

SPACE AND POLITICS IN CAPITAL CITIES: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE PRODUCTION OF URBAN SPACE



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CAMPUS CONDORCET
CENTRE DES COLLOQUES
SALLE A150
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M FRONT POPULAIRE



15-17 JUNE 2026



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Scientific Coordinators of the Conference

Gülçin ERDI, CNRS, UMR CITERES

Clara RIVAS ALONSO, postdoctoral researcher SPACEPOL

Organising Committee

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Agnès DEBOULET

Vladimir PAWLITSKY

Clara RIVAS ALONSO

Laura MONFLEUR

Paul WOLKENSTEIN

Corten PEREZ-HOUIIS

Cosimo PICA

Maria Fernanda CABEZAS

Marie Anaïs KERDAT

SPACE AND POLITICS IN CAPITAL CITIES: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE PRODUCTION OF URBAN SPACE

PROGRAMME

15 JUNE 2026 MONDAY

9h00 Welcome coffee

9h30 Welcome speech and the presentation of the SPACEPOL Research Programme

Gülçin Erdi & Clara Rivas Alonso

Session 1: Spatial imagination of capitals, national imaginary and spatio-symbolic struggle of power

10h15 - 12h45 Panel 1: Capital space at the intersection of symbolic and political

Chair: Paul Wolkenstein

Discussant: Eric Verdeil

Laura Monfleur, Tahrir Square and the Politics of the Synecdoche: From Stage of the Nation to Authoritarian Space

Gülçin Erdi, The modernist and republican configuration of urban public spaces in Ankara and the symbolic manufacture of places of everyday life

Guénola Inizan, The Symbolic Production of a “Modern” Russian Capital: Legitimizing Renovation in Moscow within an Authoritarian Context.

Anahi Alviso Morino, Place-making, national storytelling and un-monumenting through Abu Dhabi’s monuments

Discussion (30 minutes)

12h45 - 14h15 Lunch Break

14h15-15h15 Keynote conference

Haim Yacobi, UCL Bartlett Planning Unit

Jerusalem: The Making of a (Settler Colonial) Capital

Chair: Adrien Fauve

15h15 - 15h30 Coffee break

15h30 - 18h00 Panel 2: Urban projects and City-making in Capitals as showcases of the Nation

Chair: Vladimir Kolossov

Discussant: Clarisse Genton

Azadeh Mashayekhi, Navigating the Politics of Planning Large-Scale Urban Projects in Capital Cities: Insights from Tehran

Julien Thorez, Adrien Fauve, Paul Wolkenstein: "City-making in Astana: planned urbanism driven by Kazakhstani actors"

Savaş Zafer Şahin, "Competition between central government and the local opposition in making the capital city of Ankara"

Amin Moghadam, Planning Diversity, Building Power: The Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi

20h00 Dinner for the speakers at Le Clos Restaurant (see the map p.9)

16 JUNE 2026 TUESDAY

9h00 Coffee

Session 2: Governance, Environment, and Public Spaces from the Perspective of Capital Cities

9h30 - 12h00

Chair: Vladimir Pawlotsky

Discussant: Ozan Karaman

Roman Stadnicki, The Developer and the City: A Geography of Rescaling in Abu Dhabi

Youenn Gourain, River flooding, pluvial flooding: urban translations to join two risks in Mamak, Ankara

Corten Perez Houïs, Building (in) the « New Republic » : excluding or standardising red brick in Greater Cairo's construction

Paul Wolkenstein, Julien Thorez, Adrien Fauve, Astana: Urban parks in Astana: Public spaces unifying a fragmented city?

Discussion

12h00 - 13h30 Lunch Break

13h30 - 14h30 Keynote conference

David Jackman, Oxford University

Controlling the Capital: Perspectives from South Asia and Africa

Chair: Corten Perez-Houïs

Session 3: Dislocating power in urban space: from the multiplicity of the everyday experiences to collective practices of dwellers in capital cities

14h30 - 16h15 Panel 1: Place of dwellers and Collective Practices

Chair: Amin Moghadam

Discussant: Savaş Zafer Şahin

Cosimo Pica, Seeing Ankara from below: the experience of the Birlikte Kent association in the Altındağ's interstices

Agnès Deboulet, Ahmed Zazaa, Salma Bellal, Regeneration, Reproduction, and Decay of an old city/new metropolis

Randa Mahmoud, Urban Growth by Relocation. Egypt's Desert-City solution: the case of New Alamein

Discussion

16h15-16h45 Coffee Break

16h45 - 17h45 Keynote conference

Thomas Maloutas and Stavros Nikiforos Spyrellis

Athens Social Atlas: A dynamic tool to investigate inequalities and social polarisation in the Greek Capital

Chair: Clara Rivas Alonso

18h30 - 20h00 Opening Cocktail of SPACEPOL photographic exhibition
“Géographie intime des capitales. Rêves d’Etat, vie des citoyens”

Salle panoramique, MSH Paris Nord, 20 Av. George Sand, 93210 Saint-Denis

EXPOSITION PHOTOS

Photographe Vincent Delcourt
Commissaire scientifique Gülçin Erdi
Curatrice Özgür Ceren Can

MSH Paris Nord
salle panoramique sur réservation
du 2 juin au 21 septembre 2026

ANKARA
Capital since 1923
Population 5 600 000

ASTANA
Capital since 1997
Population 1 400 000

LE CAIRE
Capital since 1961
Population 17 500 000

ABU DHABI
Capital since 1971
Population 1 600 000

Géographie intime des capitales
Rêves d'Etat, vie des citoyens

vernissage
mardi 16 juin de 18h à 20h

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20, avenue George Sand
93210 La Plaine St-Denis
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Photographer Vincent Delcourt will be present during the exhibition's opening and the conference

17 JUNE 2026 WEDNESDAY

9h00 Morning Coffee

9h30 – 11h30 Panel 2: Struggle between Conceived and Perceived Space in the Capital

Chair: Cosimo Pica

Discussant: Laure Assaf

Mina Saïdi Shahrouz, Urban projects as generators of alternative public spaces in Tehran

Vladimir Pawlotsky, Life among the stars: the geography of elite in the western suburbs of Moscow

Clara Rivas Alonso, Creating a comparative framework: the impact on women of gendered monuments in public spaces in Ankara and Abu Dhabi

Discussion

11h30-12h30 Keynote conference

Marco Cremaschi, Science Po Paris

Beyond Haussmann: dematerialising power in Greater Paris

Chair: Laura Monfleur

12h30-14h00 Lunch Break

14h00 -16h00 Conclusive Roundtable: SPACEPOL and Working on Capital Cities: How to sustain the research on Capitals in the Global South?

Participants: David Jackman, Adrien Fauve, Marco Cremaschi, Gülçin Erdi, Azadeh Mashayekhi, Agnès Deboulet, Clara Rivas Alonso, Haïm Yacobi, Thomas Maloutas, Stavros Spyrellis etc.

☞ *Presentation of the book “Capital Cities as Capital” by Dalia Wahdan*

16h00-16h30 Coffee Break

☞ Ahmed Zaza will present during the coffee break a video film (8 minutes) entitled “Overwritten” realized by Taamir Co. and Agnès Michalczyk. The film will play on a loop and could be seen during the whole conference on the “mezzanine”.

17h30 Room A150

SPACEPOL proudly presents its documentary film:

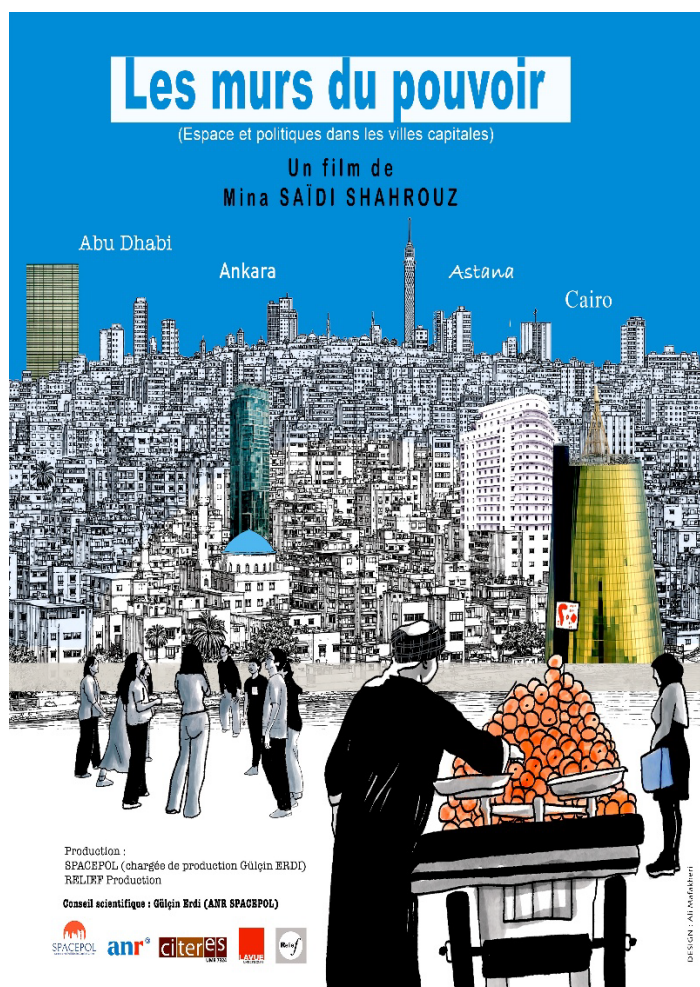
« *Les murs du pouvoir (The Walls of Power)* »

A film by Mina Saïdi Shahrouz

À travers une enquête filmée et les travaux des chercheurs de l'ANR SPACEPOL, La réalisatrice dresse le portrait de quatre villes capitales où l'architecture symbolique du pouvoir reconfigure l'urbanisme. À chaque ville, une forme cinématographique singulière.

Through a filmed investigation and the work of researchers at the ANR SPACEPOL, the director paints a portrait of four capital cities where the architecture that symbolises power is reshaping urban planning. Each city is portrayed through a unique cinematic style.

Subtitled in English



The organisers of this conference and all members of the SPACEPOL research programme wish to express their sincere gratitude to the French National Research Agency for its generous funding of the SPACEPOL programme, which has made it possible to explore new research horizons and to generate invaluable knowledge on capital cities situated in geopolitically complex and contested environments.

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Projet-ANR-21-CE22-0023

<https://spacepol.hypotheses.org/>

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SPEAKERS OF THE CONFERENCE

Dr. Gülçin ERDI, PI of the Spacepol programme, is director of research in urban studies at CNRS France, and currently working in UMR CITERES at the University of Tours. She was the responsible of Istanbul Urban Observatory at the French Institute of Anatolian Studies. Her last book is *Ankara, Miroir de la Turquie modern. Utopies, pouvoir, résistances*, Presses de l'Université libre de Bruxelles, 2025.

Dr. Azadeh Mashayekhi is a lecturer in urban development planning at the University College of London (UCL) and researcher at the Bartlett Development Unit. Her last publication is Mashayekhi, A., Dianati, V., & Vaghefi, I. (2026). Revolutionary charitable foundations and politics of land acquisition and land conflict in peri-urban areas of Tehran. City, 1-24.

Dr. Roman Stadnicki is an associate professor at University of Tours and member of the UMR CITERES. He is an associate researcher at the French research center in the Arabian Peninsula (CEFREPA) in Kuwait. His last publication is *Au-delà de Dubaï. Projeter et produire la ville moderne dans le monde arabe*, Éditions de Terres à Terres/L'Aube, 2026.

Dr. Amin Moghadam holds currently a Junior Professorship and previously he was Senior Research Associate at Ryerson University, at The Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Migration and Integration. He recently published with Triandafyllidou, A., Kelly, M., and Şahin-Mencütek, Z.(Eds.). *Migration and Cities: Conceptual and Policy Advances*, Springer Nature, 2024.

Dr. Laura Monfleur is postdoctoral researcher at CEDEJ, Egypt. She was previously teaching assistant at INALCO. Her last publication is "Challenging Urban Militarization in Post-2011 Downtown Cairo: Walls and Checkpoints", in : Paul Amar (ed.), *Cairo Securitized, New York/Le Caire* : American University in Cairo, 2024, p. 423-432.

Cosimo Pica is a PhD candidate at the University of Tours, UMR Citeres, EMAM - Arab World and Mediterranean research team. He is also a research associate at IFEA - İstanbul. His last publication is "Building Borders in the City: the Turkish Government's Plan to "Dilute" the Migrant Presence in Urban Areas through the Example of the Altındağ Metropolitan District in Ankara". *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 25(3), 2026, p.261-281.

Dr. Clara Rivas Alonso is the SPACEPOL project's postdoctoral researcher at the UMR CITERES and associate researcher at the IFEA Istanbul. Her last publication is upcoming Erdi, G., Kolosov, V., & Rivas Alonso, C. (dir.), *Space, Power and Politics in Capital Cities: How Political Power Shapes Urban Space in Non-Western Countries*, Springer, 2026.

Dr. Mina Saïdi Shahrouz is an architect and teaches at Ecole d'architecture de Paris La Villette. She is also anthropologue and documentarian film maker as a member of the LAVUE laboratory. Her last publication is with Maryam A. Gharchehdaghi, "Iran Mall, une nouvelle vision de la capitale iranienne", *Revue Méditerranée* [Online], n°135, 2025.

Dr. Agnès Deboulet is a professor of sociology at the University of Paris-8 Vincennes Saint-Denis and researcher at LAVUE laboratory (Research Center on Habitat - Laboratory of architecture, city, town planning, environment; UMR 7218, CNRS). She is a member of Center Sud and chairs the APPUII association. Her last publication is a collective book prepared with E. Havard dit Duclos et P. Urvoy, *Solidarités et coproductions urbaines*, Editions l'œil d'or, 2026.

Dr. Dalia Wahdan is an anthropologist and teaches at the American University in Cairo. Her last publication is *Capital Cities as Capital*, Cairo American University Press, 2025.

Dr. Laure Assaf is lecturer at the American University of Abu Dhabi and also an Associate Researcher at the French Center for Archeology and Social Sciences (CEFAS) in Kuwait. Her last publication is “Crafting a Global Capital. The shifting territories of alcohol in Abu Dhabi,” *Revue Méditerranée* (online), no. 135, 2025.

Dr. Corten Pérez-Houis is postdoctoral researcher at the University of Gustave Eiffel and associate researcher at Research Unit Géographie-Cités. His last publication is Declining red brick factories in Greater Cairo (Egypt) : Unveiling military-led urbanization through its productive peripheries ». *Geographica Helvetica*, 81(1), 2026, p.207-222.

Dr. Anahi Alviso-Marino is currently associate researcher at IFPO Yemen branch. She was previously a researcher fellow and co-coordinator at the collective “Penser l’urbain par l’image,” Ecole des Ponts ParisTech since December 2020. She recently published “A Monument Once Called ‘Kuwaiti Women, Giving and Sacrifice’”, in *Monumental Shadows. On museums, memory and the making of history*, (Art Jameel, Kaph Books, 2023).

Ahmed Zaazaa is a researcher and urban designer. He co-founded 10 Tooba: Applied Research on the Built Environment, Madd Platform” that works closely with local communities in Cairo and Taamir for Research and Design. He also worked as an assistant professor by practice in “Nile University” and Lecturer in the “Arab Academy for Science and Technology”.

Dr. Randa A. Mahmoud, an Architect-Urbanist is dean of the College of Architecture and Design at Prince Sultan University (Saudi Arabia). She was professor of Environmental Planning at Ain Shams University, alongside her role as a Senior Architect and Urban Planner at DAR. Her last publication is with Elbardisy, W. M., “Climate Comfort Due to Spatial Organization: A Major Factor of Urban Resilience in Complex Gentrification Nodes in New Urban Communities”, *Sustainability*, 15(4), 2023, 3563.

Salma Belal is an architect and urbanist from and based in Cairo, Egypt and member of 10 Tooba. As a researcher and designer, she works on multidisciplinary projects, tackling conservation and built heritage, advocacy for urban justice, and public-space upgrading.

Dr. Savaş Zafer Şahin is professor on urban planning and the head of Land Registry Department at the Haci Bayram Veli University in Ankara. He is also the vice-president of Ankara City Council. His last publication is “Reluctant at the Center, Embracing Locally: Mainstream Political Parties and Deliberation in Ankara”, *PS: Political Science & Politics*. 59(1), 2026, p. 88-93.

Dr. Youenn Gourain is postdoctoral researcher at the University Gustave Eiffel and an associate researcher at the IFEA Istanbul. His last publication is « Risque sismique et résilience urbaine à Istanbul », *Revue internationale des études du développement*, n° 259, 2025, p. 29-58

Dr. Adrien Fauve is a researcher and associate professor in political science at Paris-Saclay University and served as director of the French Institute for Central Asian Studies (IFEAC, based in Bishkek) from 2020 to 2024. His last publication is with Julien Thorez and Paul Wolkenstein, “La fabrique de la ville à Astana : un urbanisme planificateur porté par les acteurs kazakhstanais”, *Revue Méditerranée*, n° 135, 2025.

Dr. Julian Thorez is a researcher in geography at CNRS and member of the Research Unit on Iranian World (CERMI). His last publication is with Paul Wolkenstein and Adrien Fauve, « La

fabrique de la ville à Astana : un urbanisme planificateur porté par les acteurs kazakhstaniens », *Méditerranée : revue géographique des pays méditerranéens*, 2025, 135.

Dr. Paul Wolkenstein is an architect and adjunct lecturer at École supérieure d'architecture. His last publication is « Les Filiales brejnéviennes du musée Lénine en Asie centrale : un héritage architectural ambigu », *Les Cahiers de la recherche architecturale urbaine et paysagère* [Online], n°23, 2025.

Dr. Vladimir Pawlotsky is assistant professor at the University of Paris 8 and researcher at the French Institute of Geopolitics. His last article : Pawlotsky V., « La 'modernisation autoritaire' de la Russie par l'urbain : quelles leçons tirer du Nouveau Moscou ? », *Métropolitiques*, November 2023.

Dr. Haïm Yacobi is Professor of Development Planning at the University College London, Bartlett Development Planning Unit. His last publication is with Matan Flum and Kamna Patel, "The Architecture of Racialised Projection Exploring the Politics of Israel's Built Environment", *Routledge Critical Companion to Race and Architecture*, 2025, p. 176-186.

Dr. David Jackman is departmental lecturer in Development Studies at the University of Oxford. His last publication is with Tom Goodfellow, *Controlling the Capital: Political Dominance in the Urbanizing World*, Oxford University Press, 2023.

Dr. Thomas Maloutas is Researcher Emeritus at the National Centre for Social research (EKKE) & Professor Emeritus at the Department of Geography, Harokopio University of Athens. His last publication is with Musil, R., Matznetter, W., Budović, A., Ratkaj, I., Schnelzer, J., & Siatitsa, D., "Varieties of urban housing regimes: Comparing housing provision and tenure shift in Athens, Belgrade, and Vienna", *Journal of Urban Affairs*, p. 1-21.

Dr. Stavros Nikiforos Spyrellis is a Researcher at the Institute of Social Research of the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE), with expertise in Social Urban Geography. He is a member of the Laboratory of Social Transformations of Urban Space (LaSTcity). His last publication is with Maloutas, T., "Occupational categories: changing social profiles and spatial patterns in the city, in Thomas Maloutas (ed), *Athens: A Rapidly Changing Metropolis in the European South*, Routledge, Oxon UK and New York NY, USA.

Dr. Marco Cremaschi is a professor on urban development at Sciences Po Paris. He heads the Urban Planning programme and teaches at Sciences Po's Urban School, having previously served as Director of the Master's in Urban Planning at Roma Tre. His last publication is with Vitale, T., "The Policy of Refugee Reception and the Policing of Public Space in Paris", In: Molho, J., Gibert-Flutre, M., Ho, K.C. (eds) *City Makers and the Politics of Urban Diversity Governance*. IMISCOE Research Series. Springer, Cham, 2025.

Dr. Guénola Inizan is associate researcher to the Research Unitb "Environnement, villes, sociétés" at the University of Lumière Lyon 2. Her last publication is with Volkova D., « S'appropriier l'interstice. Tactiques et stratégies d'appropriation des parcelles des quartiers résidentiels soviétiques à Moscou », *Interstices et communs urbains*, Ed. : Didier Boissieul, Ulrich Krampl, Marie-Pierre Lefeuvre, José Serrano, Éditions Peter Lang, 2024.

Dr. Clarisse Genton is Research Fellow at the ACS Laboratory, ENSA Paris-Malaquais, PSL University. Her last publication is « La Forteresse sous la maison : la tentative de normalisation de l'entreprise coloniale israélienne en territoires palestiniens occupés », *Les Cahiers de la recherche architecturale urbaine et paysagère* [En ligne], n°23, 2025.

Dr. Eric Verdeil is a professor of geography and urban studies at Sciences Po and a researcher at the Centre for International Research (CERI-Sciences Po/CNRS). Previously, he was a CNRS researcher from 2003 to 2016 at the Laboratory for Techniques, Territories and Societies (LATTS) at the University of Paris-Est - École des Ponts et Chaussées, and from 2003 to 2015 at the Environment, City and Society Laboratory (University of Lyon). His last publication is « Bilan des destructions au Liban après la guerre de 2024 et enjeux de reconstruction », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 2025, 2025-1 (132), pp.49-63.

Dr. Ozan Karaman is Researcher at CNRS, working in Research Unit Techniques, Territoires, Sociétés (LATTS). He was previously associate professor at the Glasgow University. His last publication is with Yürük, A., “Cruising towards growth: Redefining public benefit through privatized transport infrastructure”, *Economy and Society*, 54(4), p. 647-671, 2025.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The conference will take place in the **Centre des colloques/Conference centre** in **Campus Condorcet**.

The address is: **Place du Front populaire, 93322 Aubervilliers** - <https://maps.app.goo.gl/CNywGadLuPUKD3156>

A description of the Conference Centre is available here: <https://www.campus-condorcet.fr/en/the-campus/aubervilliers-site/the-buildings-on-the-aubervilliers-site/conference-centre>

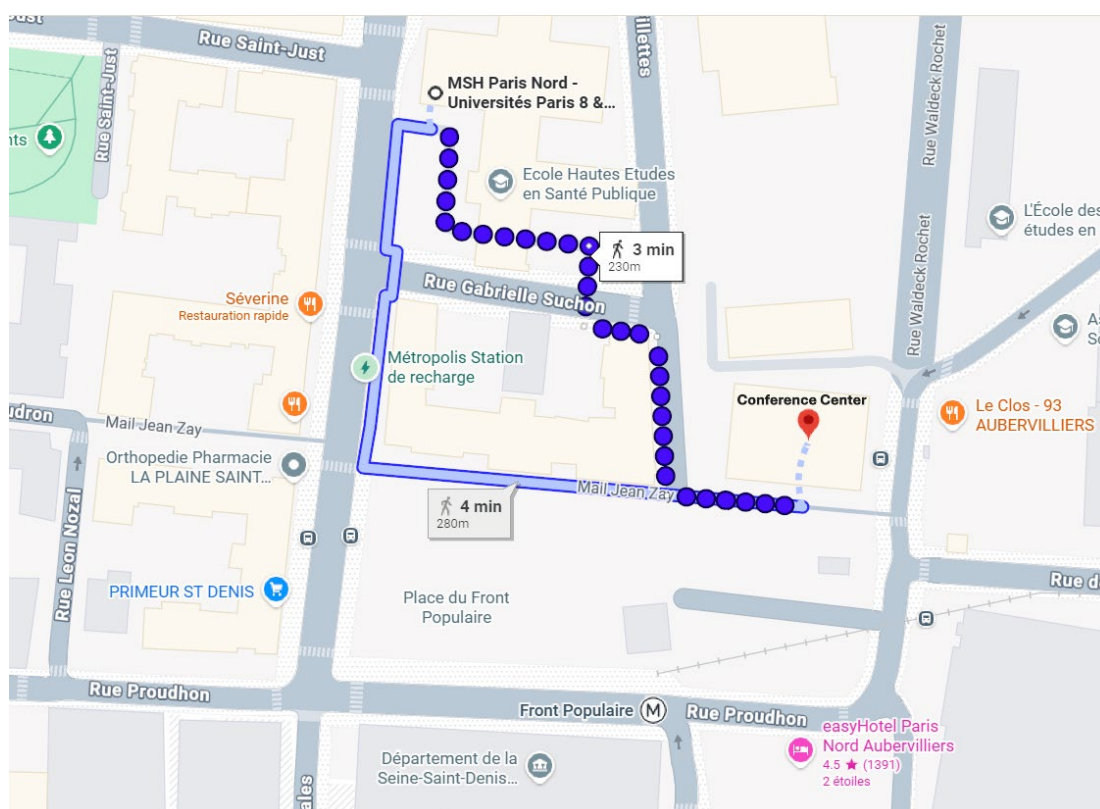
An interactive map of the whole campus is available here: <https://www.campus-condorcet.fr/cartographie>

The photographic exhibition is at MSH Paris Nord at “Salle panoramique”

Adresse : 20 avenue Georges Sand, 93210 La Plaine Saint-Denis

Access to the “Centre des colloques”:

- Train: RER B, La Plaine-Stade de France station (then bus n°139 et 239) ; RER E, Rosa-Parks station (then bus n°239)
- Tram : Line 3B, station Porte de la Chapelle (then metro 12)
- Metro : metro Line 12, Front Populaire station
- Bus : Lines 139, 239 et 512 (Front Populaire - Gardinoux station)



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