

## Project Japan

### **Why don't we change our behaviours?** *Acceptance and hindrance to a change of behaviours*

#### ***Context***

My thesis takes place in the reflexions about the harmful effects of the continuous growth of car use, as regards social, environmental and urban aspects in the Greater Paris region. There seems to be a consensus about the urgency of actions to reduce car use. However, in spite of the implementation of various political measures (increases in fuel prices, car-parking policies, etc.), the expected change in mobility behaviour does not appear to take place.

#### ***Objectives***

My purpose is to examine why most people are not prepared to refrain from using cars in urban areas and what would make them change. I stand at the interface between the different actors of mobility: users, public Authorities, professionals of transport and associations. I attempt to identify limiting factors to behavioural change and, thus, to suggest lines of action so as to create favourable conditions for the adoption of more sustainable mobility practices.

#### ***Methodology***

This research takes a sociological perspective on these issues. By asking individuals on their actual experiences in mobility, I will be able to apprehend, in a comprehensive way, the factors behind resistance to change practices. My approach is transverse. It embraces three usually separately treated topics: environmental sensitivity, attitudes towards public actions, and practices of mobility.

Information is collected by means of semi-directing interviews with users and other actors of mobility, like decision makers for instance. The aim is not to give a representative picture of the population but to show a diversity of occurrences. This qualitative method should bring complementary insights to those provided by quantitative studies.

My main field of study is Paris and its region. Forty individuals from 20 to 60 years were interviewed on their usual practices of urban travel, awareness of environmental problems, and perceptions of public policies. A diversity of situations is represented as to the mode used (automobile, public transport and bicycle) and to the main types of the trips made (Paris-to-Paris, Paris-to-suburbs, suburbs-to-Paris, suburbs-to-suburbs).

Then, I will interview decision makers (public Authorities, manufacturers, special interest groups, experts, professionals of transport, etc.) on an urban project to limit car use. For instance closing a zone to cars, road pricing, the development of alternatives like the tram construction or dedicated space for buses, reduced space for cars, etc.

I strongly wish to establish a comparison with the practices and politics in other metropolises in order to provide additional insights on the situation of Paris about the change of behaviours. Considering the interviewed users, in Paris, some of the implemented measures to limit car use and to enhance the environment, seem to have an impact on the practices of mobility of a small part of them. However, the lack of credibility and coherence of the

policies as well as the lack of visibility and communication reinforce the reluctance of individuals to change their behaviours.

***Objectives of the mission***

The objective of the mission would be to carry on my thesis investigations in the case of Japan, with your help, and to contribute to the French and Japanese cooperation.

Cities in Japan could be very interesting because of the cultural difference. I wish to compare the Japanese methods in terms of transport policies with those of Paris, and the reaction of users. I would like to understand how Japanese people move in cities, and why they move like this.

I don't know what the practices of mobility are in Japan, how the policies are, how people feel with the question of the environment, etc. Maybe you could help me to define a mission on what will be interesting for you and for my thesis subject, to study in Japan. It's certain that the country and the culture are so different, maybe doing observations and interviews with users on their mobility practices, their environment and policies perceptions will be very interesting.

I will probably need to interview people with my method of investigation. Do you think it would be possible to work with a student to translate the interview? Because if I interview only people who speak English, it would not be so much various.

Nagoya seems to be a good city to compare to Paris. Thank you to have suggested it to me. If it's possible, I would be glad to go in other cities to make observations.

It would be so nice to receive me in your country and I would be glad to work with your team.

When would be the best for you to my coming? It will be perfect for me, 3 or 4 weeks in November, starting the second week, maybe around the 10<sup>th</sup> of November.