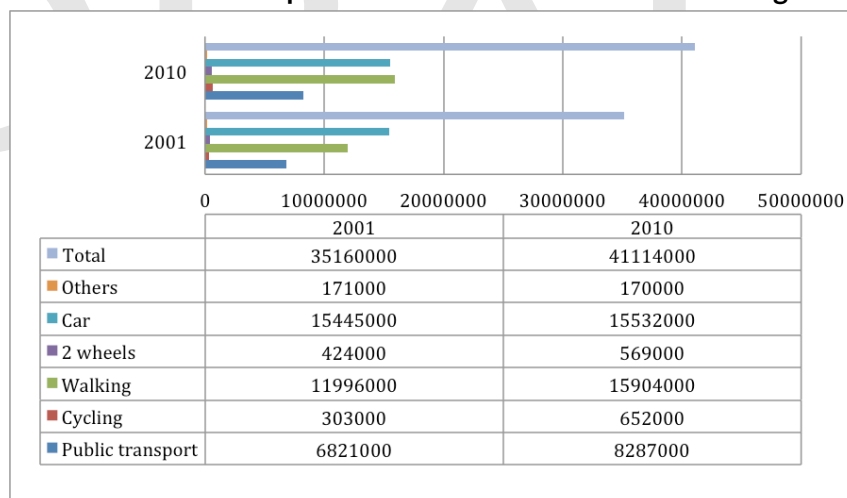
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This case was written by Charlotte Halpern and Patrick Le Gales for the project on “Transforming Urban Transport – the Role of Political Leadership,” at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design (GSD), with financing from the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF). The authors are responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the information in the case, which does not necessarily reflect the views of VREF or GSD.

# Overview

Over the past 30 years, the Paris Ile-de-France Region has experienced massive and profound changes in transportation. Myriad policy initiatives and programs introduced across levels of government have promoted strong alternatives to private vehicle use while improving accessibility to major economic and financial centers. These include enhancing public transport services and infrastructure, actively promoting non-motorized transportation (e.g., cycling, walking), and reducing car use through street layout and urban design. Beyond the City of Paris, such changes were also initiated from the periphery and have spread throughout the wider region. They combine major flagship initiatives such as the urban tramway renaissance and Velib’ bike sharing system<sup>1</sup> with salient political discourses—for instance, about air pollution, noise, and “giving the city back to its inhabitants”—and long-term, less visible, incremental changes on existing networks and systems (i.e. maintenance, new technologies, optimization measures). Concomittantly in Paris, car traffic stabilized from the early 2000s, as daily car use steadily declined both in the center city and inner suburbs. Meanwhile, the use of public transport sharply increased across the region, and the average number of daily bicycle trips doubled between 2001 and 2010.<sup>2</sup> Such transformations are noteworthy in light of wide perceptions of the urban regional transport system in Paris as a case of quasi-governance failure with high levels of road congestion and ageing transport services (RER).<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1. The evolution of transport in Paris and the Ile-de-France Region: “Peak car”?**



Source: STIF & IAURIF 2011

<sup>1</sup> The Grand Paris Express project will only be covered in this chapter to the extent that it accelerated improvements and changes in transport that have already taken place. This major capital investment, which is currently being planned in Paris and the inner suburbs area, relies upon extensive resources, and financing mechanisms (some € 25 billion Euros until 2030, more likely to be 35).

<sup>2</sup> Across the OECD, declining car use is attributed to a complex combination of macro-economic, social and cultural trends observable throughout industrialized societies (Kaufmann et al., 2004; Goodwin, 2012, 29). However, in Paris, such modal shifts are also concomitant with transport innovations and changes.

<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the Paris and Ile-de-France region are frequently depicted as an extreme case of fragmentation, complexity and interdependence between levels of governance (Larroque et al., 2004; Orfeuill and Wiel, 2012; Lefèvre et al., 2014).

	City of Paris	Métropole du Grand Paris (since January 2016)	Ile-de-france Region (since 1982)	French State
<b>Population</b>	2.265.866	7.000.000	11.800.000	
<b>Area</b>	105 km <sup>2</sup>	762 km <sup>2</sup>	12000 km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Density</b>	23685/km <sup>2</sup>	10334 /km <sup>2</sup>	996 /km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Democratically elected political leadership</b>	Mayor of Paris (since 1977)	None	President of Regional Council (since 1886)	
<b>Number of</b>	20 Boroughs		1291 municipalities, 8 Départements.	
<b>Budget and investment capacity</b>	€ 9 billion/year	€ 65 million/year	€ 5 billion/year	
<b>Competence over transport</b>	Municipal roads, bus, cycling	None	Regional railways (Metro, RER and Transilien), rapid bus transit	Highways and railways
<b>Responsibility of transport networks</b>	Vélib', Autolib'	None	Regional public transport authority (STIF)	Public-owned transport companies: RATP, SNCF; Société du Grand Paris as the project owner and contracting authority of the Grand Paris Express project

This case argues that the transformation of urban transport in Paris and the Ile-de-France Region is inextricably linked to evolving relationships between three levels of government—the City of Paris, the Ile-de-France Region and the French State—entailing as much competition and conflict as negotiation and cooperation. Where transport planning and implementation was mainly organized at the national level prior to the 1990s, it became increasingly territorialized at both the regional and the urban level as local and regional authorities struggled against the State, its agencies, and state-owned companies in assertion of their political autonomy amidst long-term decentralization, metropolisation, and urban competition. Beyond its substantive importance, transport provided a critical issue and instrumental mechanism for asserting political and institutional leadership, developing new alliances, and gaining visibility at various levels and scales. As key individuals and collective actors—including mayors, their deputies, state elites, political parties, public-private partnerships, and municipal collaborations—initiated myriad policy actions, some were radical and others incremental, resulting from negotiation as well as reaction. This mix of experiments and leadership competition not only combined to vastly transform the urban transport system in the city and region, but the emerging mode of governance further transformed the way through which transport is planned and implemented in terms of scale, modes, and collective action/networks of actors in the capital-city region.

The important role of transport experts, private firms, social movements, and political leadership notwithstanding, understanding and accounting for policy innovation and change in transport requires attention to evolving forms of institutional capacity building in the capital-city region. Hence the case study research systematically analyzed the long-term accumulation and mobilization of policy resources—including knowledge and expertise,

policy instruments, political legitimacy, and financial resources—together with major political conflicts between three levels of government over a 40-year period from 1975 onwards.<sup>4</sup> As it turns out, policy failures and political conflicts were no less important than immediate successes and gains in cumulating policy resources, repertoires, and impacts in urban transport. As we shall see shortly, the introduction of long-term spatial development policy goals for the capital-city region through the 1965 Strategic Document for Urban and Spatial Planning, limited efforts by the conservative mayoral administrations of Jacques Chirac and Jean Tiberi to initiate transport policies in Paris, and regional governance failures revealed by the 1994 State-Region Contracts and Regional Strategic Development Plan set the foundations for the left coalition’s advancement of a Parisian approach to sustainable urban transport under Mayor Bertrand Delanoé and its diffusion at the regional level as elaborated in the 2007 Regional Spatial Planning Document and 2008 Regional Mobility Plan.

The following account begins with a brief historical overview of transportation planning in Paris and the Ile-de-France Region under state leadership, precisely because the shifting mode of urban mode of urban regional governance that ushered in major transportation changes came in response to tensions and contradictions arising from this previous transport governance regime. The bulk of the case then focuses on the “why’s” and “how’s” of transport innovations and changes with respect to both the rapid advances in Paris and the slower transformations in the region. It traces the ways in municipal and regional authorities increasingly framed transport issues and challenged the leadership of state policies and agencies amidst processes of decentralization, metropolitanism, and urban competition. We further examine how incremental system changes and institutional capacity building, ambitious transport policies and projects, and political competition combined to deliver impressive outcomes in the urban regional transport system.

## **The Reign of State Bureaucrats: Transportation Planning in Paris and the Ile-de-France Region until 1975**

France has a long history of state development, strong territorialisation of political life, and robust public policies. When the Third Republic (1870-1940) granted political autonomy to 36,000 communes, it excluded Paris, which would remain directly governed by state representatives with a weak advisory council until the mid 1970s. The capital-city’s transport system was integral to the making of the French State, which was centralized around a single financial, political and administrative center. The development of the national road and the railway network followed a star-shaped system with Paris at its center. At the regional level, the rapid growth of Paris as a metropolis prompted development of an urban tramway network and suburban rail-based system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Paris metro system from

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<sup>4</sup> The authors examined archives, law and reports about transport and mobility as well as conducted a systematic press review. We completed this analysis by conducting two series of semi-structured interviews between July 2014 and June 2015 with key experts and decision-makers participating in decision-making about transport and spatial planning.

the beginning of the 20th century. Following, growing car use led to dismantlement of the urban tramway network in the 1930s and its replacement by buses.

The context of postwar reconstruction affirmed and extended the leading role of the State. Rapid population and economic growth, particularly in the inner suburbs, increased demands for transportation, housing, and urban services. The governance of the capital region, including the City of Paris, was organized according to the logic of “divide and rule,” whereby myriads of local autonomous municipalities lacked expertise, money, and resources in contrast to a powerful deconcentrated state administration (Prat 2012). In transport, pre-existing public and private urban transport operators were merged into a single, state-owned company—RATP (Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens)—that was responsible for public transport in Paris and for some segments of the suburban railway network. Similarly, the newly created state-owned railway company—SNCF (Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer)—assumed responsibility over regional railways. While the historic center relied on a dense public transport network, the inner suburbs (*petite couronne*) and emerging outer suburbs (*grande couronne*) were notoriously under-equipped.

In 1965, the conservative Gaullist government (1959-1969) reached a historic political agreement with the Communist Party, partly resulting in the introduction of long-term spatial development policy goals for the capital-city region through the Strategic Document for Urban and Spatial Planning (SDAU), formulated under the leadership of Paul Delouvrier, State Commissioner of the Ile-de-France region. Following, La Défense developed as a new business district on the western outskirts of Paris, and various suburban new towns (e.g. Saint Quentin, Marne La Vallée, Cergy Pontoise, Evry) arose some 30 kilometers away from the City of Paris, following the British experience. With transport highlighted as a major policy priority alongside housing and economic development, the SDAU included an ambitious road and railway infrastructure program to enhance regional access to the Paris transport system. It further reorganized the administrative system—the Département de la Seine was abolished and divided into four départements,<sup>5</sup> which, together with 4 other départements in the outer suburbs of Paris, were included in a new administrative region (see map below).

During this period of “strong leadership”—from the State and in particular the De Gaulle-Delouvrier tandem—transport in the capital region was dominated by engineers, planners, state agencies, civil servants in competition with each other, and, at the margin, some influential mayors and ministers.<sup>6</sup> Despite the appearance of coherence, the system was overruled by political competition between the conservative Gaullist regime and the Communist Party, which ruled over most municipalities in the inner suburbs of Paris (i.e., the “red belt”). Within the state apparatus itself, several powerful administrations<sup>7</sup> and elite groups competed for leadership over the governing of regional affairs (Estèbe and Le Galès, 2003). SNCF and RATP were run by state elites belonging to what is commonly known as

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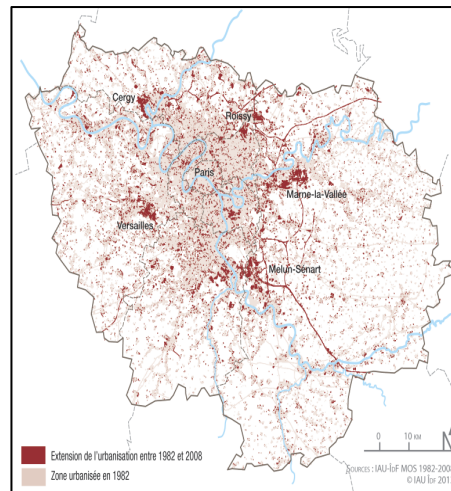
<sup>5</sup> The département is an administrative division of government below the regional level and arrondissements, which further divide into cantons and communes.

<sup>6</sup> For some, this period is considered a “golden age” in transport planning which was irremediably lost after decentralization reforms but nonetheless still justifies state interventionism; by contrast, others consider it as technocratic, contrary to the functioning of any democratic regime, and strongly oppose attempts at reviving state interventionism.

<sup>7</sup> This was particularly the case for the Ministry of Infrastructures (*Ministère des Ponts et Chaussée*, then *Ministère de l'Équipement*) and the equivalent of the Home Office (*Ministère de l'Intérieur*). Specialized state agencies were created at the regional level in order to run strategic services (e.g. water, health, housing etc.).

*Grands Corps* (the most prestigious status groups within the civil service), in cooperation and conflict with the then powerful Communist trade union<sup>8</sup>. Such level of political and organizational competition prevented any major developments in transport until the mid 1960s.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 2. Map of rapid urban growth in the Ile-de-France Region between 1982 and 2008 (already urbanized areas in 1982 featured in pink)**



(Source: IAU 2013)

**Figure 3. Map of administrative organization before and after the 1967 administrative reform**



Source: IAURIF

<sup>8</sup> Future elites—generalists and specialists, such as transport engineers—are trained in prestigious *grandes écoles*, as an alternative to universities. Most state elite bureaucrats—across state departments, public enterprises (RATP, SNCF) and in the private sector—were trained at the *Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées*, established in 1747 to train competent officers for bridges and roads. Other specialized schools include those offering practical training for Mines; Bridges and Roads; Civil Aviation and Statisticians (Bilan, Gally 2016 forthcoming).

<sup>9</sup> While the Paris metro only served the City of Paris and operated with pre-war rolling stock, only 3 km of additional metro lines were built. Several road projects were postponed. Suburban railway services remained limited, and the lack of connection between public transport networks made transfers extremely complicated.

To promote accessibility to the New Towns, the SDAU included some 900 km of regional highways to be constructed under the direct supervision of state representatives at the level of the *département*.<sup>10, 11</sup> In Paris, development of the Paris ring road (1953-1973) and highway alongside the right bank of the Seine River (1966) enabled speed in the historic city center.<sup>12</sup> The first development phase (1969-1977) of the Regional Express Rail network (RER) connected the center of Paris with the new financial District of La Défense, as well as with historic suburbs (e.g. St Germain en Laye, Nanterre, Aubervilliers) and new towns (Cergy, Marne-La-Vallée, etc.).<sup>13</sup> Considered the flagship modern public transport, it soon transported millions of daily commuters within the Paris region (Larroque et al., 2014). However, divided leadership and chaotic decision-making owing to politically-charged discussions between local mayors and state authorities, along with continued conflicts between SNCF and RATP, stymied continued progress (Sfez 1981).<sup>14</sup>

In effect, the SDAU failed to reduce inequalities within the region and created new ones. In a political system largely dominated by rural interests, urban mayors, and Paris City Council, the inner and outer suburbs of Paris, including many working class and ethnically diverse areas, failed to gain priority. While Paris faced growing levels of road congestion, it had a functional public transport system. Contrastingly, the Ile-de-france region lacked such levels of public intervention, and the rapid low-density urbanization outside the New Towns fueled increasing car use (Orfeuil and Weil, 2012).

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## **The Coming Age of Decentralization (1975-1997): Institutional Rescaling and Small-Scale Innovation**

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<sup>10</sup> Examples include the Western Highway towards Mantes (1963), the A1 (1968), and later on the A15, which serves the new town of Cergy-Pontoise, located toward the west of Paris.

<sup>11</sup> The introduction of motorway concessions—funding mechanisms targeting network users as opposed to taxpayers through toll fees—contributed to this new momentum and ensured sufficient funding for future developments and maintenance.

<sup>12</sup> Further attempts to develop urban motorways in Paris were met with strong mobilizations from residents and environmentalists in the name of heritage protection. Most projects were temporarily abandoned following the 1974 presidential election, which put an end to the Gaullist regime, and in the context of the economic crisis, but were carried out later on as part of future investments programs from the State.

<sup>13</sup> To reduce investment costs, existing railways were reopened when possible. A total investment of €1.37 billion was covered by revenues from taxes on local businesses that is, the *versement transport*. This tax was introduced in 1973 in order to finance major public transport infrastructure projects in large French cities. It is levied on all companies, both private and public, with more than 9 employees.

<sup>14</sup> In the end, SNCF and RATP shared ownership and the daily operation of the network.



Decentralization reforms beginning in the 1970s—the election of the mayor of Paris from 1977, the 1982 Decentralization Laws, which progressively devolved considerable powers to subnational levels of government across policy domains,<sup>15</sup> and creation of the Ile-de-france Regional Council in 1986—did not necessarily expand municipal autonomy in urban transport. A telltale sign of the State’s reluctance to devolve authority to the capital-city region was when the 1982 Domestic Transport Act equipped elected mayors with new resources to develop strong public transport alternatives at the metropolitan level with the exception of the entire Ile-de-France Region (Vincent et al., 2014; Hall 2015).

## **TRANSPORT GAINS LOW POLITICAL PRIORITY IN THE CITY OF PARIS**

The election of Jacques Chirac, former Prime Minister and leading figure of the Conservative Party<sup>16</sup>, as the first mayor of Paris, potentially enhanced the city’s capacity to extract resources from the central government. Moreover, the Paris City Council gained access to increased policy resources, including a large autonomous administration and budget. Yet his administration appeared more concerned with cultural flagship projects that rivaled those of President Mitterand (Urfalino 1994). In this context, transport was not considered “urban,” that is, an area in which urban authorities developed their own thinking; nor did it emerge as a policy priority on the local political agenda—being considered “low” politics and mostly restricted to traffic planning. Further, transport initiatives required the mayor to negotiate with state elites in the regional administrations who oversaw traffic congestion and the expansion of road capacity, as well as with RATP, which took over the organization of public transport services (metro and bus networks)—a daunting task.

While Chirac’s transport policy primarily combined parking management and planning tools as a way to increase roadspace for car traffic,<sup>17</sup> popular mobilizations against the negative externalities of car traffic prompted his administration to introduce alternative measures. In 1982, following the accident of the cycling advocate Jacques Essel, Chirac introduced a plan of some 80 km of “courtesy corridors” for cyclists. Yet this project faced strong resistance from members of the city administration as well as state representatives, who opposed taking away road space from car traffic. In addition, RATP bus drivers strongly opposed the idea of opening bus lanes, which they had fought hard for and obtained in 1975, to cyclists, considered a hindrance to bus operations. In an attempt to reconcile these conflicting goals and interests, the City of Paris decided to locate “courtesy corridors” between bus and car traffic lanes. Soon renamed “corridors of death,” these initiatives were not only brought to an end, but cycling became a political taboo for almost 20 years. In 1999, Mayor Chirac’s successor, Jean Tiberi, finally succeeded at implementing a cycle plan (introduced January 1996), developing two major cycling axes in the city and assigning cyclists the right to use enlarged bus lanes that were also physically separated from car traffic—no doubt a lesson gleaned from the previous administration’s failed efforts.

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<sup>15</sup> These were matched with decentralization of funding or matching financial mechanisms, such as the State-Region Contract Plans.

<sup>16</sup> He later served two terms as President of the Republic (1995-2007).

<sup>17</sup> In addition to building permits, this was also achieved through concession agreements with private firms.

As popular mobilizations had compelled the Chirac administration to explore alternatives to private motorized transport, Mayor Jean Tiberi faced increasing public concerns about noise and air pollution, which required policy response. As part of the national debate about the 1996 Law on Air Quality, the city administration overseeing quality of life issues developed new tools linking traffic congestion to levels of noise (Zittoun 2007), although the mayor neglected to provide the political support needed to develop it into a comprehensive policy tool. Moreover, lacking transport connectivity to large-scale housing development and urban renewal programs alongside the Boulevard Périphérique in the south of Paris prompted the Tiberi administration to consider urban tramway proposals, traditionally under the jurisdiction of state authorities. The first proposal, developed by the centralized transport sector (SNCF, RATP and Transport Ministry), sought to transform an existing railway line into an urban tramway line alongside the Boulevard Périphérique<sup>18</sup>. The city administration developed a second proposal—the “Boulevard des Maréchaux alternative”—advocating the construction of an ex-nihilo urban tramway network alongside this circular inner-ring road. Urban planners argued that the main rationale of transport networks and systems was not mass transportation at highest possible speed, but rather to contribute to developing high quality urban public space and mobility at the neighborhood level. While the city’s proposal entailed higher infrastructure and operating costs,<sup>19</sup> the strategic location of the urban tramway project also promoted access by a greater number of residents and daily commuters. In addition to attracting widespread interest as a major opportunity for public investment, the city’s proposal even gained support from the Socialist-Green opposition due to its expected reduction of car traffic, noise and air pollution. In the absence of sufficient policy resources, Mayor Tiberi was unable to overcome competition between the two proposals, resulting in policy impasse (Zittoun 2008). However, what became known as the “tramway controversy” highlighted the importance of developing local knowledge, expertise, policy capacity, and broad-based support in the area of transport.<sup>20</sup>

## **IN THE SHADOWS OF PARIS: FAILED LEADERSHIP AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL**

As with the direct mayoral elections in Paris, the creation of a new, democratically elected level of government the regional level—the Ile-de-france Regional Council—far from guaranteed regional autonomy in transport planning and implementation. With decentralization, State-Region Contracts (*Contrat de Plan Etat Region*) required joint decisions by the central government and regional council on transport investments and policy priorities.<sup>21</sup> In reality, state bureaucrats retained the upper hand and stymied institutionalization of policy proposals and plans, as in the cases of the 1994-2000 State-Region Contract and the 1994 Regional Strategic development plan (SDRIF). Both documents largely reaffirmed the 1965 Strategic Document for Urban and Spatial Planning (SDAU) in terms of continuing a polycentric model of regional spatial development and

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<sup>18</sup> In addition to land availability, this option offered a higher distance-speed ratio—28 km/hour—and a capacity of 17,000 passengers per hour. Its estimated costs amounted to € 270 million.

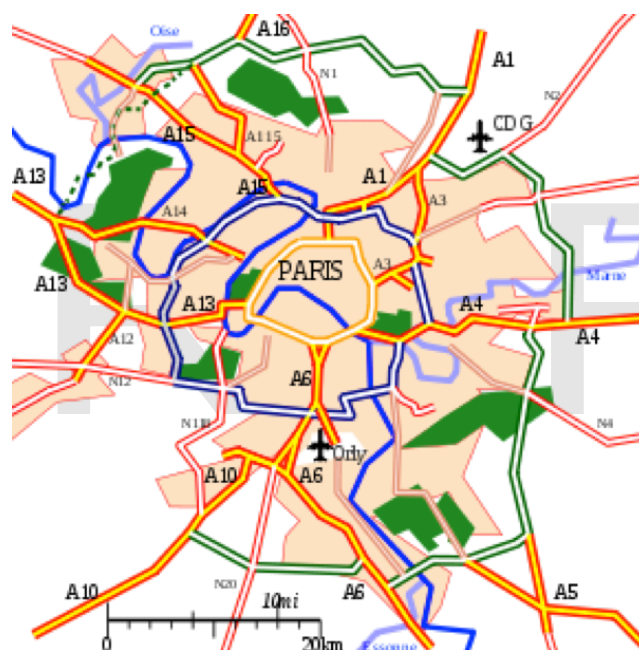
<sup>19</sup> Respectively €320 million due to land acquisitions, additional stops and the transformation of existing road network and regarding operating costs, they were also estimated higher due to lower distance-speed ratio (15 to 20 km / hour) and capacity of some 10,500/12,500 passengers per hour.

<sup>20</sup> The Paris tramway controversy is developed into more details in Section 5.

<sup>21</sup> In principle, the State favored a more hands-off approach in the capital region and transferred most of its competencies and policy resources to subnational levels of government.

maintaining the capital region's centrality as a national and major European hub. The powerful National Road Directorate secured €1.5 billion as part of the State-Region Contract to develop several ring roads in parallel to the Boulevard Périphérique and accommodate the rapid development of car use in the wider region, with the support of private developers and the influential building industry.<sup>22</sup> It further identified a series of secondary regional hubs, including new towns and the airports, and expressed a clear preference for highways at the expense of the secondary road network.<sup>23</sup> In the absence of regional coordination capacity around spatial planning, competition between municipalities accelerated low-density urbanization and urban sprawl. The growing mismatch between a centralized and insufficient public transport system on the one hand, and the redistribution of urban functions, residences, jobs and services on the other hand directly contributed to increased dependence on the automobile and congestion (Desjardins and Drevelle 2014).

**Figure 4. Map of Ile-de-france road system (as of 2014)**



(Source: DiRIEF)

Though the State now only financed a third of capital investments in transport, state administrative elites, affiliated with RATP and SNCF as well as successive Prime Ministers' cabinets, continued to dominate transport planning and implementation. RATP and SNCF, jockeying to gain the lead over regional public transport provision, aggressively competed for

<sup>22</sup> Several firms, such as Vinci Autoroute (ASF network), Abertis (Sanef network) and Eiffage-Macquarie group (APPR/AREA network), now operate the network through motorway concessions. Over time, increased coordination was needed to reduce traffic congestion throughout the region. The SYTADIN system was introduced in order to measure traffic and produce real-time information. Today, the Ile-de-France motorway network accommodates 4 million users daily and is placed under the supervision of a single state administrative division at regional level, the Direction des Routes de la Région Ile-de-France (DiRIF).

<sup>23</sup> This remains underdeveloped to date.

new infrastructure development.<sup>24</sup> Eventually receiving an equal division of resources, they appropriated resources that would have otherwise helped maintain the existing network and support an integrated approach to transport planning in the wider region. In the city of Paris, RATP and SNCF prevailed in constructing a large tunnel, which concentrated traffic around the Châtelet-Les Halles Station, in place of an orbital ring road around Paris that would have relieved traffic on radial routes, thus exacerbating congestion and delays. Additionally, each organization developed its own flagship project—a new metro line in Paris (Meteor) for RATP, alongside the existing RER A line, and a new RER line (Eole) for SNCF—which not only furthered centralization of the network but also diverted funding from maintenance, renovation, and extension on existing RER and Metro lines.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, SNCF revised its funding priorities to favor the development of high-speed to the detriment of the suburban train network despite increasing ridership. The result was chronic underinvestment in public transport, sluggish development and lacking reliability of the RER (Goldberg 2012), and an ageing suburban train system. For many observers within and outside the state administration, the RATP-SNCF conflicts, particularly the Eole-Meteor, signaled weakening political leadership and institutional trauma.

Lacking capacity to pose and develop an alternative to state interventionism, regional municipalities tended to *react against* existing political debates and policies. In implementing the 1994-2000 State-Region Contract, the State failed to provide adequate funding and other promised goods, resulting in delayed investments, as is often the case with contracts between local authorities and the French government. However, other metropolitan areas did not face the level of institutional and organizational fragmentation—for instance, involving RATP and SNCF—which hindered development of cooperative mechanisms (Larroque et al, 2002). Yet the region absorbed unanimous blame for increased congestion, the low quality of transport outside Paris, and the outer city urban crisis.<sup>26</sup> As transport became the symbol of governance failure in the capital-city region, the Socialist, Communist and Green Parties each picked up the issue to strengthen their respective positions. Outside Paris, the parties drew on support from working and lower middle class residents, who disproportionately absorbed the burdens of the ageing and insufficient transport network, to denounce growing inequalities within the wider region and cast blame on the State and the Conservative Party.

Nonetheless, such political contention and dissonance accelerated the maturation of the Ile-de-france Regional Council, helped articulate suburban municipal interests, and facilitated policy experimentation and innovation. For instance, in the Seine-Saint-Denis Département, strong Communist mayors in Saint-Denis, Bobigny, and La Courneuve successfully developed their own urban tramway systems during the 1990s (prior to Paris). In particular, the December 1995 General Strike catalyzed a paradigm shift away from the automobile-centered policy in the capital-city region. As the public transport network was completely paralyzed for three long weeks, users spontaneously turned to cycling, car sharing, and other alternative transport solutions en masse. In so doing, the strike unexpectedly demonstrated to policymakers across levels of government that various transport alternatives existed and

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<sup>24</sup> Each company developed its own technical solution for new rapid-transit capacity: SNCF championed a rail-based solution—Eole—while the RATP favored an automated metro line—Meteor. In the end, both projects were eventually adopted, with the construction of the RER E line by SNCF, and the metro line 14 by the RATP.

<sup>25</sup> Additional projects included the extension of the RER D line, some renovation of the RER network and the slow extension of some metro lines in communes next to Paris.

<sup>26</sup> Users groups mobilized against the bad quality of suburban train services in the working class district of Mantes La Jolie and in the outer suburbs of Seine et Marne.

should be encouraged beyond Paris. The regional council put out a specific grant for financing additional public transport investments during the 1994-2000 funding period. Following the January 1996 release of the Tiberi Administration' cycle plan for Paris,<sup>27</sup> it further made efforts to encourage cycling at the regional level as part of the Regional Plan for Soft Mobility (May 1996).<sup>28</sup> Where such measures largely existed at the margins in the capital-city region, the election of a Socialist-Green majority at both the regional level (1998) and in Paris (2001) would emerge as strong policy alternatives to the dominant approach to transport.

## **The Making of a New Mode of Urban Regional Governance Under the Left-Green Alliance (1997-2015): Innovation, New Policies, and Political Conflict**

Following the election of a Socialist-Green majority in the city of Paris, the new Socialist Mayor, Bertrand Delanoé, assumed leadership over a ruling majority including various parties of the left but most importantly the Greens. The Parisian Greens had singled out transport and mobility as their key policy issue since their time of opposition to the right wing mayors, Chirac and Tiberi. Drawing their strength from a strong base of social movements and neighborhood-based organizations as well as impressive electoral results, they highlighted transport and mobility as priority areas for municipal policy intervention in negotiating the coalition agreement with the Socialist Party. As the interests of the two parties aligned on this issue as well as urban planning and environmental protection, transport and mobility gained a large share of the municipal budget, while Green Party members were appointed as deputy mayors (Pichon 2012).

### **PARIS TAKES THE LEAD: THE SOCIALIST-GREEN COALITION AND THE INVENTION OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY**

#### **The Socialist-Green Agenda for Transport**

As Delanoé's Deputy Mayor for Transport (2001-2008), the prominent Green Party representative Denis Baupin promoted a radical transformation of transport and mobility in Paris, investing massive political resources despite strong resistance from pro-car interests,

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<sup>27</sup> In Paris, the Tiberi administration elaborated and presented a cycle plan in January 1996 that included the development of two major cycling axes in Paris (A 6 km north-south axis and a 7 km long east-west axes) as well as the right for cyclists to use bus lanes (effectively implemented in 1999). Bus lanes were subsequently enlarged and physically separated from car traffic.

<sup>28</sup> This laid the groundwork for a cycling policy in the Ile-de-France region, which would come to fruition after 1998 upon election of the Socialist-Green majority.

RATP and SNCF, and state administration.<sup>29</sup> For the first time, the City of Paris developed an integrated approach to transport and mobility, first focusing on the reduction of car use by enhancing public transport before including sustainable transport modes such as cycling and walking. Widely considered a major political success contributing the reelection of the left in Paris in 2008 and 2014, the programme became a source for inspiration to other cities worldwide. That the left coalition—including the Socialists, Greens, and Communists—won three consecutive elections and has governed Paris for 14 years has enabled the systematic development of transport innovations over time.<sup>30</sup>

Mayor Delanoé additionally used transport as a cornerstone for transforming central-local power relations. Previous debates over the development of a circular urban tram network alongside the city’s outer borders had demonstrated for the Socialist Party the necessity of Green Party support in exceeding the city’s traditional areas of intervention and competences in transport—road traffic and parking (Zittoun 2008). Aside from forming a majority within the city, they also needed to successfully mobilize at regional and state levels and against transport operators to promote an urban approach to transport and mobility issues. Green Party representatives helped develop joint actions across levels of government and in various legislative assemblies, exerting strong and continued pressure for sustainable urban transport, in part by mobilizing constituent social and economic groups.

Yet the role of the socialist-green coalition as well as its collaborative dynamics should not be overstated. Some of the proposed transport measures were inherited from the Tiberi administration or inspired from experiences of other French or European cities, such as the Velib bike-sharing system (first experimented in Vienna, La Rochelle and Lyon) (Huré, 2012). Most decisions on transport entailed lengthy negotiations within the ruling coalition on a case-by-case basis and according to budgetary and political constraints. During Delanoé’s first mayoral term, significant portions of the municipal budget were allocated to transport issues, but subsequent competition with other policy issues such as housing reduced budget allocations in the second term (Foing 2012)<sup>31</sup>. The table below provides an assessment of proposed policy measures and the extent to which they were implemented.

**Figure 5. The Socialist-Green coalition in action**

Policy measures	Formal adoption	Effective implementation
Urban tramway network alongside the Boulevard des Maréchaux	2000 (Tiberi administration) and 2003 public enquiry	2006 – 1 <sup>st</sup> extension between 2009 and 2012; 2 <sup>nd</sup> extension underway
Urban tramway network within the inner-city	Failed	

<sup>29</sup> He developed his agenda in favor of car reduction in a book published in 2007, « Tout voiture, no future ».

<sup>30</sup> Delanoé was elected twice (2001-2014) and his deputy Anne Hidalgo was elected Mayor in 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Baupin and the Greens obtained poor results during the 2008 electoral campaign; he remained deputy mayor for environment, whereas transport and mobility issues were allocated to Annick Lepetit (socialist party).

Transform several areas of Paris into “green areas”.		Mostly in left-wing Arrondissements
Develop a local mobility plan for Paris (in complement to the Ile-de-France Region urban mobility plan)	Failed	
Creation of a green network	2006	Very limited
Dismantling of urban expressways and development of right-of-way bus lanes	2001-2007 and 2008-2014	Progressive but systematic (Boulevard Magenta, Jean Jaurès, etc.)
Access to the Seine River	2008-2014	Southern way closed in 2013 and northern side to be transformed.
Development of a cycling network - Vélib	2007	2007 through a public-private partnership with JC Decaux (as opposed to free access) – Extended to adjacent municipalities after 2009

### The Invention of a Parisian Model of Urban Sustainable Transport

The Parisian approach to sustainable transport relies on the transformation of urban public space as a way to reduce road space available for automobile traffic (Deroubaix and Leheis, 2011).<sup>32</sup> The approach grew out of the Tiberi-era controversy over the Parisian urban tramway, more specifically the second proposal developed by the city administration, which failed to gain political consensus and policy traction but nevertheless carried important consequences. Thereupon, the Socialist-Green coalition prioritized transport and mobility issues as part of their respective programs and accumulated knowledge and other resources to develop alliances and partnerships across levels of government as well as inside and outside the city administration with urban planners and local communities. Following the election of Mayor Delanoé, the administration formally chose the second proposal for implementation against strong opposition from local shop-owners, the right-wing party (Rally for the Republic/Union for a Popular Movement), and adjacent municipalities.

Strategically tapping into public concerns about noise (going back to the Chirac era), the city introduced a series of measures to reduce car use throughout Mayor Delanoé’s first term (2001-2008). While emphasizing a low profile issue—noise—instead of the highly contentious issue of car use, the Deputy Mayor of Environmental Affairs, Yves Contassot (Green Party), leveraged national funds made available by new national legislation encouraging introduction of traffic calming measures and development of pedestrian zones as part of urban regeneration programs. Drawing on the noise measurement and location tools previously developed under the Tiberi administration, the city further developed tools for monitoring and raising public awareness (e.g., noise maps, noise measuring stations and an anti-noise observatory). As an alternative to the Préfecture’s existing approach (Zittoun 2007), it promoted a comprehensive strategy against noise that combined urban and street design, reduction of road space available to cars, and construction of right-of-way bus and cycle lanes.<sup>33</sup> The city transformed various squares to reduce parking and road space and promote alternative uses of public spaces, including walking, cycling and leisure activities.

<sup>32</sup> This stands in contrast with congestion pricing and other economic tools favored in places like London.

<sup>33</sup> The latter would not only entail taking away parking spaces on roads, which dated back to the Chirac and Tiberi administrations, but further lead to taking cars off the roads altogether.

Such efforts proceeded with greater intensity following the 2008 national decree in favor of pedestrian priority zones.<sup>34</sup>

In combination with such low profile, incremental policies, the Delanoé administration launched flagship initiatives such as reclaiming public access to the Seine River. Again, the city did not frame it as a transport initiative but as part of the Delanoé administration's efforts to "give Paris back to its inhabitants." It began with small-scale, interim programs such as Paris Plage (2002), which temporarily closed off large urban motorways on the banks of the Seine to create artificial beaches. This seasonal event built on ongoing practice since the 1990s of closing the highway on Sundays for pedestrians and cyclists and expanded the time to several weeks during the summer. Combined with seasonal leisure activities and mixed uses, Paris Plage attracted a growing number of users every summer and contributed to the city's worldwide self-positioning as a liveable city and hotspot of experimentation in transport and mobility services (in competition with London and other world cities)<sup>35</sup>. Beyond active urban marketing, access to the river bank signified a major step towards regaining space from the private car and was later included in Mayor Delanoé's transport strategy. Following, in 2012, the City of Paris decided to pedestrianize a section of the urban highway flanking the left bank of the Seine. In 2013, the southern route (Rive Gauche) was closed in 2013 and the proposed conversion of the northern route (Rive Droite)—the George-Pompidou urban motorway—into an urban boulevard became a hotly debated topic during the 2014 municipal election campaign.

This decade-long planning process carried long-term consequences for urban transport and mobility agenda setting in Paris. First, it contributed to the development of a uniquely Parisian approach to sustainable urban mobility. It relied upon the city's extensive capacity for developing autonomous policy alternatives without necessarily receiving support from transport authorities and operators (RATP, SNCF, Ministry of transport). It also highlighted the instrumental role of transport for developing large-scale urban renewal programs in areas located at the margins of the capital-city. It further targeted the automobile as a source of nuisance and actively sought to reduce car use by developing alternative transportation and reclaiming available road space for other uses. Second, by highlighting the urban dimension of transport and mobility, this strategy contributed to further differentiating the Socialist-Green policy offer from that of the Conservative Party, but also, from those of the Socialist and Green Parties at the regional and national level.

## **RESOURCE ACCUMULATION AND RENEGOTIATING POWER RELATIONS IN TRANSPORT**

An innovative dimension of Mayor Delanoé's strategy for increasing the autonomy of the City of Paris relied upon systematic resource accumulation in terms of funding and expertise. A pivotal measure was the reorganization of tendering procedures throughout the city administration and Delanoé's successive terms as a way to break with Chirac and Tiberi era clientelistic arrangements by encouraging competition. In the case of transport and mobility, the resource accumulation strategy entailed considerable administrative changes—reshuffling

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<sup>34</sup> These initiatives drew on a new generation of policy principles such as the protection of vulnerable users, which were made operational through changes in the Highway Code, including 30km/h zones.

<sup>35</sup> Interviews with Mobility Agency, May 2015 and City of Paris, Department for Transport, February 2016.



funding priorities in favor of transport and urban renewal, reorganizing administrative resources under the supervision of the Traffic Department, and creating the Mobility Agency (2011) with a concentration on research and innovations activities. The Delanoé administration further pursued funding outside of the transport sector (e.g. urban regeneration, environmental protection, EU) while negotiating new power relations with RATP and creating innovative forms of public-private partnerships.

In developing the first Parisian tramway line, the city reframed the transport project as part of a larger urban renewal programme, effectively enlarging the scope of stakeholders and drawing on policy resources and tools from the urban planning sector, including the powerful urban development agency (APUR). Meanwhile, RATP underwent organizational restructuring in response to decentralization reforms and the growing role of local municipalities in the funding and organization of transport. In 2001, it opened a local agency in Paris, which was largely autonomous in overseeing the daily management of the bus network and leadership over project development, such as the opening of new bus and urban tramway lines. The local agency primarily attracted engineers sympathetic to the Socialist-Green sustainable urban mobility plan,<sup>36</sup> as well as members of the Communist majority union in RATP with previous experience in the development of urban tramways in the Seine Saint Denis Département. As a result, this agency played a critical role in advising the first Delanoé administration (2001-2008) to develop some of its flagship projects in the field of transport—Urban Tramway Lines 1 and 2, Rapid Transit Bus Line 91, and the City of Paris Mobility and Transport Plans.<sup>37</sup> Over time—paralleling trends in the city administration—new generations of highly skilled engineers sought to join this project development team in contrast to their predecessors who had preferred SNCF (e.g., high-speed, Transilien, Eole) and RATP (meteor) flagship projects. Throughout France, continued decentralization reforms and massive investments in urban mobility across large metropolitan areas elevated urban mobility and transportation from marginal status among transport engineers and state elites to a prominent issue and a highly sought after experience.<sup>38</sup>

The City of Paris further used its strengthened knowledge in the area of urban transport to explore alternative funding solutions and transportation services as in the case of the Paris Velib bicycle sharing system. As argued by Huré (2012), the system itself is less considered a major innovation in transport than the underlying economic model (see also Boullier, 2014). While the Greens envisioned a publicly-funded cycling network for Paris, Mayor Delanoé and the Socialist Party drew inspiration from the work achieved in Lyon by another Socialist-Green coalition—a bicycle sharing system operated through a concession by JC Decaux, a family-owned and French-based advertising company company.<sup>39</sup> The Parisian Velib

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<sup>36</sup> In some cases, these pioneers were members of the Green Party themselves and had served as technical advisers to Dominique Voynet (green Environmental Minister between 1997 and 2001) (Interviews with RATP representatives, May and June 2015).

<sup>37</sup> This was despite little initial interest by RATP management in the development of urban tramways.

<sup>38</sup> This process culminated after 2010 with SNCF creating its own subsidiary Keolis and proclaiming itself an urban mobility service provider. A similar process takes place in the transport industry.

<sup>39</sup> JC Decaux specializes in street furniture and holds 80% of the French market. Its economic model is simple: the installation and maintaining of a large range of street furniture is financed through a monopoly on advertising revenues. As the company wished to increase its long-standing partnership with the city of Lyon against its main competitor, the American based company Clear Channel, it proposed the development of a metropolitan bicycle sharing system in exchange for renewing its contract for the next 13 years. The Velov system was introduced in Lyon in 2004 and marketed worldwide by both JC Decaux and the Grand Lyon as a major innovation in the field of urban mobility.

system, introduced in 2007, was developed on a similar basis but on a much larger scale in terms of the number of bicycles per inhabitants and geographical coverage. Also, incorporating the Visa credit card system, Paris enhanced access to include non-residents (Boullier 2014).<sup>40</sup> With the Velib system constituting the most visible component, the urban cycling network has vastly expanded, with some 700-km of cycling lanes planned since 2001, of which 65% was effectively built by 2014. In 2013, introduction of the Autolib', an electric car sharing system, incorporated a similar public-private partnership with the Bolloré Group,<sup>41</sup> which then used Autolib' as an opportunity to promote its electric car system, Blue Car, at the international level.

Finally, internationalization triggered small-scale experimentation in transport and mobility through the use of benchmarks, bids for European funding and active participation in European and International networks of cities. The search for alternative funding sources also facilitated research and development activities, sometimes in partnership with universities, state-owned enterprises (RATP, EDF) but rarely with the Region and the State. Such experimentation offered a unique opportunity to explore new dimensions of urban transport on a short-term basis and at lower cost, while at the same time, drawing on findings and results to develop coherent citywide policies and programs.<sup>42</sup>

## **The End of Unilateralism? Competition for Leadership Over Transport in the Ile-de-France Region**

As the City of Paris gained considerable financial and political autonomy and developed an approach to sustainable urban transport that prioritized policy demands and priorities catering to its own residents rather than the State, it faced strong criticism from suburban municipalities within the Ile-de-France region, which problematized the profound inequalities between Paris and the inner suburbs. At the same time, major transformations were also taking place at the regional level. Following the election of a Socialist-Green- Communist majority in 1998 with Jean-Paul Huchon (Socialist Party) at its head, the Ile-de-France Regional Council gained new policy resources in the field of transport, including support from suburban municipalities. The budget and autonomy of the regional council were far below that of Paris City Council, even as staff and budget size as well as the level of expertise rise rapidly under Huchon (1998-2015). Yet the regional level became increasingly important, as successive decentralization reforms transferred authority over regional spatial planning and mobility and transport planning from the State to the region. Besides having its own Planning and Development Agency (Institut d'Aménagement et d'urbanisme—IAU),

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<sup>40</sup> This is a major difference with the choice made in other large metropolitan cities worldwide, in which the bicycle sharing system is limited to city residents or to public transport users.

<sup>41</sup> The Bolloré Group is a large French-based company specializing in transport, logistics and advertising among others.

<sup>42</sup> Current efforts now lie with urban logistics, electromobility, and the management of big data.

the regional council took over the Regional Transport Authority—Parisian Transport Syndicat (STP), renamed Syndicat des Transports d’Ile-de-France (STIF) in 2004.

### **The STIF facilitates inter-municipal negotiation and new forms of cooperation**

Despite competition in the field of planning, mainly due to the historic rivalry between the regional and Parisian development agencies (IAU versus APUR), the STIF emerged as a preferred arena for inter-municipal negotiation and new forms of cooperation. Besides providing a venue for political and technical discussions about operationalizing transport policy goals in the capital-city region, including the City of Paris,<sup>43</sup> STIF gained additional capacity to effectively negotiate new policy goals with transport operators and local authorities while streamlining policy offers across the region. From 2000 onwards, it introduced bilateral short-term contracts between the two main transport operators (RATP and SNCF) to enhance the quality of transport service delivery and internal management.<sup>44</sup> STIF further oversaw negotiations on spending allocations of versement transport revenues and defined the tax rate for versement transport across the region—the STIF’s largest source of income (39.1% of total operating revenue in 2014)<sup>45</sup>, together with fare revenues (29.7%)<sup>46</sup> and local, regional and state subsidies (19.2%)<sup>47</sup>.

In Paris, Denis Baupin, Deputy Mayor for Transport, and the Greens clearly led the urban sustainability mobility agenda, while at the regional level, Mayor Delanoé and Pierre Mansat, Deputy Mayor for Territorial Cooperation and Community Party member, initiated informal cooperation between the City of Paris and suburban municipalities as part of the “Paris Métropole Initiative.”<sup>48</sup> Drawing on Mansat’s political network within the “red suburbs” of Paris, they forged new scopes for cooperation in the field of transport, energy, and housing and to enhance urban services in the inner suburbs. Moreover, in the area of transport, Mansat successfully negotiated the support of suburban municipalities for expanding existing transport systems beyond the City of Paris, offering in turn the city’s support during funding negotiations with the Region, the STIF, and the State. In revising—and subsequently raising—the versement transport rate and facilitating agreement on differentiated rates between the City of Paris and the inner and outer suburbs, STIF became the effective setting for negotiating transport planning and implementation in the capital-city region. In exchange for more autonomy, the City of Paris agreed to develop new mobility services at its own cost. This occurred partly at the expenses of outer suburbs, where the quality and density of

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<sup>43</sup> As the regional public transport authority regional planning and funding in the field of public transport, it brings together the Region, 8 Conseils Généraux (Départements) and the City of Paris, it oversees.

<sup>44</sup> The current programming period runs between 2012 and 2015.

<sup>45</sup> It is defined by the STIF as a percentage of companies’ payroll and within a ceiling that is fixed by the government. Currently, the rate applied is 2.6% for companies located in Paris and the Hauts-de-Seine County; 1.7% for those in Seine-Saint-Denis and Val-de-Marne Counties; and 1.4% in the outer ring of the region.

<sup>46</sup> Since 1982, public and private employers in the region must reimburse 50% of their employees’ season fares. In 2014, their contribution represented 9.3% of all operation expenses.

<sup>47</sup> Since 2004, the State has stopped subsidizing operating costs, apart from school transport, and State funds are available mainly for capital investment. The regional council and counties provide funding that cover for the costs of discounted fares, and local governments also directly fund public transport subsidies. Other income sources include advertising and proceeds from traffic fines collected at the regional level (2.7% of STIF’s budget).

<sup>48</sup> The City of Paris much depended on the support of suburban municipalities in dismantling urban motorways in the city center and reducing road space available for cars.

transport services are lower, and later justified the introduction of a single, region-wide tariff zone in 2015.

## Towards the Liveable Region? The Upscaling of the Sustainable Mobility Agenda

Reversing the historic trend whereby the regional/national motorway network expanded into the City of Paris, discussions at the regional level around the 2007 Regional Spatial Planning Document (SDRIF) and the 2008 Regional Mobility Plan considered expanding the Parisian sustainable transport model towards the inner suburbs. Both documents advocated an approach to spatial planning and transport that sought to “give the region back to its inhabitants” and increase liveability and quality of life. For the first time, the regional council led the planning process with the support of IAU, the Planning and Development Agency,<sup>49</sup> concertedly promoting a more collaborative approach to policy design and planning, partly as a way to limit urban sprawl in the region and re-urbanize existing urban centers. Within STIF, a capacity-oriented and infrastructure-led approach to transport gave way to a focus on improving public transport service quality. STIF signed performance-based operation agreements with the region’s main transport operators—RATP and SNCF—to expand the metro, develop the urban tramway, and extend right-of-way bus lanes beyond the Boulevard Périphérique. In 2001, it introduced *Mobilien*, high service bus routes operating at the regional level, and made significant efforts to provide region-wide travel information, change the tariff policy, and install new ticketing systems (e.g., Imagine R card for students, creation of the Ticket t<sup>50</sup>).

Suburban municipalities additionally relied on alternative resources to accelerate the diffusion of sustainable mobility. A new piece of national environmental legislation formally opened the scope for experimentation in the urban mobility area. After 2008, funding support became available for development of alternative transportation systems, car and bike renting systems, congestion charges, and electric cars. The State strictly monitored its implementation through successive competitive calls for projects (respectively in 2008 and 2011) to which both the industry and specific types of municipalities (i.e. medium-sized cities, deprived neighborhoods, and interurban mobility) could apply. Extended beyond Paris city borders, the Vélib’ system now accounts for a total of 23,000 bikes (or 1 for 97 in 2014) and 1,800 stations in Paris and 30 adjacent municipalities. In constituting the most visible part of the burgeoned a cycling network throughout the region, the Velib system also provoked a shift away from an auto-centric approach in the inner suburbs in favor of alternative transportation beyond public transport. Municipalities and départements negotiated cycling infrastructure investments as part of successive Regional Mobility Plans (see also table below), in part, spurring development of “cycling gateways” connecting

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<sup>49</sup> Among the ranks of the Ile-de-France Regional Council, the new Vice President of Transport, Pierre Serne, was a former advisor to Baupin in the City of Paris Baupin himself was elected as an MP in 2012, and paid less attention altogether to transport and mobility issues as he became vice president of the French Parliament.

<sup>50</sup> The ticket t is a single trip ticket common to all transport companies

various cycling networks. As with the Velib system, the Autolib' system was developed across 64 municipalities.

**Figure 6. Cycling networks in the Ile-de-France Region—  
Planned vs. achieved between 2000 and 2012**

	<b>Planned (in km)</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Level of achievement (%)</b>
<b>Paris (75)</b>	700	400	63
<b>Val-de-Marne (94)</b>	480	200	41
<b>Yvelines (78)</b>	500	278	56
<b>Essone (91)</b>	427	71,5	17
<b>Val d'Oise (95)</b>	500	100	20
<b>Seine-et-Marne (77)</b>	1300	541	42
<b>Total</b>	4172	2522	60

Together, these municipal initiatives fostered a major shift in regional transport policy goal setting. Drawing on the preparatory work done by the STIF as part of the Regional Mobility Plan (PDUIF), the Socialist-Green majority sought to develop its own sustainable transport plan and to further differentiate itself from both the State and the municipalities. In contrast to the 1994 version, the 2007 SDRIF was defined by smaller scale and more incremental investments along with a more autonomous vision of the capital region's future development that prioritized policy objectives serving the region's residents rather than the State. In contrast to the 1994 SDRIF, public transport and the development of sustainable transportation received much attention.<sup>51</sup> In place of a radial network towards the City of Paris, it aimed, on the one hand, to develop direct and rapid connections between large urban and economic centers in the periphery, and on the other hand, to forge new interconnections between existing networks and the new circular axes. To fund the plan, the region suggested a 10-year investment programme co-funded by the region, the State, the Départements and the municipalities for a total amount of €19 billion. Political debates on the new transport plan became exceptionally heated, both within the regional council and among the region, the State, and local authorities. Besides accusations that the plan was overly driven by party politics and the Socialist-Green coalition, the region received blame for the purported absence of a "grand vision", lack of political ambition, and incapacity to foster agreement about the economic future of the Paris-Ile-de-France region. With strong levels of distrust and conflicts also characterizing State-region administrative relations, state representatives in the region repeatedly challenged their regional counterparts.

The State's reaction to the 2007 SDRIF came as a great surprise when the newly elected president Sarkozy's 2007 instead presented the Grand Paris Strategy,<sup>52</sup> widely understood as

<sup>51</sup> It also puts less emphasis on roads and more so on regional trains and maintenance. It should be noted that road competencies also evolved following the 2004 decentralization reform. All national roads that are not part of the national motorway network were transferred to the départements.

<sup>52</sup> It was held on the occasion of the opening of a new satellite at Charles de Gaulle airport on June 26, 2007: <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/077002121.html>

a war declaration against the region and, more generally, a clear denial of local autonomy. Making clear references to the pre-1975 period and the “Golden Age” of regional planning under state leadership, Sarkozy’s strategic plan for the capital region by 2030 publicly challenged the regional government’s legitimacy and blamed local authorities for their supposed inability to foster cooperative dynamics in the Ile-de-France region. As a former local elected representative of the affluent western suburb of Paris,<sup>53</sup> he was particularly critical of the notion that regional strategic planning might prioritize the demands and interests of residents than promoting the role and function of Ile-de-France as the capital city-region. Blocking the formal adoption of the 2007 SDRIF, Sarkozy commenced the “battle over the Grand Paris project,” which would last until 2013 and reach far beyond the scope of this chapter. Yet this debate also confirmed the strength and salience of the sustainable urban transport approach that developed in Paris and diffused towards the inner suburbs, while at the same time, accelerating the emergence of a regional transport model as a reaction to state interventionism. With support from Ile-de-France region MPs and across political parties, Parliament developed a strong alternative to the Sarkozy Grand Paris strategy, and in turn, local elected representatives bypassed party politics and territorial competition to achieve political consensus on the vision for regional transport and formalize it as the 2010 Grand Paris Law. The conflict further revealed continued mistrust on the part of state elites against regional organization and local autonomy in transport and spatial planning, as indicated by the creation of the new state-owned organization, Société du Grand Paris, for the purpose of planning and developing new infrastructures (e.g., orbital railway, several metro lines) and raising capital investments. Finally, the State continued its “divide and rule” strategy—cognizant of the enduring conflicts among RATP and SNCF over the larger transport system and their detrimental consequences, it willfully neglected to impose major changes to disentangle their respective networks (Carrez, 2010; Goldberg, 2012).

## Conclusion

In sum, transport developments in Paris and the Ile-de-France region over the past four decades reveal dialectics between multiple initiatives and conflicting political leadership on the one hand, and the incremental making of a mode of governance, with massive and transformative outcomes on the other. Beyond political leadership, negotiation and reaction

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<sup>53</sup> N. Sarkozy built his entire political career at the local level, in the municipality of Neuilly-sur-Seine, the wealthiest municipality of the Ile-de-France Region.

played critical roles, as key mechanisms leading to gradual adjustments and impressive results in urban transport. Competition between different levels of government—and especially, strong reactions by local authorities against state interventionism—spurred respective mobilizations of resources and helped bring about policy innovation and change in transport. In turn, transport played a role in shaping a new mode of urban regional governance in the French capital-city region. In a context of continued territorial reforms and increased competition between the French capital-city and other large metropolises worldwide, transport emerged as a critical issue and instrumental mechanism for asserting political and institutional leadership, developing new alliances, and gaining visibility at various levels and scales. The resulting systematic accumulation of policy resources and introduction of highly visible initiatives helped strengthen the territorial dimension of transport policies in the capital region and accelerated a shift in mobility behavior.

In terms of key actors, the Paris case featured an interesting mix between key individuals and innovative forms of collective action among political parties and municipalities as well as across levels of government and the public and private sector. Leadership was decidedly collective, drawing upon strong mechanisms of cooperation between levels of government, robust political coalitions and alliances (i.e. the Gaullist-Communist agreement in the 1960s, the Socialist-Green agreement in the 2000s, and recently, the cross-party coalition against Sarkozy), and negotiation in a multi-level governance system. At the same time, the City of Paris distinguished itself as a leading transport policy entrepreneur and innovator and successfully enrolled other municipalities in the inner suburbs area. Despite reactions from the State and the Region, Paris dominated agenda-setting dynamics through its ability to mobilize political and knowledge resources, achieve impressive results around sustainable mobility from a series of both small-scale and highly visible policy experiments. Yet its success resulted from the combination of unilateralist decisions and new forms of cooperation with suburban municipalities. At the regional level, institutional rescaling and the selection of STIF as a preferred venue helped render the region as a key player in transport planning and facilitate the adoption of an integrated sustainable transport agenda for the capital region.

The battle over the Grand Paris Express not only reveals the robustness of the new regional mode of governance in transport but also regional authorities' relative weakness in negotiations with the State and the City of Paris. Today, local authorities (municipalities and départements) prefer to negotiate political and technical agreements between about transport planning and implementation in the capital region at the regional scale. Yet recent attempts to expand the leadership of regional transport authorities—including STIF—as part of a new wave of decentralization reform elicited strong opposition from local authorities, including the City of Paris, on the basis of protecting local autonomy. Also, the new regional mode of governance only applies to transport planning and implementation; in most other policy areas, competition among the three levels of government continues to overrule as recently demonstrated by the controversies over air pollution peaks, the question of whether or not the newly created metropolitan government should any competences in transport, and leadership over the application to host Olympic games.

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## **Appendix 1. List of Interviewees, Paris Ile-de-France case**

NB: This list of interviewees has been anonymized according to the wishes of several interviewees.



1. DR, Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la région Ile-de-France, Engineer, transport and mobility department, 13/04/20115
2. FP, Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la région Ile-de-France, transport economist, project manager, 13/04/20115
3. JPO, engineer, Leading transport expert, 16/04/2015
4. SB, Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la région Ile-de-France, law and urban planning, 28/04/15
5. PS, Conseil general du Val d'Oise, Transport Department, 06/05/15.
6. JCB, RATP, 20/05/15
7. DG, Member of Parliament, Socialist Party, 27/05/15
8. GC, Member of Parliament, Les Républicains. 21/05/15
9. IF, Ile-de-France region, Department of planning, regional planning and metropolitan strategies, 12/05/15
10. AF, City of Paris, Mobility Agency, 12/05/2015 & 30/06/2015
11. CA, Ile-de-France region, Department of Transport, 03/06/2015
12. MC, Conseil general des Hauts de Seine (92), Transport infrastructures, 19/05/2015
13. FH, Ile-de-France Regional and Interdepartmental State Administration for infrastructure and planning (DRIEA), Department planning, 20/05/2015
14. JCM, STIF, Relations with users, 02/06/15
15. KM, STIF, Project manager, Department for economic affairs and tariff development, 28/05/15
16. FD, SYSTRA, urban unit in the Ile-de-France region, 18/06/2015
17. EG, Ile-de-France Regional and Interdepartmental State Administration for infrastructure and planning (DRIEA), Grand Paris Unit, 16/06/2015
18. MF, elected representative Regional council, EELV party, June 2015

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