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**No. 7 - ITS European Congress - 2026
Review Special Edition**

MAGAZINE

CONGRESS
ISTANBUL
2026

its 17th ITS European
Congress
Bridging Innovation:
Intelligent, Safe and Sustainable

Istanbul as Crossroads

Intelligent Transport Systems - Explained

Technologies to operate and manage transport infrastructure



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ITS Edge is published by **ITS Now**, which exists to promote best practice and professional development within the Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) sector, in the UK and internationally.

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17th ITS European Congress

Bridging Innovation:
Integrated, Safe and Seamless Mobility

In this edition:

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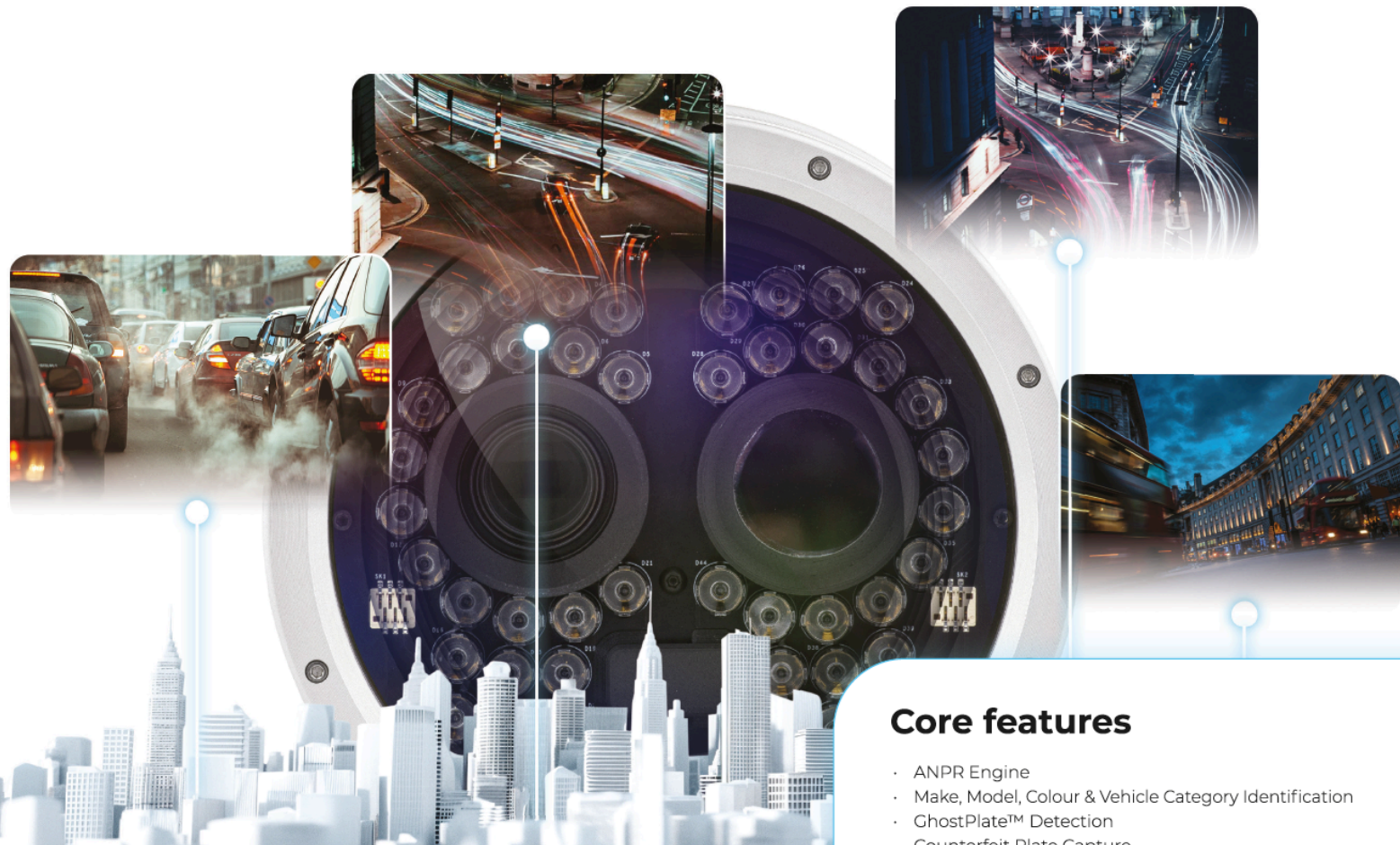
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Istanbul felt less like a conference and more like a continental crossroads where policy, industry and city practice were being actively stitched together. The **17th ITS European Congress** convened delegates from across Europe under the banner *Bridging Innovation: Integrated, safe and seamless mobility*, and the tone from the opening plenary was unmistakable: the sector's conversation has moved from "what if" to "how fast and at what scale". Over three days the Congress combined plenary debate, technical sessions, an exhibition floor and live demonstrations intended to show, not merely describe, how connected, data-driven systems can be embedded into everyday transport operations.

For an international readership the significance is twofold. First, Istanbul was presented as a living laboratory, a city with complex multimodal flows, legacy infrastructure and ambitious digital programmes where integration challenges are visible and solvable in real time. Second, the Congress staged a policy pivot. Delegates repeatedly returned to the same refrain: *integration, not invention*. The priority is not another proof-of-concept but interoperable stacks, procurement frameworks and governance models that let cities and regions buy, operate and scale ITS services across borders. This feature takes that pivot as its organising idea. It maps the headlines and announcements emerging from Istanbul, then drills into the technical and policy pillars of safety and resilience, multimodal system management, smart logistics and beyond-road connectivity, before bringing voices from the floor into the frame. The aim is to show what Istanbul signals for Europe's ITS trajectory and how those signals will ripple into global practice.



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Headlines and announcements



Connectivity aligned with mobility needs. A dominant theme in plenaries and panels was the alignment of telecoms roadmaps with mobility requirements. Delegates framed next-generation networks, private cellular deployments, edge compute strategies and early research into future generations of connectivity, as essential enablers rather than optional upgrades. The practical message was clear, that low latency and high capacity only translate into safer, greener mobility when standards, interfaces and procurement pathways are synchronised across sectors.

Procurement and governance as the new bottlenecks. Across sessions, procurement practitioners and city officials described a familiar pattern where pilots demonstrate value, but procurement rules, fragmented budgets and unclear responsibilities at the city-regional level slow scaling. The next wave of progress, many argued, will come from procurement innovation with frameworks that allow cities to buy outcomes rather than bespoke systems and from clearer governance around data sharing and liability.

Operationalisation over novelty. Exhibitors and city delegations used the ITS Arena and live demonstrations to show interoperable stacks, such as traffic-management AI, kerbside orchestration, digital freight platforms, that claim to work together in live traffic. The narrative shifted from “what new tech can do” to “how existing tech can be integrated and paid for”. That shift reframes success metrics from prototype counts to measurable reductions in incidents, delays and emissions.

Cross-border freight and corridor thinking. Freight and logistics emerged as immediate priorities for European coordination. Delegations emphasised harmonised digital freight documents, interoperable tracking and green corridor initiatives as low-hanging fruit where EU-level action could deliver rapid benefits.

A throughline of human-centred deployment. Across panels the human dimension of public trust, operator workflows and equitable access were never far from the technical debate. Technology was repeatedly framed as a tool to deliver public value, not an end in itself.



What's next?

When the lights go down and the exhibition stands are packed away, the real test for any congress begins. In Istanbul, the most telling signals after the final sessions were not about a single headline product, but about whether Europe is getting serious about the unglamorous work that turns innovation into something a city can procure, operate and scale. The post event narrative was about deployment readiness, with partnerships and harmonisation efforts aimed at reducing the friction that still makes many ITS projects feel bespoke.

Two developments captured that shift. One was a cooperation agreement between ERTICO, ITS Europe and 6G-IA, positioning next generation connectivity as a shared mobility priority rather than a telecoms side project. The other was a parallel push from road operators to harmonise connected vehicle data, with the practical aim in mind of making it easier for authorities to procure, compare and apply data products for day-to-day tasks such as maintenance planning, winter services and safety monitoring. Taken together, these items point to a market that is maturing from pilots to programmes, where interoperability, common interfaces and clearer specifications matter as much as algorithms and sensors.

For readers, the implication is straightforward. The next wave of progress will be won in standards meetings, contract clauses and shared assurance frameworks that let a solution travel from one city to the next without being rebuilt each time. That is also why the Congress kept returning to outcomes. If Europe can align performance measures with procurement and governance, connected mobility starts to look less like a collection of one-off demonstrations and more like a repeatable public service that can be funded, audited and improved over time.

>Make sure to read on to find out more about what happened across the three-days in Istanbul.



Safety and Resilience

Safety remains the moral centre of intelligent transport. In Istanbul, that truth surfaced not as rhetoric but as a hard-edged operational question: **What does 'safer' actually look like once AI, connected vehicles and sensor rich corridors leave the demo zone and enter the daily grind of a traffic control room?** The Congress repeatedly steered away from the seduction of capability lists and towards proof, measurable outcomes that can be explained to mayors, auditors, insurers and ultimately the public who must consent to systems that observe and influence how they move.

A recurring theme across technical sessions was validation. The question was not whether predictive collision risk models, AI driven signal optimisation or fused roadside sensing can work, but whether they deliver repeatable gains in the messy mixed conditions that define real streets. Speakers and delegates returned to the same set of demands of independent performance data, transparent test regimes and clear definitions of success. That meant evidence of reductions in incident frequency and severity, faster detection and verification of hazards and demonstrably improved emergency response times. Just as importantly, it meant confronting the operational trade-offs that rarely make it into slide decks, false positives that erode operator confidence, black box outputs that cannot be defended after an incident and models that drift when traffic patterns change. In the Istanbul framing, 'AI for safety' only becomes credible when it is auditable, explainable and continuously monitored against agreed metrics.

Resilience broadened the safety conversation beyond crashes and near misses to the disruptions that now sit on every transport risk register, extreme weather, cyber incidents, communications outages and energy instability. The most practical contributions focused on designing systems that fail safely, with architectures that degrade gracefully and preserve core functions when parts of the stack go dark. That design discipline changes how cities think about connectivity and cloud dependence. If a corridor loses backhaul, what remains locally at the edge? If a control centre is operating under constrained visibility, which signals, warnings and priorities take precedence? Istanbul's answer was not a single standard or product, but a mindset. Resilience is not a bolt on module for a later phase, it is a procurement requirement and an engineering constraint from day one, shaping redundancy, fallback modes and the division of labour between roadside, vehicle and centre.

Yet even the best engineered system can stall on governance. A persistent friction point was the absence of harmonised certification pathways for AI enabled and connected safety functions, an uncertainty that travels quickly from legal teams into tender documents. City representatives and industry voices alike argued for clearer EU level guidance on testing, assurance and liability so authorities can adopt innovation without absorbing open ended risk. The point is not to slow deployment with bureaucracy, but to speed it with clarity through common validation frameworks, comparable benchmarks and agreed processes for updating models over time. In that context, the most compelling case studies were the operational ones, examples where integrated sensing and adaptive control improved response during incidents or where predictive approaches helped reduce severity rather than simply shifting congestion elsewhere.

For ITS leaders inside city halls and control rooms, Istanbul's safety and resilience message can be translated into a simple buying discipline. Specify outcomes and test methods, not just features. Require explainability, reporting and continuous performance monitoring, not one-off acceptance. Demand degraded mode operation and clear cyber and power assumptions, not best-case connectivity. Done well, this approach turns safety from an aspiration into a measurable service, and it sets up the next step in the Congress narrative. Once you can trust the safety core, the question becomes how to stitch data and decision making across modes, so buses, bikes, kerbs and cars are managed as one operational picture rather than competing silos.

Case Studies demonstrate integration is key

The recent case studies presented to the industry offer a masterclass in how diverse urban environments are navigating the complexities of modern transport. From the sprawling, historic corridors of Istanbul to the budget-conscious streets of mid-sized European municipalities, the common thread is a clear shift towards pragmatic, integrated intelligent transport systems that prioritise real-world outcomes over mere technological novelty.

Istanbul stands out as a formidable living laboratory for the modern engineer. As a dense, multimodal metropolis grappling with the friction between legacy infrastructure and ambitious digital goals, the city faces a unique set of operational hurdles. Its famously complex junctions, mixed traffic flows, and heavy freight volumes are further complicated by seasonal tourism spikes that regularly push the existing network to its absolute limit. During recent delegations, it became clear how Istanbul serves as a vital testbed for integrated approaches that must work under extreme pressure.

Central to this transformation is the city's use of artificial intelligence and cooperative intelligent transport systems (C-ITS). By combining sophisticated traffic control with dynamic kerbside management and targeted enforcement, the city has demonstrated that even the most historic and complex congestion can be mitigated. For instance, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) has deployed the ATAK adaptive traffic management system. This system utilizes a network of input and output sensors to detect queuing at junctions and adjust signal phases in real-time, drastically reducing idling times.

The city has also pioneered the use of 5G-equipped "smart roads," such as the 40km corridor between Hasdal junction and Istanbul Airport. This Cooperative Intelligent Transportation Systems (C-ITS) testbed integrates roadside communication units and AI-based image processing to send location-specific alerts directly to vehicles regarding accidents, black ice, or lane closures. Complementing these arterial improvements is a pilot for digital kerbside management in districts like Kadıköy. This initiative uses Smart Zones and sensors to manage the heavy delivery and visitor traffic of historic market areas, allowing for bookable loading slots and reducing the chaos of first-come, first-served parking.

These efforts do more than just move vehicles more fluidly; they significantly enhance safety for pedestrians and drivers alike during peak events. It is a powerful example of how digital oversight can successfully tame urban chaos. In contrast, several medium-sized European cities have provided a roadmap for scaling innovation within tight financial constraints. These authorities are increasingly eschewing grand, expensive overhauls in favour of modular procurement and the clever reuse of existing infrastructure. Their strategy relies on outcome-based contracts that share performance risks with suppliers, ensuring that every pound spent delivers a measurable improvement to the citizen experience. The consensus amongst these smaller cities is that authorities do not need massive capital outlays to mirror the operational successes of their much larger neighbours. Instead, by utilising shared technical building blocks and standardised procurement templates, they can achieve high-level efficiency and data-driven insights without the associated price tag. This pragmatic approach democratizes access to high-end transport solutions.

The discussion also moved beyond city limits to examine the vital role of cross-border freight corridors. A standout case study focused on the tangible gains achieved through harmonised digital documentation and interoperable tracking systems. In the past, paperwork friction and a lack of transparency led to significant delays at checkpoints and unnecessary emissions from idling engines. However, by coordinating standards and enforcement across different member states, this corridor has successfully slashed border dwell times and boosted real-time visibility for logistics operators. This reinforces a clear lesson: targeted, corridor-level interventions can deliver rapid and measurable benefits when stakeholders commit to a unified digital framework.

Together, these examples illustrate a maturing landscape where the focus is firmly on scalability, cooperation, and longevity. Whether managing a megacity or a regional transit corridor, the successful application of technology depends on its ability to integrate seamlessly with existing systems while remaining flexible enough to adapt to local needs. For the readers of ITS Edge, these insights provide a compelling argument that the future of transport lies not just in the tools we use, but in how we coordinate their deployment across borders and budgets alike.

A driver's perspective from inside a car, looking out at a city intersection during sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow. Two traffic lights are visible, both showing green. The car's interior, including the steering wheel and dashboard, is partially visible in the foreground. The background shows city buildings and other vehicles on the road.

AI in intersection control – a win-win situation

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The importance of ITS working across mobility segments

The future of urban mobility is no longer a collection of siloed networks but a singular and data-centric ecosystem where the boundaries between modes are increasingly blurred. This year's sessions in Istanbul offered a compelling look at the practicalities of multimodal system management, shifting the focus from individual vehicles to a holistic operational picture. The central theme was clear: the goal is to stitch together traffic management centres, Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platforms and kerbside management systems into a unified digital tapestry that reduces friction and enhances the citizen experience.

At the heart of this evolution lies the formidable challenge of data orchestration and interoperability. For years, the industry has struggled with the reality that vehicle telematics, public transport schedules, micromobility locations and kerbside availability all speak different digital languages. The exhibition floor in Istanbul provided a glimpse into the solution, showcasing advanced middleware and data space approaches designed to normalise these disparate feeds. By creating a common vocabulary for transport data, these platforms promise a single operational picture that offers tangible payoffs. Operators are already seeing faster incident detection, more accurate demand forecasting and a significantly more efficient allocation of precious urban space.

However, while the technical foundations are being laid, the journey towards true Mobility as a Service remains fraught with political and commercial friction. Istanbul highlighted several integrated ticketing pilots and dynamic routing systems that successfully blend heavy rail and bus networks with the flexibility of micromobility. Yet these successes are often tempered by the complexities of data sharing agreements and revenue sharing models. The recurring theme amongst delegates was that technical integration is a necessary condition but not a sufficient one. Without solving the underlying governance issues and ensuring that public authorities can guarantee equitable access, MaaS will remain an aspirational goal rather than a universal reality. The lesson is that the commercial and regulatory frameworks must evolve in parallel with the software.

One of the most visible battlegrounds for this new integrated approach is the kerbside. Once regarded as simple parking space, the kerb has become some of the most contested real estate in the modern city. Logistics providers, passenger pick-up services and micromobility operators all compete for a limited footprint. In response, cities are deploying dynamic pricing, reservation systems and automated enforcement technologies to manage this demand. Those municipalities that combine clear policy objectives with real-time operational tools are already reporting measurable improvements, specifically in kerb turnover rates and a marked reduction in the perennial problem of double parking.

These operational wins are the lifeblood of the industry, providing the proof of concept needed to secure further investment. Several cities presented data showing how integrated management reduced congestion during major public events or improved >

>bus punctuality through the simple but effective application of signal priority. These are not just technical achievements; they are evidence of how strategic procurement and policy choices translate into service improvements for the person on the street. For traffic control centres to maintain this momentum, they require middleware that reduces integration costs and dashboards that present information with ergonomic clarity. The message to vendors was loud and clear: prioritise APIs, adhere to open standards and focus on the needs of the operator.

While passenger transport often grabs the headlines, it is in the realm of freight and logistics where ITS can deliver the most rapid gains in both efficiency and environmental impact. The logistics track in Istanbul focused heavily on green corridors, urban consolidation centres and digital freight platforms. There is a compelling policy case for the harmonisation of digital freight documents and interoperable tracking systems. Across Europe's dense and often congested freight network, even minor improvements in documentation and real-time visibility can yield outsized reductions in border delays and idling emissions.

The challenge of the last mile also featured prominently. Cities are now showcasing pilots that combine dynamic kerbside pricing with consolidation hubs to keep heavy goods vehicles out of historic centres. The technical hurdle here is real-time coordination, matching delivery windows with vehicle types and kerb availability through a single interface. The most successful pilots have been those that blend public regulation with private consolidation services, all managed via a digital platform that coordinates every step of the delivery journey.

Furthermore, the electrification of logistics is introducing new layers of complexity. The transition to electric fleets is often constrained by depot capacity and access to charging infrastructure. Here, ITS plays a crucial role by optimising charging schedules, routing vehicles to available chargers and integrating fleet energy demand into broader grid management. While exhibitors demonstrated platforms capable of handling these functions, scaling these solutions remains dependent on significant regulatory support and infrastructure investment. Because freight operations are commercial and concentrated, they are often easier to regulate than the dispersed behaviour of private car owners, making logistics a primary lever for early gains in carbon reduction.

The Congress also sought to push the boundaries of ITS beyond traditional road transport, exploring the integration of ports, rail and the emerging field of urban air mobility. Ports, as complex multimodal nodes, are particularly ripe for digital transformation. Digital twins and berth optimisation systems were presented as essential tools for reducing dwell times and cargo congestion. The next logical step is the tighter integration of port systems with hinterland traffic management, a move that requires significant European coordination to be effective.

Similarly, the integration of rail signalling data with urban traffic systems offers a way to reduce conflicts at level crossings and improve the reliability of multimodal transfers. Demonstrations showed how synchronised timetables and signal priority can make the transition between modes feel seamless for the passenger. Even the nascent field of >

>urban air mobility was framed through the lens of multimodal integration. While airspace management and public acceptance remain significant barriers, the core principles of ITS, such as interoperability, governance and data sharing, will be essential as these vehicles eventually enter the transport mix.

The overarching technical challenge across all these domains remains the same: the need for interoperable interfaces and clear governance. By building orchestration layers that can enforce policy across different transport sectors, we move closer to a truly unified system. For the industry, the path forward involves practical and high-impact steps: harmonising digital documentation, investing in corridor-level tracking and incentivising the creation of consolidation hubs. These are the interventions that, with targeted support, will transform the theoretical potential of ITS into a lasting operational reality.



What Cities are actually deploying

Across the exhibition and technical sessions, a pragmatic technology stack emerged, less about single breakthrough technologies and more about how components are assembled and governed.

-Sensing and edge computing. Cities are deploying a mix of roadside sensors, cameras and connected vehicle feeds. Edge computing is used to pre-process data locally, reducing latency and bandwidth needs while preserving privacy by minimising raw data transfer.

-Middleware and data spaces. Middleware layers and data-space architectures normalise disparate feeds into operational pictures. These layers are critical because they translate vendor-specific formats into interoperable APIs that traffic control centres and MaaS platforms can consume.

-AI and analytics. AI models are used for predictive risk scoring, demand forecasting and dynamic signal optimisation. The emphasis in Istanbul was on explainability and validation because cities need models that can be audited and that provide interpretable outputs for operators.

-Connectivity and private networks. Private cellular networks and hybrid connectivity strategies (combining public 4G/5G, private LTE/5G and short-range V2X) are being trialled to meet the latency and reliability needs of safety-critical services.

-Integration and orchestration. Orchestration layers manage workflows across systems, triggering signal changes, reallocating kerb space or rerouting freight in response to live conditions. The orchestration layer is where policy meets operations, it enforces rules about who can change what and under which conditions.

-Security and privacy. Cybersecurity and data governance were recurring technical priorities. Cities and vendors are adopting layered security models, data minimisation strategies and role-based access controls to protect systems and build public trust.

What Istanbul signals for global ITS trends

The discussions in Istanbul have signalled a pivotal shift in the global intelligent transport systems landscape, where the focus is moving decisively away from pure technology and towards comprehensive systems thinking. For years, technical novelty has dominated the headlines, yet the lessons from the Turkish metropolis suggest that the next wave of global progress will be driven by the alignment of standards, funding and legal frameworks. Europe's emphasis on procurement and governance offers a blueprint for other regions, demonstrating that technology can only be deployed at scale when it is supported by a foundation of public trust and robust regulation.

One of the most significant trends emerging from the summit is the transition from isolated pilots to platform thinking. The industry is no longer satisfied with small-scale trials that exist in a vacuum. Instead, there is a clear move towards creating an operational backbone through middleware, orchestration layers and shared data spaces. This approach allows multiple services to coexist and communicate within the same digital environment, ensuring that a city's transport network functions as a single, cohesive unit rather than a collection of fragmented projects.

Furthermore, the criteria for success are being redefined by tangible outcomes rather than the mere implementation of new tools. The global ITS community is increasingly focused on measurable results such as fewer collisions, faster freight flows, lower emissions and improved reliability for public transport. This shift ensures that every investment is held accountable to the needs of the citizen and the environment. To support this, the way we fund these systems must also change. Moving away from siloed budgets towards pooled funding models is essential, as this recognises the cross-sector benefits that smart transport investments bring to health, commerce and urban planning.

The market itself is also undergoing a transformation as it moves away from the constraints of vendor lock-in. Future success will belong to modular and standards-based products that can integrate easily into existing city operations. This modularity allows local authorities to remain agile, swapping or upgrading components without being tethered to a single supplier's proprietary ecosystem. It fosters a more competitive and innovative marketplace where interoperability is the baseline rather than an afterthought.

Ultimately, Istanbul made it clear that the era of technology-first development is being superseded by a governance-first philosophy. While the technical promise of smart cities remains vast, it is the levers of procurement, policy and public engagement that turn that promise into actual public value. By prioritising the "how" and the "why" of technology deployment, the industry can ensure that the digital transformation of our streets is both sustainable and inclusive. The message is clear: **the future is not just about the gadgets we build, but about the systems of cooperation we create to manage them.**

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Checklist for Success!

Policy levers and funding: where Europe can accelerate scale

Istanbul made clear that technology alone will not deliver scale. Policy and funding choices will determine whether pilots become city-wide services.

- **Harmonised certification and standards.** A top priority is harmonised certification pathways for AI and connected systems. Clear testing regimes and liability frameworks reduce legal uncertainty and make procurement easier.
- **Outcome-based procurement frameworks.** Procurement that pays for outcomes, reduced incidents, improved punctuality, lower emissions, aligns incentives across cities and vendors. Shared templates and pooled procurement can help smaller authorities access better terms.
- **Targeted funding for integration.** Funding that explicitly supports integration (middleware, data spaces and orchestration), can unlock the value of existing pilots. Without funding for integration, individual projects remain isolated.
- **Cross-border coordination for freight.** EU action on digital freight documents, interoperable tracking and corridor funding can deliver rapid gains in emissions and efficiency.
- **Public engagement and trust building.** Policymakers must invest in transparent validation and public engagement to build trust in AI and data-driven systems. Demonstrable, independently validated benefits are the strongest antidote to public scepticism.

Practical recommendations: a checklist for scaling ITS across Europe

- **Adopt outcome-based procurement templates** that reward measurable improvements.
- **Invest in middleware and data spaces** that normalise disparate feeds into operational pictures.
- **Create harmonised certification pathways** for AI and connected systems.
- **Prioritise freight corridors and port integration** as early wins for emissions and efficiency.
- **Design for resilience** so core safety functions persist under disruption.
- **Engage the public** with transparent validation and clear benefits to build trust.
- **Support pooled procurement** for smaller cities to access interoperable solutions.
- **Fund integration projects** that connect pilots into city-wide systems.
- **Mandate independent validation** for vendor performance claims before awarding outcome-based contracts.
- **Encourage modular, standards-based products** to reduce vendor lock-in and integration costs.





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Congress Outcomes and Legacy

The ITS European Congress in Istanbul marked a fundamental shift in the industry's collective consciousness. It felt less like a conventional showcase of futuristic gadgets and far more like a high-level strategy session dedicated to scaling what already works. The dominant message was one of pragmatic realism: **If Europe truly intends for intelligent transport systems to deliver on the promises of safety, resilience and decarbonisation at scale, the focus must shift immediately to systems engineering, procurement reform and governance.** The consensus was clear that technology will naturally follow wherever policy and funding frameworks make integration both feasible and attractive.

The true value of Istanbul lay not only in the high-profile announcements made on the main stage but in the granular conversations happening in the corridors and across the exhibition floor. These were practical exchanges about contract clauses, data formats and integration patterns, the unglamorous but essential details that determine whether a pilot project matures into a city-wide service. For Europe, the next 12 to 24 months will be decisive. The choices made now regarding procurement templates, certification pathways and corridor funding will either unlock a period of rapid deployment or leave the continent with another generation of promising but isolated pilots.

For the practitioners, policymakers and vendors who gathered in the city, the practical task is now set. They must build interoperable platforms, demand independent validation and design governance structures so that cities can purchase outcomes rather than just hardware. If Istanbul marks the moment when this work began in earnest, the continent and the wider world stand to benefit immensely.

A defining feature of the Congress was the remarkable diversity of perspectives. City transport directors, procurement officers, industry CTOs and researchers all shared the stage, offering a blend of optimism and practical tension. **Dr Angelos Amditis** described the host city as an obvious venue for a congress about the future of mobility, calling it an amazing city that never stands still. He argued that data, AI and connected systems can function as new bridges that help cities move with greater precision and equity. However, he was careful to stress that these advances only matter if they remain truly human-centred and guided by trust, inclusivity and sustainability.

Joost Vantomme, CEO of ERTICO – ITS Europe, used the sheer operational complexity of Istanbul to make a blunt point about the reality of deployment. His assertion was simple, *"If you can manage traffic in Istanbul, you can manage it anywhere"*. Local voices reinforced this logic, framing smart mobility as quality-of-life infrastructure rather than a mere technology showcase. **Erdem Samut**, CEO of İSBAK, and **Pelin Alpkökin** of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality pointed to pedestrian-first redesigns as tangible expressions of integrated planning. By redesigning roads and parts of the historic old town to be more pedestrian-friendly or even pedestrian-only, the city is proving that technology and infrastructure must serve the lived experience of the citizen.





City pragmatists at the event emphasised the day-to-day constraints of budgets, procurement cycles and political accountability. Their priority is for systems that deliver predictable outcomes and can be integrated into existing operations without long or disruptive rollouts. Several delegates described procurement pilots that deliberately focused on outcome-based contracts, such as paying for reduced incident rates or improved bus punctuality rather than for bespoke hardware. This shift ensures that the public sector only pays for what actually works.

Industry integrators used the exhibition to demonstrate cross-vendor interoperability, sending a message that the market is maturing from single-vendor stacks to modular, API-driven ecosystems. However, vendors also acknowledged the need for clearer standards and certification to reduce the integration costs currently faced by cities. At the same time, researchers and representatives from standards bodies urged caution regarding AI governance and data ethics. They argued that scaling these systems without robust governance risks a public backlash and legal exposure. Their call was for transparent validation frameworks and public engagement strategies that build long-term trust.

The procurement officers present described the practical steps needed to move from pilots to scale. They highlighted standardised contract templates, outcome-based clauses and shared procurement frameworks as the tools that could allow smaller cities to pool their buying power. These are the nuts and bolts of the industry that will determine whether the rhetoric heard in Istanbul becomes continental practice.

The overarching mood on the floor combined optimism about technical maturity with a sober realism regarding the institutional work required to scale these solutions. Conversations often turned back to the practicalities of data formats and integration patterns. The industry understands that the hardware is ready; the challenge now is the "soft" infrastructure of rules and cooperation.

In these final reflections, Istanbul appears as a genuine turning point. It moved the conversation away from "what if" and towards "how to". The focus on systems thinking over gadgetry suggests a maturing industry that is ready to tackle the complexities of the real world. By prioritising governance and procurement, Europe is laying the groundwork for a transport network that is not just smarter but more resilient and inclusive.

The challenge for the coming years is to maintain this momentum. Success will require a sustained commitment from all stakeholders to move beyond their own interests and work towards a common digital architecture. If the spirit of cooperation seen in Istanbul can be translated into policy, the dream of a seamless, multimodal European transport network will finally be within reach.

The roadmap has been drawn, the task now is to **build the roads, both physical and digital, that will carry us there.**




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In today's world, our transport networks are complex ecosystems, undergoing a profound transformation driven by technology. Creating infrastructure that is safer, more efficient and sustainable requires more than just new hardware or software. It demands deep expertise, strategic foresight and a clear understanding of how technology translates into real-world value.

As a highly experienced and respected freelance consultant, I provide a comprehensive range of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and Traffic Signal consultancy services to navigate this complex landscape. My mission is to be the critical link between technological potential and practical implementation, ensuring innovation delivers meaningful outcomes.

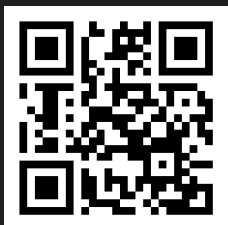
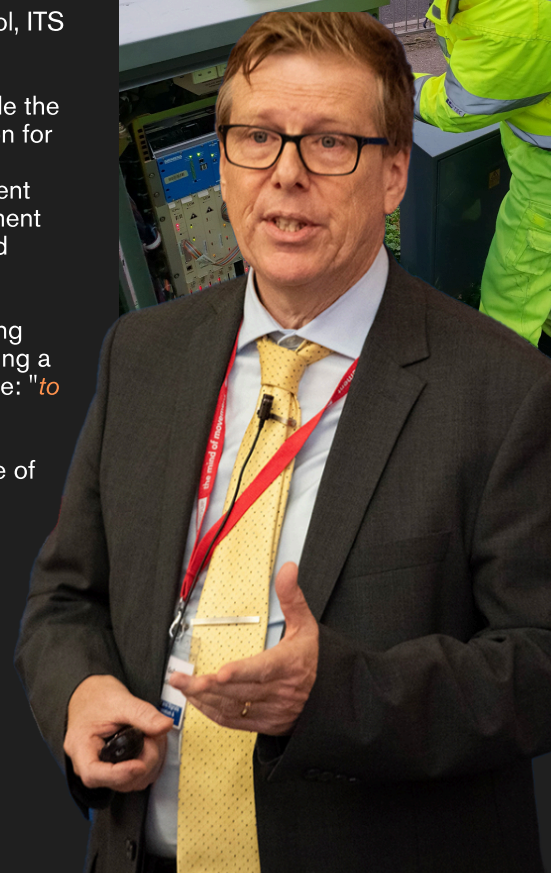
I work with a diverse client base, including **highway authorities, engineering / management consultancies** and **commercial technology firms** to deliver expert guidance, innovative solutions and tangible results for transport infrastructure projects. The common thread in my work is bridging the critical gap that often exists between different stakeholders. Public authorities need to procure effective, future-proof solutions; technology companies need to align their products with genuine market needs; and engineering consultancies require specialist knowledge to deliver robust project designs. I operate at the nexus of these requirements, speaking the language of public policy, commercial strategy and technical engineering with equal fluency.

For my **public sector clients**, I provide independent, expert advice on everything from strategy development and systems specification to procurement support and project assurance. My guidance ensures that investments in new technology are sound, deliver maximum public benefit and avoid costly pitfalls. When partnering with other **consultancies**, I act as a specialist extension of their team, bringing niche expertise in advanced traffic signal control, ITS architecture and emerging mobility trends to enhance their project delivery capabilities.

For commercial **technology firms**, both established players and market entrants, I provide the strategic insight needed to succeed. This includes critical guidance on product localisation for the UK market, identifying the most appropriate applications for new solutions, facilitating strategic introductions to key industry players and providing technical business development support. By aligning your innovative technology with the specific challenges and procurement frameworks of the transport sector, I help accelerate your path to commercial success and impactful deployment.

Ultimately, my work as a technologist, author and speaker is driven by a passion for creating better transport systems. Whether I'm designing an advanced traffic signal strategy, advising a company on market entry or speaking at an industry conference, my goal remains the same: *"to apply deep technical knowledge and strategic thinking to solve real-world problems"*.

I invite you to explore my services and learn how we can work together to shape the future of mobility on my **newly updated website**, I look forward to hearing from you.



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