

AUDIO CHRONICLES

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Smartphone or car: young people have made their choice...

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In Japan, as in Europe, young people are increasingly turning away from the car. What are the factors behind this?

The author

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Transcription

The lack of love for cars felt by the young generation is now a subject on the agenda of car manufacturers.

Two years ago, a major Japanese car manufacturer contacted us at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne with an unprecedented question: 'in Japan, young people no longer dream about cars, remote communication – smartphones, laptop computers and tablets - have replaced the car as the symbols of freedom. We would like to know if the same trend is going to be witnessed in Europe'...

By looking more closely at the subject, it appears that there is indeed a lack of love for the car among young Europeans – for reasons to do with the cost of obtaining a driving licence and also to do with the environment, but perhaps more importantly, because the car's ability to travel through space has been superseded by the means of remote communication. The notion of total freedom in time and space, the sort that really makes

Continuation. The notion of total freedom in time and space, the sort that reality makes people dream, is now embodied in social networks and remote communication. Authorities and transport operators haven't perhaps understood the full extent of this yet: the speed of transport, it's no longer an issue, as it was at the time of Concorde!

Keywords : *Virtual Mobilities, Car, Lifestyles, Service users*



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Vincent Kaufmann, a Swiss sociologist, is one of the pioneers of mobility and inventor of the concept of motility. He is director of LaSUR at the EPFL, General Secretary of CEAT and professor of sociology and mobility analyses.

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Kaufmann

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