



January 2006  
For immediate release

**NICHES News Release**  
***Is your city a leader in transport innovation?***  
***Apply for the OSMOSE Awards!***



The OSMOSE Awards on urban transport innovation were launched at the workshop of the NICHES project in Stockholm in December 2005 (the proceedings of this workshop are available at [www.niches-transport.org](http://www.niches-transport.org)).

**Objectives**

The OSMOSE Awards - created within the framework of the European NICHES project - want to reward local authorities who have shown the courage to introduce innovative and daring measures in order to meet the urban transport challenges they are facing today in a sustainable and effective way.

The Awards will particularly look at the most promising new concepts, initiatives and projects which today still occupy a "niche" position but clearly have the potential to become a 'mainstream' urban transport policy application in the future.

Applications can be submitted for the following **categories**:

1) **New Seamless Mobility Services**: Citizens increasingly ask for more flexible, personalised and comfortable mobility services, which go beyond traditional collective transport supply. In order to maintain and increase the market share of sustainable transport modes, transport policies have to respond to the differentiated mobility needs for citizens.

2) **Innovative Approaches in City Logistics**: Goods transport undoubtedly contributes to commercial prosperity and economic growth. However, increasing traffic volumes in urban areas lead to unacceptable levels of air pollution and noise intrusion for citizens living in those areas, as well as to traffic congestion negatively affecting city life. New solutions tackling urban freight-related problems play an increasingly important role, but so far have been insufficiently exploited and considered in urban transport policies.



NICHES is a Coordination Action funded by the European Commission under the sixth Framework Programme for R&D, Priority 6.2 Sustainable Surface Transport

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**3) New Non-Polluting and Energy-Efficient Vehicles:** Despite their negative impacts, it is clear that also in the future there will be a strong need for the flexibility and capacity that cars and goods vehicles offer in urban areas. The key challenge is to make these vehicles as little polluting and noisy as possible. Today, only a very small segment of the European vehicle fleet consists of Alternatively Fuelled Vehicles. Main obstacles for their use include the lack of fuelling facilities, low availability, high costs, lack of service, incentives, information, and user acceptance. These obstacles require innovative strategies.

**4) Innovative Demand Management Strategies:** Most European cities are confronted with increasing problems of congestion and pollution due to motorised traffic. The great challenge for the future is to safeguard our mobility and economic development, while controlling the demand for transport through solutions which convince people to change their travel habits.

**The Award is open to European local and regional authorities and their local partners. Local authorities wishing to participate in the Award have to submit a complete application form (available on [www.osmose-os.org](http://www.osmose-os.org)) before 31 May 2006.**

#### Notes for editors:

1. NICHES is a project on mainstreaming urban transport innovation supported by the European Commission, Directorate General for Research, under the sixth framework programme for R&D, Priority 6.2. Sustainable Surface Transport.
2. OSMOSE (Open Source for MOBILE and Sustainable city), [www.osmose-os.org](http://www.osmose-os.org), is a portal on urban transport innovation developed under the framework of NICHES.
3. NICHES is coordinated by the city network Polis ([www.polis-online.org](http://www.polis-online.org)), and the consortium includes the following partners: Rupperecht Consult, PTV, Eurocities, City of Stockholm, Warsaw University of Technology, CEMR-CCRE.



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