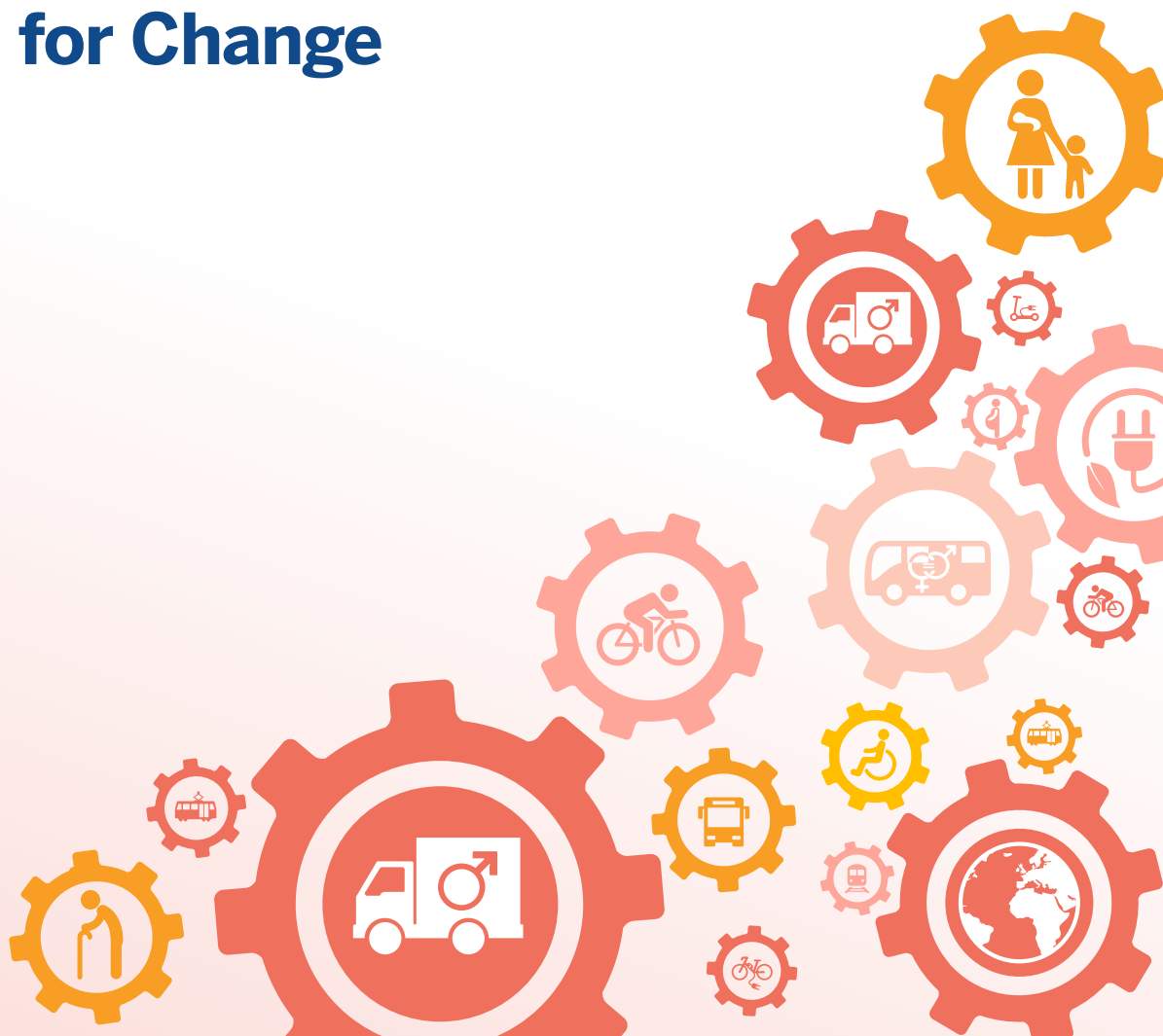


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Gender Imbalance in the Transport Sector

A Toolkit for Change



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Gender Imbalance in the Transport Sector

A Toolkit for Change



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Foreword

The Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) Consortium consists of 56 member organizations that have pledged to a shared vision of sustainable mobility anchored on the four goals of universal access, efficiency, safety, and green mobility and have agreed to work together toward its implementation.

The transport sector is facing a significant gender imbalance, whether we are talking about users, workers, or decision-makers. Although data is sparse, when we focus on the women as transport workers dimension, the International Labour Organization (ILO) suggests only 16.8 percent of the global workforce in transport is female. The latest estimates conclude that closing the global gender gap could take 132 years. Against this backdrop, in 2022 – and recognizing gender as one of the important dimensions of sustainable mobility –the SuM4All partnership mobilized its extensive network of experts to do a deep dive into challenges and opportunities women face when working in the transport sector under the “Global Roadmap of Action (GRA) in Action Series”. The GRA in Action series details, concrete, and actionable guidance on “HOW to” implement the findings and high-level policies included in the Global Roadmap of Action’s (GRA) Catalogue of Policy Measures (CPM) and turn them into impactful actions on the ground –by deep diving into selected measures, reflecting on country examples and global experiences. This series covers some of the most cutting-edge topics and policy issues countries’ decision makers face today in transport: e-mobility, transport-energy nexus, data sharing, safety, public transport, gender, and freight and logistics.

As part of this effort, we are pleased to share Gender Imbalance in the Transport Sector: A Toolkit for Change which provides practical and actionable policy guidance along with case examples and resources on how a gender-sensitive approach can be mainstreamed in the transport sector. The findings offer an overview of the state of the art of women’s global employment in transport, including all modes and sectors of transport by identifying five main areas or entry points where actions and measures could provide the most impact in accelerating gender balance. This analysis also explores the relationship between policy frameworks, workplace cultures, and positive action while examining the extent to which policy determines and influences women’s employment opportunities and experiences. It also provides tools and case studies to inspire and bring about change at an international, regional, and national level.

We thank the FIA Foundation for funding this work; Sheila Watson of FIA Foundation and Jim Walker of Walk 21 for leading the engagement with our members; Isobel Duxfield of POLIS and Heather Allen for conducting the research and producing this report; and all the incredible work done by the gender working group members on this important topic, contributing to raising its visibility for policy making, and leading the production of this paper in a collaborative way.

Sustainable Mobility for All Steering Committee

(On behalf of our 56 Member organizations)

May 2023, Washington, D.C.

Preface

FIA Foundation is committed to supporting evidence-based policy across the whole range of issues in safe and sustainable mobility. One of the areas of greatest concern is inclusivity.

Nowhere is this more important than in the role that different genders play within the transport sector. In particular, failing to capitalize on the extraordinary talents and abilities of the many women at work at all levels in the transport sector is not only a terrible waste of talent and Resources, but also potentially undermines wider work on sustainability, which is both essential, and in which women have a key role to play.

FIA Foundation has supported a wide range of work in this area. The experience has revealed some deeply ingrained issues within the sector, which hitherto have prohibited women from maximizing their role and contribution. This study aims to consider the range of experiences of women in the sector as workers and as decision makers for instance, that support a transition to a more balanced workforce across the sector and that secure the benefits, which women can bring.

We are extremely grateful to the SuM4All Gender Working Group members, and indeed to the wider SuM4All family, for their inputs to the study. Although the study concludes that widening participation at all levels is a long way away, it is heartening to see the good practice examples and progress, made to date.



Sheila Watson
Deputy Director
FIA Foundation

Across the last few years, the need for what has been termed a “Just Transition” has come to the fore. For urban mobility, and transport as a whole, this has never been so critical. As the race to create a more sustainable future for mobility and utilize the expanding armoury of technologies and innovations available gains pace, putting accessibility and inclusivity at the heart of this transition is crucial. The future of mobility must work for all, not just a privileged few.

However, as this study reveals, these inclusive transport services cannot be delivered without a more diverse workforce. We need to be able to reflect and represent who we seek to serve, and at present, the transport workforce is far from achieving this much-needed diversity. The lack of gender diversity in particular is apparent. While we have seen a growing recognition of the necessity for change, displayed vividly in this study, translating words into action has been far slower.

This study and toolkit therefore come at a decisive moment for the transport sector. A clear and comprehensive understanding of where the entire sector stands and honest reflections on the outcomes of recent policy changes and positive action are urgently required.

This urgency is only likely to grow. Creating and scaling up more sustainable transport services will be critical to confronting the looming climate crisis, yet without leveraging all the human resources and brain power available, such technological and structural changes remain pipedreams.

While this study is a stark reminder of the immense progress still to be made, it also demonstrates that we do not need to reinvent the wheel. If we are to fulfil the gender equality, and indeed, climate pledges, time is not ours to fitter away. The tools, processes, and partnerships outlined in the toolkit provide a huge resource for those seeking to act fast to push beyond ambition and toward systemic action.

At the heart of this is the importance of collaboration, working with others across the transport sector, learning from them and sharing one’s own experiences and knowledge. This is also at the heart of everything POLIS is doing as a network, and we are delighted to have worked closely with the FIA Foundation and the members of the SuM4All Gender Working Group on this toolkit, bringing together global expertise for what is such a comprehensive—and most important of all, useful—tool for transport practitioners everywhere. We feel the momentum is here, more than ever, to accelerate the diversification of the transport workforce, which in turn will result in a more inclusive and sustainable mobility ecosystem for all.



Karen Vancluysen,
Secretary General
POLIS

Acknowledgments

This report *Gender Imbalance in the Transport Sector: A Toolkit for Change* was prepared by the Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) Gender Working Group. It is the outcome of a one-year collaborative effort under the umbrella of the Sustainable Mobility for All Partnership. The toolkit report was compiled and written by Isobel Duxfield (POLIS Network) and Heather Allen (gender and sustainable transport expert) with valuable support from the SuM4All Gender Working Group under the co-leadership of Sheila Watson (FIA Foundation) and Jim Walker (Walk21). We are also grateful to Nato Kurshitashvili (World Bank) and Professor Susan Durbin, University of the West of England, for reviewing the toolkit.

Input was received from gender working group members: Haldane Dodd (ATAG), Harvey Scordia (CAF), Angie Palacios (CAF), Bianca Macedo (C40), Anne Joselin (FCDO), Marina Moscoso (Espacio), Kristina Kebeck (GIZ), Leonie Guskowski (GIZ), Heather Thompson (ITDP), Thilly De Bodt (ICAO), Maha Mousavi (ICAO), Gyorgyi Gurban (IMO), Susanna Zammataro (IRF), Julia Funk (IRF), Mary Crass (ITF-OECD), Magdalena Olczak-Rancitelli (ITF-OECD), Alana Dave (ITF), Claire Clarke (ITF), Jodi Evans (ITF), May Ali Babiker (IsDB), Garance Dubarry (Michelin), Marcus Baffoe-Bonnie (Michelin), Claire-Marie Bernard (Michelin), Itumeleng Makgobathe (Michelin), María Seguí-Gómez, Heather Allen, Karen Vancluysen (POLIS), Isobel Duxfield (POLIS), Elizabeth Pollitzer (Portia), Annabel Bradbury (ReCAP), Elsa Marie D’Silva (Safe Cities), Kalpana Viswanath (Safetipin), Sam Clark (Transaid), Jason Finch (Transaid), Wei-Shiuen Ng (UNESCAP), Lizzette Soria Sotelo (UN Women), Laura Capobianco (UN Women), Kathryn Travers (UN Women), Dioni González (UITP), Lindsey Mancini (UITP), Ayman Smadi (UITP), Brigitte Ollier (UITP), Bronwen Thornton (Walk21), Saroj Ayush (WBG), Julie Babinard (WBG), Nato Kurshitashvili (WBG), Muneeza Alam (WBG), Mary Ngaratoki Fabian (WBG), Shokraneh Minovi (WBG), Karla Dominguez Gonzalez (WBG), Karla Gonzalez Carajal (WBG), Ramon Munoz Raskin (WBG), Carla Walker (WRI), Siba El-Samra (WRI) and Natalie Elwell (WRI).

We acknowledge the guidance received from the SuM4All Steering Committee comprising Benjamin Jeromin (BMZ), Anne Joselin (FCDO), Lily Ryan Collins (FCDO), Sheila Watson (FIA Foundation), Susanna Zammataro (IRF), Atiq Ahmad (IsDB), Alana Dave (ITF), Nicolas Beaumont (Michelin), Ben Hartley (SEforALL), Maruxa Cardama (SLOCAT), Marvin Stolz (TUMI), Jan Hoffmann (UNCTAD), Francesco Dionori (UNECE), Jim Walker (Walk21), Nhan Tran (WHO), Benjamin Welle (WRI), Nicolas Peltier (World Bank) and Binyam Reja (World Bank).

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¹ Accessible via <https://www.sum4all.org/publications/gra-action-series>

Executive Summary

This document provides an insight into the challenges and opportunities women face when working in the transport sector. It is grounded in a review of published literature and primary data collection among a sample of men and women working in the sector. Based upon the evidence collected, the action-based toolkit produced from the findings offers an overview of the state of the art of women's global employment in transport, including all modes and sectors of transport. It identifies five main areas or entry points where actions and measures could provide the most impact in accelerating gender balance. It also provides tools and case studies to inspire and bring about change.

The primary research findings for this study are based on the results of the online survey with 300 respondents representing all regions and disciplines, complemented with 27 interviews.¹ The survey and interviews helped explore both women's and men's opinions and experiences of employment from an organizational and individual perspective. This includes views on the existing state of international and national policy frameworks and personal experiences of working in the transport sector.

This analysis also explores the relationship between policy frameworks, workplace cultures, and positive action while examining the extent to which policy determines and influences women's employment opportunities and experiences. At a regional level effort continue to reinforce policy. The European Commission has stepped up its efforts in equal employment. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,² lays the groundwork for equal treatment, pay and occupational safety. There are also directives such as work-life balance for parents and carers³ to address existing lack of incentives for men to assume an equal share of caring responsibilities in an effort to promote equity in employment, work and pay. In other continents, efforts are ongoing, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa⁴ or the Maputo Protocol, which calls for the promotion of equality of access to employment and women and girls' rights to education.

The survey findings revealed five key barriers, from which we have identified five entry points for action which could enable cross-sector progress in the recruitment and retention of women, as well as improved gender balance at leadership level and the erosion of occupational segregation:

1. Gender stereotyping for certain jobs, especially technical ones
2. Discriminatory work cultures
3. Lack of flexible working and childcare provision
4. Invisible glass ceilings and restricted career options
5. Gender equity and its relationship with wider diversity, behavior, and culture change

Although some of these attributes are not unique to the transport sector, the survey findings identify the entry points that are presently shaping gender inequitable employment, and how these are playing out in individual regions and modes within the sector.

The toolkit is designed to tackle inequity in a targeted and effective way. It expands on these five key areas for action, in depth, and offers examples of explicit initiatives that build upon the foundations laid by policy. It also provides targeted and detailed recommendations for action, complemented by in-depth case studies, which examine the critical guidance required for others seeking to kick-start or scale up their own initiatives through positive action. The toolkit seeks to support all actors—individuals, organizations, representative bodies, and others—looking to initiate or develop actions to address the prevailing gender imbalance, by highlighting what does and does not work.

The toolkit is accompanied by a series of appendixes, which provide in-depth information on the case studies, networks, and tools, as well as key additional literature for further reading.

The research, and resulting toolkit, acknowledge geographical variations in employment rights for women, different social and cultural environments and gender equality gaps that frame the backdrop to this work and add to the complexity of addressing this issue. Simultaneously, transport itself is changing rapidly with differing job functions and workplace cultures across the various transport modes undeniably shaping employment challenges for women. Nonetheless, this analysis of a broad range of transport modes, has identified the importance of shared or transferable solutions, focusing on specific actions, the keys to their success—or its lack of—and the learning others can take from these.

In doing so, this research and subsequent toolkit address the sector's gender imbalances not just as statistics—although they are important indicators of progress—but as the lived experiences that shape women's decisions and capacity to enter, remain in, and reach their highest potential in the sector.

This action-oriented approach follows, and builds on, the SuM4All Global Roadmap for Action (GRA),⁵ which identified four distinct issues⁶ that prevent women from fully benefiting and participating in the transport sector. The GRA also called for the transport sector to address key legal provisions and social norms that not only restrict women's mobility but create barriers to them working in transport.

This work was funded by the FIA Foundation,⁷ a registered charity works to shape projects and advocate to secure change in policy and practice, and led by the SuM4All Gender Working Group,⁸ whose members are derived from across the transport sector, representing many different sectors and geographies, yet all shared similar concerns for the transport sector's gender imbalance and urgency for a more comprehensive understanding of how to accelerate change toward a more gender balanced sector.

Notes

- 1 A full list of interviewees' organizations is available in Appendix A.
- 2 European Parliament (2012) Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - Protocols - Annexes - Declarations annexed to the Final Act of the Intergovernmental Conference which adopted the Treaty of Lisbon, signed on 13 December 2007, (WWW) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN>
- 3 European Parliament (2019) Directive (Eu) 2019/1158 Of The European Parliament and of The Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU (WWW) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32019L1158>
- 4 African Union (2019) Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (WWW) <https://au.int/en/treaties/protocol-african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights-rights-women-africa>
- 5 Sustainable Mobility for All (2019) Global Roadmap of Action Toward Sustainable Mobility: Gender. Washington DC, License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3. (WWW) <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/229591571411011551-0090022019/original/GenderGlobalRoadmapofAction.pdf>
- 6 These four issues were legal, engineering, economic and marketing
- 7 Established as an independent UK-registered charity in 2001 by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the FIA Foundation has worked closely with international agencies, expert technical partners, civil society organizations.
- 8 The SuM4All consortium consists of over 50 member organizations that have pledged to a shared vision on sustainable mobility anchored on the 4 goals of universal access, efficiency, safety, and green mobility and have agreed to work together toward its implementation. Member organizations fall into five broad categories: (i) Multilateral Development Banks; (ii) UN/Intergovernmental Organizations; (iii) Bilateral Partners; (iv) Private Sector/ Business Associations; and (v) Global Civil Society Organizations: <https://www.sum4all.org/consortium-members>.

Introduction

“In order to provide an equitable, sustainable and accessible transportation system for ALL, we need to have voices, policy, planning, implementation and deployment for all.”

Quote from respondent.

Worldwide, the transport sector is facing a significant gender imbalance. Although statistics are difficult to obtain, the International Labour Organization (ILO) suggests 16.8 percent of the global work force in transport is female. However, this differs immensely regionally, with 29 percent in North America, 12.2 percent in Asia and the Pacific, 10 percent in Africa and 5.5 percent in Arab States, in Europe, women represent less than 20 percent of the global transport workforce¹ and a fragment of its leadership, both in the private² and public sectors.³ These figures, provide an inflated view, owing to the inclusion of storage and communication and a range of transport pipeline occupations.⁴

At the same time, occupational segregation is widely visible, and women remain heavily underrepresented in engineering and technical roles.⁵ Although recognition for the need for action is growing, no significant improvement has been observed in the situation since 2010.

The transport sector is now at a critical juncture, where urgency for progress is meeting fresh opportunities for action. Transport faces skills and labor shortages worldwide and rapidly developing technologies and services are contributing to transforming work across the sector, with new skills and reskilling required in every mode.

Widespread recognition⁶ has dawned that recruiting and retaining women are fundamental to the sector’s financial and environmental resiliency, with gender equality the key to create the diversity of thought, creativity, and sheer human capital required for the successful, more sustainable, and innovative services the world demands. This is not simply an opportunity for more gender equitable employment, it is a necessity. Failure to address recruitment, training, workplace cultures, maternity provisions, work-life balance, and barriers to career progression mean many women will be locked out of the new opportunities that are emerging, and the sector is starving itself of a large pool of skills and talent.

This study builds upon findings from the SuM4All Global Roadmap for Action (GRA),⁷ which called for the transport sector to address key barriers inhibiting women from accessing decent work in transport. It delivers a clear overview of the existing employment landscape in transport and recommends and guides positive action for practitioners across the sector, informed by the experiences of those pioneering change.

Informed by desk-based research, surveys, and interviews, the study examines the primary challenges for women entering, remaining in, and progressing in the transport sector worldwide, before presenting a toolkit, which lays out key recommendations for action. The study also goes behind the statistics, to offer an insight into women’s (and men’s) lived experiences of working in the sector, from an organizational

and individual perspective, revealing the tangible, marginalizing impacts of employment practices and cultures.

The research reveals an unequivocal recognition of the need for a more diverse sector, especially in gender diversity and, on the other hand, a need for further data on the negative impacts of gendered working cultures. Alongside this, a lack of understanding prevails around the accurate and effective actions needed to tackle gender diversity. This research is thus one of the most up-to-date and in-depth analyses of gender equity in the sector so far.

The toolkit delves into the five key entry points identified that analyze the complex situation in the field, providing clear, comprehensive evaluation of the action required to generate the paradigm shift demanded for transformative change. Across the survey and interviews, it was clear that action is frequently being inaugurated and advanced by individuals —often women—working in the sector. However, these actions are often not embedded in institutional and organizational processes. In order to The toolkit, therefore, supports the scaling up of more comprehensive gender equal employment structures and provides a range of in-depth case studies examining positive action across the sector, in all regions. It blueprints actions for others seeking to kick-start or enhance initiatives and processes in their own organizations.

The case studies represent more intricate accounts of the processes, responsibilities, outcomes and the main lessons learned. They also indicate how executive leadership has been engaged and has provided support. Key partnerships are highlighted and, in some cases, the technologies and tools that have been deployed. As such, the toolkit can also be used as a resource for actions, coalition building, and data collection across the sector, as well as a catalyst for further peer-to-peer learning. Above all, the toolkit has been designed to accelerate action toward gender parity and to improve the diversity, equality, and inclusion of the sector.

Notes

- 1 The World Bank (2023) Making Way for Women in Transport and Logistics: Promising Practices in Europe and Central Asia (WWW), <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/01/26/making-way-for-women-in-transport-and-logistics-promising-practices-in-europe-and-central-asia>.
- 2 Lutte, R. (2021) Women in Aviation: A Workforce Report 2021 Edition.
- 3 Inter-Parliamentary Union (2023) Women in Politics: 2023 (WWW) <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/infographics/2023-03/women-in-politics-2023>
- 4 Additionally, the data includes storage and communication and a range of occupations such as transport via pipelines, supporting and auxiliary transport activities, and the activities of travel agencies, postal services, and telecommunications.
- 5 Women in Trucking (2022) Women in Trucking Index, (WWW) <https://www.womenintrucking.org/index>
- 6 Ng, W., and Bassan, D. (2022) Gender equality and the role of women in decarbonising transport, OECD/ITF & FIA Foundation, Paris and London
- 7 Sustainable Mobility for All (2019) Global Roadmap of Action Toward Sustainable Mobility: Gender. Washington DC, License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0

SECTION 1

The International Landscape for Gender Equal Employment

This section provides an overview of the global context of women's economic empowerment and action, which has taken on an international, regional, and national level to address gendered barriers and challenges to access employment and career progression. It then focuses specifically on the transport sector and examines key changes, which have occurred over the last decade and the opportunities for action these have prompted.

Global context: Empowering women to accelerate sustainability

As global pressure to eradicate poverty and address climate change targets grow, enhancing women's economic participation must now move from ambition to action at an accelerated pace. Closing the global gender employment gap plays a central role in economic prosperity, welfare, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability; and enabling women and girls to enter the formal job markets has been noted as one of the biggest opportunities¹ for human development and economic growth. Bringing more women into formal employment also contributes to achieving global development goals.

Diversity presents a clear business case, which as is explored later, is particularly the case in transport. International research by Catalyst² and more recently by McKinsey,³ found that companies with the highest number of women representatives at senior management level had better financial performance.⁴ The research also links diversity to financial performance of companies, revealing positive repercussions for the success of products and services developed.

Diversity can also have a positive impact on business performance in a multitude of ways, from greater innovation and skill sharing to increased productivity and higher revenues, while also changing customer perception and public image of transport services, critical for many modes, particularly public transport.

The business case for gender equality in Latin America

CAF, the Latin American Development Bank^a estimates that improving women's participation in the work force in Latin America could add an additional 34 percent to the region's GDP (CAF 2017). They note that, had it not been for the inclusion of 70 million women in the labor market in the last 20 years, the growth of Latin American economies—the so called economic miracle—with average growth rates of about 5 percent (2002–08) and drastically reduced extreme poverty levels, would not have been possible.

Note:

a. www.caf.com/en/currently/news/2017/03/the-decisive-role-of-women-in-the-economic-development-of-latin-america/

A Forbes Insights survey in 2022⁵ revealed that diversity is a key driver of innovation in the workplace, highlighting that the workplace environments that accommodate and encourage diversity will most likely see a surge in innovation.

The presence of women in technology roles, from entry level to board level positions, is significantly lagging. To put this into perspective, only 26 percent of the UK tech workforce are women and as little as 5 percent of leadership roles in tech are held by women.⁶ The lack of female representation across all job roles and skill levels shows the digital skills gap in a stark light. Technology businesses, including transport, have a responsibility to consider how their working models can be developed to attract and retain female talent companywide.

At the same time, early evidence suggests⁶ women have suffered disproportionate job losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with their unpaid working time having increased. As a result of such pandemic-induced changes in working practices and growing care work demands, according to the International Labour Organization⁷ (ILO), women's employment declined by 5 percent in 2020 compared to 3.9 percent for men, and 90 percent of women who lost their jobs in 2020 exited the labor force entirely.⁸

Meanwhile, in many regions of the world populations are ageing. In many developed economies, increasing numbers of workers are reaching retirement age, presenting a major problem for employers, with many, particularly in transport, struggling to recruit from younger generations.⁹ At the same time, in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia Pacific we are seeing growing working age populations, presenting key pools of labor.

Transport is one of several male dominated sectors that are traditionally regarded as “No place for women,”¹⁰ globally. Yet, at the same time, many sub-sectors within transport, particularly logistics and public transport, are experiencing major shortages in the workforce, in some places a so-called labor crisis,¹¹ accompanied by high levels of occupational gender segregation. More worryingly, traditional approaches to recruitment do not appear to be building the required robust pipeline of talent. Women represent approximately 20 percent of the global transport workforce¹² and a fragment of its leadership, with figures increasing at an alarmingly slow pace over the last decade.

The slow pace of change: An alarming picture

At the prevailing rate of advance in women's economic empowerment, educational opportunities, and political empowerment, it is estimated that the global gender gap will take over 130 years to fill.¹³ Yet, progress is not accelerating. Research from across the globe outlines the slowing pace¹⁴ of advancement—and even regression—in the numbers of women in formal employment, the types of sectors and roles they are able to access, and their representation at higher levels of leadership.¹⁵

This imbalance is also present in political representation and decision-making roles. Figures released in 2023 show¹⁶ globally, only 9.8 percent of countries have female heads of government, with a mere 14 countries achieving a gender-balanced cabinet. At the local level, in Europe, female mayors head less than a quarter of the continent's big cities.¹⁷

A similar trend prevails in the private sector. Despite the introduction of policies on corporate governance, disclosure requirements, and quotas for women's representation on boards, advances are slow. Less than

30 percent of leadership roles and nearly 16 percent¹⁸ of executive level of company decision makers are held by women. According to the UN Women, Women's Leadership in the ASEAN Region study,¹⁹ the share of women managers rose only 2 percentage points in 20 years, with research in the United States²⁰ suggesting progress is slowing down. The European Women on Boards Gender Diversity Index²¹ revealed that only 5 percent of companies are anywhere close to parity in governance.

This is also the case at leadership and managerial levels, with the share of women hired into leadership roles slightly rising from 33.3 percent in 2016 to 36.9 percent in 2022.²² Of the 49 jurisdictions covered by the OECD 2019 Corporate Governance Factbook,²³ 12 countries reported establishing mandatory quotas, with national policies in France, Germany, and Italy; with Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and others introducing mandatory board quotas for state-owned enterprises.

Women also face barriers to entrepreneurship and self-employment, with less access to finance and with fewer assets. In 2021, women were around 30 percent less likely than men to be starting or managing a new business across OECD countries.²⁴ Typically, women are more often in part time or precarious jobs²⁵ and given the importance of informal transport employment for women in many regions, especially the Global South and the recent growth of platform work, such barriers present key threats to equity.

More progress is to be made toward gender parity in education. The United Nations warned²⁶ in 2020 that in spite of the good intentions enshrined in laws and policies, governments are inadequately implementing gender equality in education. We have seen some transformative gains²⁷ in women and girls' education, with girls' learning outcomes, on average, reaching those of boys, even exceeding them in some instances,²⁸ supported by frameworks such as the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education as well as tools such as the European Commission's Educational toolkit to help fight gender stereotypes in primary school,²⁹ yet, progress has been uneven across regions.³⁰ Women remain the minority of students in STEM science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education – just under one third³¹ of female tertiary students choose STEM disciplines worldwide although some countries such as India are making inroads.³² The lack of representation in STEM subjects has repercussions in the workforce, where women make up only one third of the workforce in the 20 largest global technology companies (map 1.1).³³

Map 1.1. Women in STEM chapter map.



Women in STEM Chapter Map

Source: <https://womeninstem.org/>

International policy frameworks for equality: Progress within a heterogenous global picture

The last decade has witnessed an expansion of national and international policy frameworks, which aim to support women's economic empowerment. Although change is occurring at varying rates across the globe, actions tackling lack of educational opportunity, violence and discrimination, lack of maternity and childcare facilities, and to some extent gender balance at leadership level, are making headway.

According to the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2022,³⁴ the global gender parity³⁵ score rose from 67.9 percent in 2021 to 68.1 percent in 2022, propelled by rising rates of employment and greater representation of women at leadership level. These shifts have been underpinned by an advancing national and international policy arena, which affords growing attention to women's economic empowerment³⁶ and employment rights, having particular impact in the jobs women are able to access in the transport sector. In the past decade, approximately 130 countries³⁷ have enacted nearly 275 legal and regulatory reforms supporting gender equality, covering maternity leave, educational rights, and protection against harassment in the workplace.

The United Nations' 2016 report "Leave no one behind: A call to action for gender equality and women's economic empowerment"³⁸ presented evidence and made a substantive case for actions to address the systemic constraints and persistent gaps in women's economic opportunities. This remains at the heart of the International Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)³⁹ have addressed women's outsized contribution to unpaid caring roles and economic participation. Several policy frameworks look to increase women's participation in all spheres of life including the economy, education, and agency. For example, SDG5 calls for women to be empowered economic actors and for caregiving activities to be shared more equally between women and men, accompanied by several other key actions.⁴⁰

Violence and discrimination remain a major barrier for women⁴¹ despite the many international conventions, some dating back to the 1970s. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW in 1979, sometimes called the "human rights treaty for women," and now adopted by 189 member countries of the UN.⁴² The International Labour Organization's (ILO) convention on Violence and Harassment in 2019,⁴³ maternity protection, and part-time and home working are of specific interest to transport, as violence in the workplace is still widespread and is a particular problem in transport.

At a regional level, efforts continue to reinforce policy. The European Commission has stepped up its efforts in equal employment; for example, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union⁴⁴ lays the groundwork for equal treatment, pay and occupational safety, whereas directives such as work-life balance for parents and carers⁴⁵ to address existing lack of incentives for men to assume an equal share of caring responsibilities in an effort to promote equity in employment, work, and pay is an example. In other continents, efforts are ongoing such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa⁴⁶ or the Maputo Protocol calls for promotion of equality of access to employment and women and girls' rights to education.

Meanwhile, early signs are emerging that international corporate governance codes are proving effective. In Australia,⁴⁷ the number of women on corporate boards in the ASX 200⁴⁸ has increased from 8 percent in 2010—when recommendations were introduced— to 23 percent in 2016. Women now hold 28 percent of the corporate board seats in the USA⁴⁹ and 30 percent in the European Union.^{50, 51}

Many actions have been accompanied by regulations on transparency measures covering gender pay gaps. Eighteen of the 38 OECD⁵² countries, as of 2021, mandate systematic, regular gender wage gap reporting by private sector firms of a certain size—most of which have been introduced over the last decade. Recent changes include amendments to the UK’s Equality Act in 2017, which requires any organization with 250 or more employees to publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap. The European Commission made a deal in December 2022 on a provisional agreement, giving workers and workers’ representatives the right to receive clear and complete information on individual and average pay levels, broken down by gender. Such measures show evidence of advancements in this area. The OECD asserts⁵² that measures—accompanied by the threat of sanctions—remain a valuable tool for advancing equal pay. However, studies also warn of the limited impact pay reporting regulations have on rises in women’s wages, and this effect has been further compounded by the negative impact of COVID-19⁵³ on women’s employment generally.

In addition, women continue to spend a disproportionate amount of time on unpaid care and housework, which complicates their engagement in the labor market, especially once they become mothers. For example, women in OECD countries⁵⁴ are, on average, ten percentage points less likely to be employed than men and still spend about five fewer hours per week in paid work. OECD found that gender differences in working hours are driven by disproportionately high rates of part-time employment among women workers.

Transport under the gender lens: a long way from achieving gender equity

Transport is a sector which has a significant and persistent gender imbalance. The SuM4All GRA⁵⁵ identified that 104 of the world’s economies have at least one restriction on women’s employment and that 19 have specific restrictions on their work in the transport sector.⁵⁶ It provides an overview of the geographical differences in distributions of women in transport internationally and lays bare the extent to which this is a challenge for the sector in all regions across developed and less developed countries. These include restrictions on working at night, on accessing a vehicle driving license, and restrictions on specific roles within transport for women, such as driving metros, buses, and trucks.⁵⁷

Worldwide, the transport sector is facing a significant gender imbalance. Although statistics are difficult to obtain, the International Labour Organization (ILO) suggests 16.8 percent of the global work force in transport is female. However, this differs immensely regionally, with 29 percent in North America, 12.2 percent in Asia and the Pacific, 10 percent in Africa, and 5.5 percent in Arab States; in Europe, women represent less than 20 percent of the global transport workforce and a fragment of its leadership, both in the private⁵⁹ and public sectors⁶⁰—figures which in fact provide an inflated view, owing to the inclusion of storage and communication, and a range of transport pipeline occupations.⁶¹

Women in the transport sector in Canada

Transport Canada commissioned an economy-wide study in 2015 to validate the assumption that women are underrepresented in transport careers across Canada.

In Canada, female participation in the transport industry is only 27.3%, compared to 48% for all other industries, with women particularly underrepresented in the rail sector (12.8%) and in truck transportation (14.6%). The only industries with fewer women than transportation are utilities, mining, and construction.

The study revealed that the rate of women's participation in the sector has remained largely unchanged over the past 20 years; and in all subsectors, women are far more likely to hold administrative, service, or support roles, rather than management or technical roles. Women's participation is highest in the aviation subsector, but they are overrepresented in service-oriented positions such as flight attendants (78%), rather than as pilots or flight engineers (6%).

Source: *Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table (2017) Executive Insights: Women's Participation in Transportation Careers - Moving Beyond the Status Quo*, [WIT-Report-2017-Final-Web.pdf \(westac.com\)](#)

Occupational segregation is widely visible, and women remain heavily underrepresented in engineering and technical roles,⁶² and in roles often stereotyped as male occupations including freight, airline pilots, long haul maritime captains and crew, and maintenance jobs such as aircraft, shipping, road, and rail.

Despite widespread equal opportunity policy implementation across a broad number of employment measures, the last several decades have seen numerous challenges to successfully integrating women into non-traditional roles.⁶³ Broken down by sector, women make up only two percent of seafarers and three percent of truckers. Data availability is a problem across the sector, making it difficult to analyze the situation in more detail. Data are also often asymmetric — 40 percent of the aviation sector is made up of women but only two percent of pilots are female.⁶⁴

Aviation in focus

Although [India](#) is near the bottom of the Economic Participation and Opportunity subindex (156th out of 159 countries), they have the highest number of female pilots and 12.4% of commercial pilots are women. This figure is over twice the global average. Typically, the average is nearer 5%, according to the International Society of Women Airline Pilots. It is 5.5% in the US, the largest aviation market in the world, and 4.7% in the UK although Air France and Lufthansa have 7% and 6% respectively due to targeted programmes.

Source: Brown, H. (2022) India has the highest percentage of female pilots in the world, Zoya Agarwal is one of them, EuroNews, (WWW)<https://www.euronews.com/travel/2022/10/06/india-has-the-highest-percentage-of-female-pilots-in-the-world-zoya-agarwal-is-one-of-them>

The numbers of women working in transport overall differ geographically,⁶⁵ with the highest female participation rates in North America at 23.2 percent and the lowest in Asia and Africa at 8.4 percent and 8.1 percent respectively.⁶⁵

TinnGO's hub for data and tools for gender equity in transport

The European Observatory for Gender Smart Transport was launched and is maintained by the **European project TinnGO**, to develop a framework and mechanisms for a sustainable game change in the European transport sector.

Twenty organizations—including 7 higher education institutes and research institutes, 4 municipalities and 9 transport consultants—from 13 countries set up **10 national hubs** to address issues of local importance. Specifically they looked to:

- gather gender mobility data^a (**open data repository**)
- generate intersectional analysis
- develop **gender and diversity action plans^b** (gadaps)
- produce **best practices** and **case studies**
- design training materials and **tools**
- **create idea factories to foster discussions and co-create solutions**
- raise awareness of gender sensitive smart mobility by **publishing articles**, among other activities

They have also created a learning centre with training materials and 14 inspirational case studies of **successful women** employed in the fields of transport and smart mobility.

Notes:

a. <https://tinngo.sboing.net/>

b. <https://transportgenderobservatory.eu/resources/gender-diversity-action-plans/>

Women also remain a minority in political decision making in transport, accounting for only 15.5 percent of ministers with transport portfolios across the 27 EU Member States⁶⁶, and as of February 2023, only 7 of the 64-member countries of the International Transport Forum⁶⁷ countries have female Ministers of Transport.⁶⁸ According to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap report,⁶⁹ 21 percent of the supply chain and transportation sector have women leaders; the fourth lowest score in the ranking of all industry sectors,⁷⁰ and is one of six industries that hired significantly more men than women into leadership positions in 2021.

The male dominated nature of the sector has repercussions for women's treatment in the workplace, which was evident from the survey findings and the interviews. However, over the last decade, transport has slowly shifted its attention toward issues surrounding gender balance in the workplace and women's employment experiences.⁷¹

The growing body of literature on this topic testifies to the increasing attention toward the issues of a gender imbalance in the sector. For example, the publication of several key pieces of research into⁷² equality and discrimination, and efforts by the European Commission⁷³ and World Bank, and international representative bodies such as International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)⁷⁴ and European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF),^{75,76} and networks including the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association, Women in Transport, and Women in Trucking have exposed discriminatory practices and cultures, highlighting challenges, and campaigning for action.

An opportunity for change

The transport sector is at a critical juncture where renewed urgency for progress, accompanies fresh opportunities for action. The last several years have seen unprecedented social movements toward exposing women's lived experiences and pressing for more transformative change. Following the onset of the **#MeToo** and **#TimesUp** movements, women's experiences as transport workers and as service users were thrown in the limelight.⁷⁷ This has created a new demand for change at all levels, which employers, unions, networks, local and national authorities must face head on.

Transport also faces significant skills and labor shortages worldwide. Rail,⁷⁸ trucking and coach⁷⁹ sectors in particular are grappling with a crippling lack of workers, with employees requiring upskilling and reskilling. Globally, 2.6 million truck driver jobs were unfilled in 2021,⁸⁰ while in the UK, it is estimated that 80 percent of the rail industry⁸¹ will require training over the next two decades to contend with modernizing technologies. Therefore, leveraging human capital in a targeted and sustained way is critical for the sustainability and success of the sector.

Women in Freight and Logistics

In June 2022, after surveying more than 1,500 commercial road transport operators in 25 countries across the Americas, Asia, and Europe, the International Road Union (IRU), and a representative body for this subsector released its 2022 Global Driver Shortage Report. This report found that 2.6 million truck driver jobs went unfilled in 2021 in surveyed countries, and it found that shortages of professional drivers increased in all regions in 2021 except Eurasia.

As laid out in the IRU's 2022 action plan, they aim to have 10% of professional drivers in the EU being below the age of 25 years old and an increase of 10% for women by 2030.

The American Trucking Association (ATA) reported that the trucking industry will need to hire roughly 1.1 million new drivers in the next decade in the United States and approximately 110,000 new drivers each year through 2029.

To put this in context, approximately 3.6 million professional truck drivers are employed in the United States, (ATA) with just over 2 million driving heavy trucks and tractor-trailers, and nearly 1.5 million delivery drivers or drivers or sales workers. The ATA further reports that 7.95 million people are employed in trucking and trucking-related jobs in the U.S.

IRU Survey Results

Less than 3% of truck drivers were women in 2021 in all regions, with notable exceptions in China at 5% and the USA at 8%. The rate of women bus and coach drivers in Europe is nearly 12%. However, these rates are all still well below transport sector norms, especially in Europe and the US where 22% and 28% of all transport workers respectively are women. For example, 315,000 truck drivers are registered in the UK, of which only 2,200 are female.

Nevertheless, female truck driver percentages have slowly begun to increase, especially since the equal rights act in 2010 was introduced. Women are now catching up and 23% of transport management roles within the trucking sector are now occupied by women.

New transport technologies and mobility services are simultaneously transforming work with repercussions for women's work in the sector. This is likely to accelerate, and automation, digitalization, electrification, and the expansion of gig working platforms are creating new jobs, requiring different skills and, in some cases, threatening existing functions. With women already largely underrepresented in all job functions—including and often in particular, STEM roles—these trends have, and will continue to have, decidedly gendered impacts. Failure to act risks locking in transport's existing gender imbalance for decades to come.

A recent growth of platform taxi driving, and delivery has also prompted rapid expansion in informal work⁸² with a large percentage of females employed in these jobs, particularly in developing countries. The proliferation of the gig economy has the capacity for more flexible working opportunities for women. However, it also raises critical concerns for women's access to and control of personal finance, safety, and welfare benefits such as maternity provisions and pensions. With the ride-hailing industry set to expand to US\$285 billion by 2030,⁸³ up from \$36 billion in 2018, understanding trends and identifying challenges are critical.

The introduction and scaling up of electric mobility are creating new opportunities for women's employment in India

Dipti Mahapatro is the female General Manager of Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) at Odisha State Dipti Mahapatro Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC). India looks to challenging the male dominance in the public transport sector by creating an ecosystem that is gender inclusive and gender sensitive. CRUT operates 225 buses under the brand name Mo Bus, non-electric buses. Mahapatro recently introduced the concept of 'Mo E-Ride' in Bhubaneswar, an electric rickshaw system that acts as a feeder service to Mo Bus operations and employs transgender and women drivers.

Mahapatro has implemented multiple measures on women's safety. Her work has been recognized and awarded by the Government of India three times—every year since CRUT's inception under her leadership. These women's safety measures have included the deployment of more than 40% of women conductors as crews, disaggregated ticketing, fitting Mo Buses with CCTV, strategically locating well-lit bus shelters, equipping state-of-the-art Mo Bus depots with separate toilets for gender groups, as well as training crew on tactful practices of passenger management.

At the same time, the need to create a more sustainable transport sector and reconfigure services around pandemic-induced changes in global mobility patterns are also transforming job roles. It is widely recognized^{85, 86} that recruiting and retaining women is fundamental for the sector's financial and environmental resiliency,⁸⁵ with gender equality key to creating the diversity of thought, creativity, and sheer human capital required for successful, accessible, and innovative services the world demands.

This is an area that is only likely to become more critical for the entire sector because rapid technological advance offers new avenues for tackling the global climate crisis, yet also demands new and different skills and competencies. Indeed, as the Kurshitashvili et al.⁸⁶ latest study notes, expanding opportunities for women will be particularly critical in cementing public transport as the backbone of sustainable mobility.

Actions are beginning, but barriers remain

Clearly, critical barriers remain for women entering, remaining in, and advancing in the sector. If the transport sector is to build on this progress, key fundamental changes need to be implemented that actively improve women's ability to access the sector, their workplace experiences, and decision-making roles.

Such advancement is not simply an opportunity; it is a necessity. Failure to address recruitment, training, workplace culture, and safety, maternity provisions, work-life balance and barriers to career progression mean many women will be locked out of the new opportunities, which are emerging across all sectors of transport—and others directly and indirectly related to transport. At the same time inability to address gender diversity will stifle the industry's capacity for sustainable growth.⁸⁷

Public and private employers can now access several toolkits such as the International Transport Forum's (ITF) Gender Analysis Toolkit for Transport,⁸⁸ the ITF and UITP's positive employer gender policy⁸⁹ the Gender Equality Toolkit for Transport,⁹⁰ and joint pledges such as Mobility XX,⁹¹ to help place gender equity at the heart of employment practices, and into the services they provide. Other initiatives have mapped women who are leaders in transport such as TUMI's series of "Remarkable Women in Transport".

Nevertheless, major gains are yet to be seen. This toolkit is therefore the first to offer a state-of-the-art overview of the lived experiences of women and men in the global transport sector in their employment, thus enhancing and developing existing academic and industry research and actions. It addresses the clear gap between research and action, by connecting quantitative and qualitative data with some of the most profound recommendations for actions yet seen.

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SECTION 2

Survey and Interview Results

This section draws from the findings from the online survey and interviews, outlining the methodology. It provides insight into the types of positive action taking place and the obstacles which remain.

Methodology

This study was undertaken over a nine-month period from June 2022 to March 2023 and combined desk-based research and literature reviews, surveys, and 23 interviews with selected individuals from across the transport sector. The online survey was completed by 300 individuals, from across the public sector who were either local or national entities, international development agencies, the private sector, academia, unions, and nonprofit organizations.

The survey, which was created through the platform Alchemer, was disseminated through the SuM4All and POLIS communications channels, social media, individual email outreach, and at major international transport events and through international transport publications. Taking part in the survey was voluntary and respondents were informed that they could withdraw their consent at any time, up until their submission of the online survey.

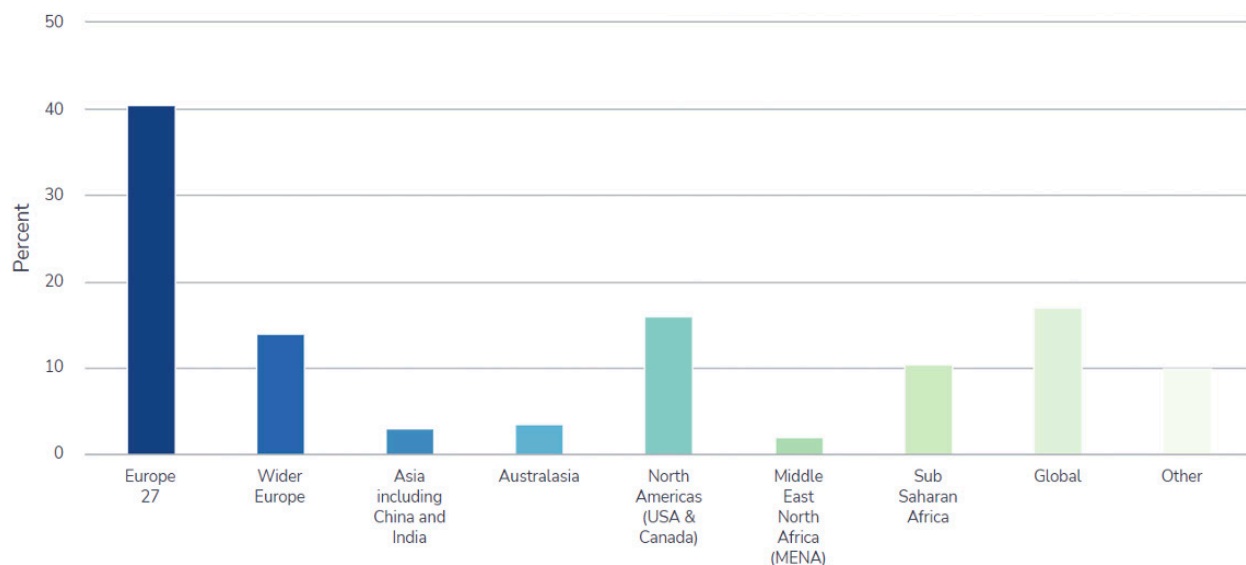
The survey (see Appendix D) was split into several key parts, which sought to identify:

1. Respondents' professional positions and demographic details—sector, role or status, gender, and region.
2. Understanding and experiences of the international policy landscape and its effects.
3. Views and experiences of gender balance in the transport sector, including examples of what their organizations are doing, gender parity in their organization, and details of female leadership.
4. Views and experiences of main barriers for women entering and progressing in the transport sector from an organizational and personal point of view.
5. Views and experiences of the key positive actions taking place in the transport sector.
6. Views on key actions for the future.

The survey was then analyzed using the online tools available through the Alchemer platform.

Interviewees were then sourced through those who completed the survey and agreed to participate in an online interview, as well as individual outreach to key individuals across the sector. These individuals comprised female CEOs, human resource managers, individuals involved in women's transport networks, and others from leadership and managerial positions with a good insight into key barriers for gender equitable employment and positive actions on the ground. The researchers endeavored to interview a wide range of people, covering many geographical regions and modes (figures 2.2).

Figure 2.1. Responses to the question: “Which region does your organization operate in?”



The primary research was supported by feedback and insights from a steering committee comprising individuals with extensive knowledge and experience in this field. These experts supported in shaping and disseminating the survey, ensuring it was circulated widely, reaching as many sectors as possible. The steering committee also provided valuable critique throughout this process, advising on gaps in data and helping shape the toolkit into an action orientated, targeted resource that could be applied across the sector. The final toolkit was further supported by the SuM4All Gender Working Group who provided feedback on scope, approach, and findings of the work throughout the research and drafting process.

The online survey used a combination of direct “yes or no” and more open-ended questions, as well as a rank-and-score option and potential solutions. This provided quantitative data and an understanding of priority challenges and actions, as well as more qualitative impression of respondents’ workplace experiences and further information on initiatives deployed.

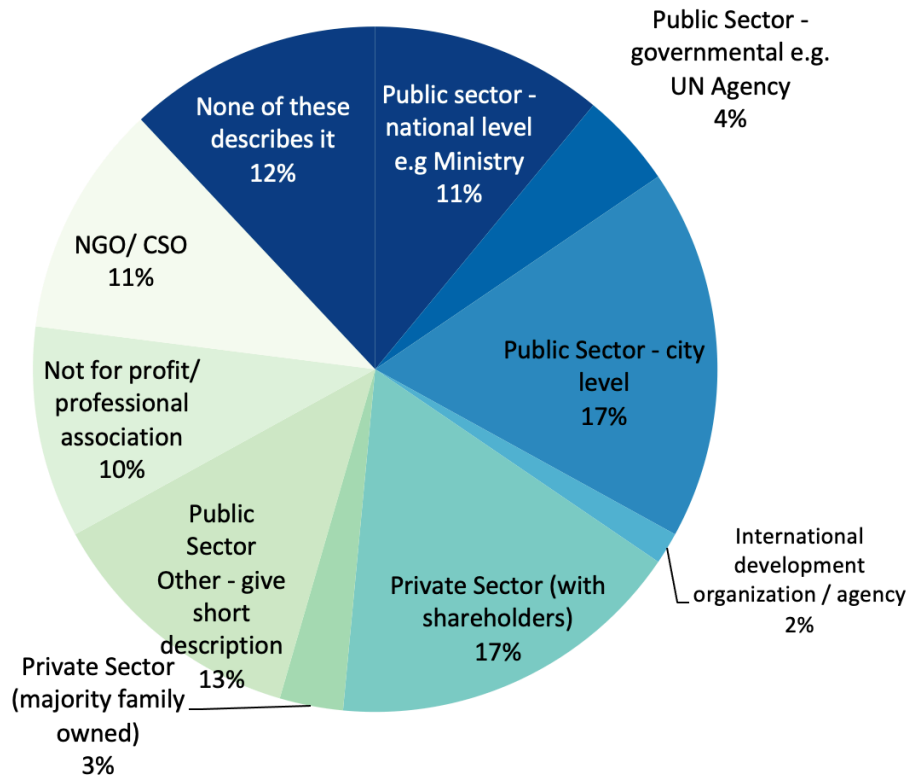
Respondents came from technical roles, planning officials, administration, middle, and senior management as well as c-suite. They were invited to take part via several channels including by direct email invitation, social media platforms and various relevant networks. Most respondents were female but about a quarter identified as male. Data were drawn from a broad range of transport sectors; however, more inputs came from specific modes such as rail, road, and transport planning because of the networks the researchers had access to. This sample profile reflected primarily the views of those in professional positions rather than from line workers or shop floor technicians—35 percent self-identified as being in roles that take decisions such as a political leader like a mayor or vice mayor, head of transport company, or other senior positions that can influence decisions about transport (see figure 2.2).

In not obliging respondents to reveal their name, organization and contact details—though many opted to do so—the survey secured frank answers to the questions. Comments allowed greater insights into specific experiences and provided some interesting and unique examples.

The interviews conducted enabled a deeper dive into many of the themes identified in the survey and the levers behind the positive action initiatives being deployed. Interviews were conducted with people from local authorities, international trade unions and NGOs, ride hailing, freight, public transport, active travel, aviation, and maritime players, as well as representatives from automotive and technology industries.

A slight bias surfaced toward respondents coming from Europe and North America, although 15 percent stated that they acted globally, and 36 percent of respondents described the scope of their work as international. Inputs from modes and regions with less representation in the survey were secured through stakeholder interviews.

Figure 2.2. Profile of respondents to the web-based survey.



The prevailing face of gender in transport: Survey and interview results

It is clearly recognized that transport has a gender balance issue. Yet, it was stated by many that the sector must also look beyond gender and consider wider diversity too. The respondents were specifically asked about their views on the need for change and 97 percent agreed that the transport workforce needs to be more diverse.

“Wider representation of all groups will lead to greater diversity of ideas and opinions,”

Quote from a survey respondent.

There was also unanimous agreement, from both men and women, on the intrinsic value of economic empowerment and inclusivity, and recognition of the need to ensure service offers were also accessible and inclusive.

“Diversifying the workforce by including different genders ensures that the needs of both genders are integrated in service delivery and planning of transportation.”

Quote from survey respondent.

Diversity and inclusion are seen to be ever more critical as transport seeks to shift toward a more sustainable future. The prevalent focus on a ‘Just Transition’¹ and greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, is given growing priority in national and international policy agendas.

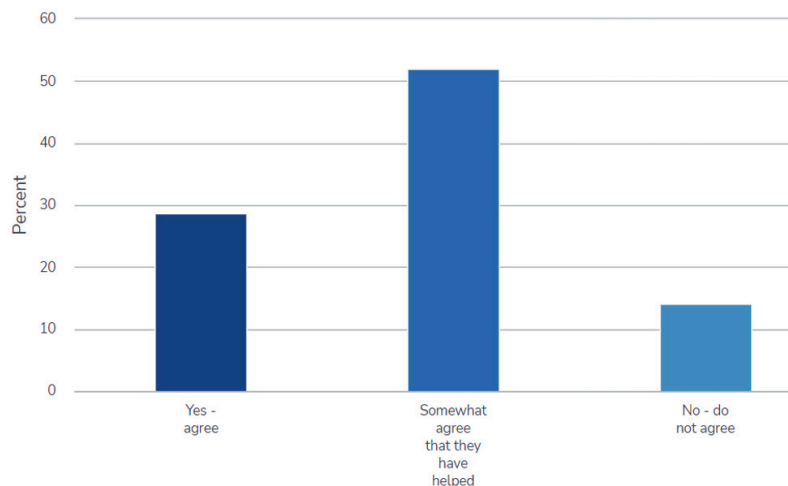
“A service so essential to any society should strive to be as diverse as possible in both its vision and workforce”.

Quote from survey respondent.

Policies are important, but not in the driving seat

This survey exposed that many of the challenges women face go beyond national or international policy frameworks. Global consensus prevails that policies which support gender equality and women’s empowerment are important, although these may vary depending on the geographic region and cultural norm. However, they are no longer the key determinant for women to thrive in the transport sector, which was evident in respondents’ views on the role of international policy, combined with their affirmation of barriers for women’s work in the sector. Although 30 percent agreed—and a further 50 percent were inclined to agree—that the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and calls to action on gender equality and equity have helped increase the opportunities for women to enter the formal labor force, they repeatedly asserted that international policy frameworks do not filter down yet to national or local levels, at least in transport. Furthermore, based upon comments to open questions in the survey, a number of respondents had not heard of specific SDGs and their focus on women or gender and were therefore unaware of their relevance (figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Response to the question Would you agree or disagree that the Sustainable Development Goals and call to action on gender equality and equity have helped increase the opportunities for women to enter the formal labor force (generally and within transport)?.*



Although the international policy environment was regarded as being relatively supportive, policies were general in nature, and few placed specific restrictions on women or means of empowering them to work in transport at national and local levels. Additionally, relatively half or 55 percent felt that policy frameworks provided support for more gender equitable employment in transport with only 15 percent asserting that this was “to a great extent”.²

A large number of respondents did not uphold the idea that policy supports gender equitable employment in transport, with 71 percent agreeing that it helped “somewhat” or “not much”, suggesting that it is left to the individual organizations to attract and retain women and others to increase the diversity of the workforce. Meanwhile, more broadly, specific barriers were highlighted, which emanated from practices and cultures within the sector itself.

“The problem is not policy frameworks, but rather the overall way of thinking about gender roles, and applicable jobs based on gender.”

Quote from survey respondent.

Progress in policy also appears to be slow, and less than a quarter or 24 percent of respondents had seen international policy changes over the past decade that had specifically encouraged women to work in transport and 44 percent had seen no change.

Interestingly, in low- and mid- income countries (LMICs) national policies were seen to sometimes provide a new barrier to women, especially university graduates, gaining employment. This applied mostly to smaller organizations such as small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that found financial commitments to some policies difficult. This was mentioned in relation to the legal requirement for maternity leave—in some countries such as India—where this has been increased to be in line with many Western European countries. It appears to affect professional women most, who can command higher salaries and may claim their rights, more than those working in lower paid jobs, and it also seemed to affect technical positions that may only have one person fulfilling this role.

“A female graduate would need to be paid the equivalent as a male, but the company has to cover the costs of her salary when she is away on maternity leave and hire and train a new person short term if she became pregnant – and so the company finances would suffer. This would not be the case for the man, so they get chosen more often”.

Quote from an interviewee.

Throughout the interviews, national equal opportunities legislation, maternity, paternity or shared leave provisions and the cost and availability of childcare emerged as significant factors to create the right working environment for women to be fully productive. It also played a strong role in shaping organizations’ internal policies and actions. Nonetheless, even in those countries holding more progressive equal opportunities policies, they did not, as one interviewee described, create pressure for transformative action, but rather enabled local and individual actions.

As a result, it can be summarized from this that formal policies have their place but do little to overcome many of the informal and invisible barriers that keep women out and hold them back when they do enter the sector.

The transport sector is struggling to attract and retain women

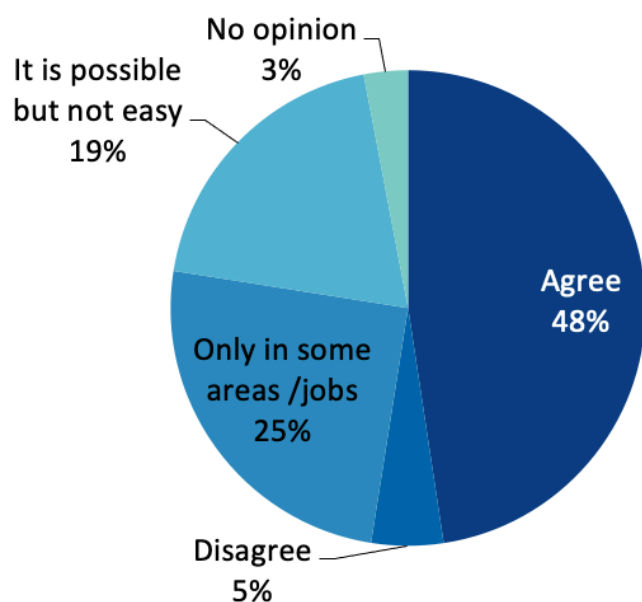
Many survey respondents, of whom almost three-quarters were women, saw transport as an attractive sector to work in and chose transport as a conscious career choice. However, an equal number simply, in one respondent’s words, “ended up” working there because they had the opportunity to work in the sector and took it (table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Responses to a specific question posed in this survey.

Did you decide to join the transport sector as a specific career decision?”	Percent
Yes	46.5%
No - it happened by accident	47.2%
Other	6.3%

Nearly 50 percent of respondents felt that it was easy for women to join and work in transport if they had the right qualifications (figure 2.4), whereas 44 percent felt that this depended on the type of job and for some job profiles it was possible, but not easy. More than 65 percent also stated that their organizations actively encouraged women to join while respecting equal opportunities requirements.

Figure 2.4. Response to the question: "Would you agree or disagree that women can easily join and work in the transport sector if they have the right qualifications?*"



Attracting women to apply for positions was seen to be improving; 45.5 percent stated that they felt that it was easy for their organizations to attract women to work for them, but 20 percent disagreed and a further 30 percent were not sure. This suggests that half of respondents did not agree that women can easily join the sector. Nonetheless, it was also stated that technical positions were more difficult to fill, and that junior positions were easier to fill than senior ones.

Many organizations for which the respondents worked were identified as focusing their attention on the retention of female employees. More than 55 percent of respondents' organizations had schemes to support women's job retention and career progression (table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Percentage of respondents stating their organizations were implementing actions aimed at supporting gender balanced or equitable employment.

Description of action	Percentage of respondents stating their organizations were implementing these actions
Flexible working	76%
Equal pay policies	58 %
Gender equity policies	51%
Protocols and processes for addressing sexual harassment in the workplace	49%
Internal networks to support women or diversity	42%
Support for or assistance with childcare	26%
Mentoring schemes designed to fast track or support women	19%
Blind CV selection	14%
Positive quotas	10%

Other examples include "return to work schemes", the availability of fridges for nursing mothers, increased options for flexible working, and sharing useful knowledge and broadening information on gender through internal communications channels.

Action is underway, but it remains piecemeal and fragmented

Senior management levels have seen some changes, with 88 percent of survey respondents stating that leadership and senior positions are or were in the recent past held by women. These positions include chief executive, operating, financial officers and other senior positions. Sixty-one percent of respondents indicated that the number of women holding leadership positions in their organizations had changed over the last decade, and more women were present.

Many organizations had gender-related internal policies, especially the larger ones and those with international activities. The case studies section of this toolkit illustrates several examples, which can be read in more detail. More than 65 percent of survey respondents asserted that their organizations had begun to take steps over the last few years to improve the recruitment and retention of women, including mentoring schemes, flexible working options, separate and dedicated training opportunities for women, as well as training to address unconscious bias and more structured ways to communicate with potential and existing employees.

Training is seen as crucial to address bias and discrimination in the workplace, yet fewer than half of respondents' organizations systematically offer such training to all employees. Many of these are on-line and self-paced.

An interesting observation, made in an interview, which to some extent is echoed in existing literature, is that although some modules of diversity training may be mandatory, the optional courses are more often taken up by women as they feel that this will give them more skills to manage their existing roles.

"A half hour diversity class once a year does nothing unless the leadership actively avoids the stereotyping and removes the bias in the workplace. Otherwise, it persists."

Quote from survey respondent.

We noted that gender and diversity actions are being spearheaded by individuals, male and female, who often embrace this work with great enthusiasm—sometimes in newly created dedicated equality and diversity positions (GEI),³ or in addition to other roles.

"A Chief Equity Officer has latitude to 'be in every department's lane', encouraging all departments and divisions to work with the EDI Division (Finance, Human Resources, Legal, Operations, President/CEO Offices, Government Affairs). This allows collaboration with all divisions and departments to ensure that equity, diversity, and inclusion are not the responsibility of one unit but is an organisational goal that is shared among all."

Quote from a Chief Equity Officer during an interview.

It is encouraging to see that these new roles are being created and that this reinforces internal policies and actions. So far this is largely a northern hemisphere phenomenon and is not yet global.

“Greater responsibility needs to be put on the organization/company that welcomes women or other underrepresented groups and make sure there is an active work in relation to inclusion”

Quote from survey respondent.

Even when there were specific organizational diversity and inclusion policies, their success and implementation are contingent on continued “work behind the scenes” requiring both resources and individuals passionate about addressing their organization’s gender balance. They in turn relied on receptive and responsive management and leadership for establishing and developing positive actions.

Many insights on this topic were shared in the interviews, and policies and reporting were seen to be only as effective as management allowed for them to be. Higher levels of leadership within organizations were sometimes seen to be only walking the talk when it suited them, and they were not yet leading on making the cultural changes needed further down the organization. Indeed, the success of policies depends largely on the ways in which they are implemented and adopted within an organization. This in turn, depends on the attitudes of those in supervisory positions. If these key gatekeepers uphold historically accepted but discriminatory and gendered practices and outlooks, positive action is not capable of substantial long-term effects.

Such an attitude is highly concerning for the trajectory of gender diversity in the transport sector. Without institutional shifts in recruitment processes, working patterns, career progression, and the masculine cultures surrounding these, we are unlikely to see accelerated change. It will not happen naturally, we were warned.

Analysis of the findings

While the appetite for change and introduction of positive actions are clearly visible, the persistence of barriers was evident throughout respondents’ reflections on their own experiences working in the sector. Despite 48 percent of respondents agreeing that all employees have the same opportunities for career progression, regardless of gender, the reality of respondents’ personal experiences paints a different picture.

An overview of the main challenges

Despite modal and geographical variations, many commonalities revealed issues in the recruitment and retention of women, career progression, the gender imbalance at leadership and decision-making levels, and high levels of occupational segregation. Many respondents divulged examples of unequal treatment and ways in which systematic procedures had disadvantaged them across their career. Indeed, even when relating positive experiences, continued recognition persisted that the sector was still resolutely grounded in its historical and traditional past.

“We find it very hard to reach female candidates.”

Quote from one survey respondent.

In addition, a problem remains with the way those in the transport industry attempt to address gender balance in recruitment and retention, across multiple modes. This was clearly indicated in the language that was used for advertising positions, the channels and audiences targeted to attract candidates, and in the phrasing of the questions in interviews.⁴

The types of performance measures and again the language used to describe performance also continues to reflect masculine values rather than diverse ones. On the other hand, several examples of where this has changed and the benefits of implementing these were also pointed out through comments in the survey and the interviews—the case studies sector provides extended examples.

Several respondents noted the transport sector’s ‘leaky pipeline’. This concept, which has also been identified in other sectors⁵ refers to a talent drain in middle management, which for women often coincides with the life stage when family and caregiving responsibilities become a more conscious part of work-life balance. This has a serious knock-on effect for women’s promotion to c-suite level, where internal female candidates are clearly missing.

This was very apparent in responses to the question: *“In your personal view and personal experience, do you think that it is as easy as a woman to join and progress in the transport sector—meaning that there is no difference between women and men—if you show you are capable?”*.

Although approximately one quarter said “yes”, about 40 percent said “sometimes” and approximately 20 percent said “definitely not”. Their responses reflect such a considerable proportion of respondents reporting significant or more minor impediments for women, drawn from their own experience working in the sector. This analysis suggests that although some women have been able to break through the proverbial glass ceiling into senior management, reflected by the smaller increase in women in those roles, this remains a minority. The glass ceiling is still intact, it is just not as conspicuous.

Thus, despite growing positive action, it is clearly necessary to deepen and broaden the scope of change so as to reinforce what are still relatively new and fragile actions and initiatives. The study brought to light a collection of challenges facing women in transport, which are underpinning the persistent gender inequity prevalent across the sector, with gender imbalance being only one aspect of the sector’s diversity problem. There appears to be growing recognition that gender cannot be addressed in isolation from other intersecting characteristics such as racial, sexual, or socioeconomic equality. Gender and race relations clearly intersect in this research data, with antiracism and gender equality movements often working together to commence and enhance dialogue about the urgency for wider diversity in the sector.

Notes

- 1 A just transition seeks to ensure that the substantial benefits of a green economy transition are shared widely, while also supporting those who stand to lose economically – be they countries, regions, industries, communities, workers, or consumers.
- 2 Similar numbers felt that some policies restricted women from working in the sector.
- 3 Gender equality and inclusion.
- 4 For clear examples of this, see the case study on London Council's adaptation of job advertisements
- 5 This has been identified in life sciences, academia, and technology sectors in particular.

SECTION 3

Key Entry Points for Action

This section presents the five key entry points for action identified from the primary research outlined in Section 2. It provides an in-depth analysis of how these challenges for more gender-equitable employment are being created and sustained and the impact this is having on women's ability to access and progress in the transport sector.

Based on the findings from the data collected, the study determined five key entry points for actions that would impact and help make the working environment and lived experiences of women more positive. These are measures and initiatives, which if taken, would increase opportunities for women to be able to add value to the sector as well as encourage other underrepresented groups to apply, and be successful, for advertised positions and enable them to make their careers in the sector.

These identified five entry barriers are:

1. Gender stereotyping for certain jobs, especially technical ones
2. Discriminatory work cultures
3. Lack of flexible working and childcare provision
4. Invisible glass ceilings and restricted career options
5. Gender equity and its relationship with wider diversity, behavior and culture change.

This section thus examines the five key areas for action in depth. Furthermore, examples can be found in the Toolkit section and case study appendix C.

Five entry points for action to tackle leading barriers

1. Gender stereotyping remains strong for certain jobs, locking women out of the sector

Transport—among other related industries—continues to be recognized as being very masculine. Despite individual actions at institutional and organizational levels, progress is seen as being very slow. Stereotyping for certain jobs in the sector remains strong, particularly in engineering and technical roles, and organizations across the sector struggle to reach out to and recruit the growing body of qualified women. Many campaigns often fail to take into account the support many women may need to access opportunities.

Consequently, a gender imbalance in the workforce stretches from junior roles to middle management and up to leadership positions. More targeted, innovative, and inclusive recruitment is needed.

“We need to get the word out that transportation is not an exclusive club.”

Quote from survey respondent.

Typically, transport organizations hold entrenched cultures of structured internal progression, often from trainee or shop floor to management and board levels. This causes significant issues for women to complete the entire pipeline, on account of career breaks, family commitments, and nonlinear career progression, and results in the pool of candidates for leadership positions remaining heavily male dominated.

Overall, 65 percent of respondents asserted their organizations actively tried to recruit women, while just 45percent reported finding it “easy” to attract female candidates, particularly for more technical and data-based roles, driving positions as well as apprenticeship schemes.

“I work in a very inclusive environment and in talking to the many female engineers I work with the major issue is not policy but education.”

Quote from interviewee.

A large part of this problem stems from a lack of clarity around the skills and qualifications needed for specific jobs and functions and promoting this effectively using inclusive language. Extensive research reveals women’s hesitancy in applying for jobs they do not consider themselves fully qualified for and based on our survey respondents and the interviews a shortage of applicants was pervasive.

Women in STEM in India

Some emerging economies are making significant inroads and recent World Bank data,^a shows that women make up nearly 43% of the total graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics in India—one of the highest in the world—but just 14% of scientists, engineers, and technologists in research development institutions and universities. Data from the Indian National Science Foundation show that while 52% of women enrolled for science,^b technology, engineering and math courses for their graduation, only 29% of them actually joined the STEM workforce. Even at the C-suite level only 3% of women hold the post of CEOs in the STEM industry.

Notes:

- a. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/publication/the-equality-equation-advancing-the-participation-of-women-and-girls-in-stem>
- b. <https://www.bqprime.com/business/dear-india-inc-lets-talk-about-the-missing-women-in-stem>

Women and girls entering STEM fields have extensively advanced yet transport still struggles to attract and retain women in these fields. The gender imbalance in STEM presents a significant challenge, even with the introduction of gender quotas and other positive actions, which many recommended as a short term or transitional solution to a historical trend. Quotas do not solve, or even approach, the core of the problem demonstrating the importance of both recruitment and outreach measures and addressing the issue upstream in education and career choices.

Indeed, education was mentioned in many survey comments and in the interviews, and several examples of initiatives were given that increase interest in studying subjects that could ultimately lead to transport jobs. Using role models such as female engineers and bus drivers—as well as other roles—in schools and technical colleges as well as international initiatives, scholarships, and apprentice program outreach to attract new audiences and counteract the gendered stereotyping, which was rated as the biggest barrier for women entering the sector in the survey. Simply featuring women in recruitment campaign material is not sufficient and must be combined with a range of wider measures to be fully effective, especially on the language used.

Interestingly, while staff shortages are often touted as reason for the need to accelerate the recruitment of women, in some cases, it is proving detrimental to progress toward a more gender balanced workforce by diminishing the focus on decent jobs, equal pay, and diversity and only looking at sheer numbers. This finding is essential to comprehend the importance of targeted gender outreach.

Getting girls into STEM

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day^a is marked annually at the end of February during Engineering Week. The week to recognize engineering was started by the National Society of Professional Engineers (N.S.P.E.) in 1951 and “Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day” was started 15 years ago by the N.S.P.E. in collaboration with IBM to ensure a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce by increasing understanding of and interest in engineering and technology careers.

Women now account for 14% of engineers in the United States—risen from 5.8% in the 1980s—and more work needs to be done to grow representation. One of the main ways that this has been successful has been through the creation of scholarships for women. However, despite engineering receiving more female applications, data show that some 40% of women move to other fields.

Notes:

a. <https://nationaltoday.com/introduce-a-girl-to-engineering-day/>

Getting more women behind the wheel

Much of the world is experiencing a huge rise in demand for professional drivers for both heavy goods vehicles (HGV) and public service vehicles (PSV), which is expected to increase over the coming years. Many initiatives are offered to attract women as professional drivers.

- Transaid UK has launched a new initiative to increase the number of female drivers on the road in Uganda. The Volvo Group is working with the Commercial Trucking Academy, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to support South Africa's logistics sector and coordinate a training program, which will see 1,000 women—120 female professionals, 300 entrepreneurs and 495 truck drivers —being trained and mentored over a three-year period.
- New Delhi's municipal government's "Mission Parivartan" initiative launched in April 2022, aims to induct women into the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC). The DTC fleet will get 8,000 new electric buses by 2025, with conditions in the tender document mandating that 20% of these be operated by women. This has increased opportunities for women's employment as across the DTC and Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS) operate approximately 7,379 buses. The move has also led to women being employed as part of the 15,000-strong workforce of bus drivers in the state's public transport.
- According to TransMilenio scheme in Bogotá,^a Colombia figures in 2022, of the 23,965 drivers in the system, only 328 or 1.4% are women. Bus operators or drivers are required to have a primary school degree, a C1, C2 and C3 type license, and at least one year of certified experience in either cargo vehicles of at least 1.5 tonnage or passenger transport vehicles. A scheme entitled, "The Seeding Plan" provides driving training and makes the requirements more flexible so women can apply. Women require only a C1 type license, one year of certified experience as a vehicle driver and a primary school certificate. However, in 2021, the Columbian government announced that 450 of the new 1500 electric bus drivers in Bogota were going to be women. **Yet, six months later, only 15 women were hired by the electric bus company, Green Movil -a Transdev-owned operator.** This shortfall stemmed from the lack of sufficient qualifications from candidates and a lack of support needed for women workers to be able to take advantage of the opportunity. Only 27% of driving licenses are in women's hands, significantly inhibiting their recruitment.
- Subsidizing licenses is seen as an important way avenue for advancement. Chile's Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications (MTT) has supported the promotion of driving roles in public transport to women by providing state funded scholarships, free or cut price access to driving licenses and annual award,^b and voted by the public, for the best female driver. This has increased the number of women drivers in public transport from 100 in 2013 to more than 1,000 by 2022.
- Uber is adopting a similar approach for facilitating women to join their fleet by launching programs to subsidize the cost of private hire vehicle licenses and providing discounted access to finance the purchase of vehicles.

Notes:

- <https://changing-transport.org/more-women-at-transmilenios-wheel-why-is-it-so-important/>
- <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/reports-publications/just-transition-urban-transport-workers-0>

It is clear transport needs to change how it advertises and promotes vacancies, actively expanding its outreach to reach new audiences and counteract the gendered stereotyping, which was in fact rated as the biggest barrier for women entering the sector in the survey. Simply featuring women in recruitment campaign material is not sufficient and must be combined with a range of wider measures to be fully effective, especially on the language used.

Interestingly, while staff shortages are often touted as reason for the need to accelerate the recruitment of women, in some cases, it is proving detrimental to progress towards a more gender balanced workforce by diminishing the focus on decent jobs, equal pay, and diversity and only looking at sheer numbers. This finding is essential for comprehending the importance of targeted gender outreach.

2. Discriminatory work cultures and practices: Diversity will remain illusory without behavior and mindset change

Pursuit of diversity must also be partnered with inclusive workplaces. The majority of respondents felt that the policy framework was "good enough" but that workplace cultures and behavior change were critical for women to be able to enjoy the opportunities the sector had to offer. At present, the transport sector is underperforming with gendered stereotyping and bias prevalent across all modes, regardless of geographic location. This jeopardizes women's ability to conduct their jobs as well as compromising their personal safety, security, wellbeing. In some organizations and regions, initiatives are ongoing, but they are not yet comprehensive enough to accelerate change at the pace required.

"Women are expected to adjust instead of the workplace adjusting."

Quote from survey respondent.

Almost 50 percent of respondents stated that their organizations conduct training on inclusive language, discussions on stereotyping and unconscious bias; yet "male dominated surroundings", "uncomfortable" environments, "discrimination", and "prejudice" were routinely identified as leading challenges for women across the sector, with zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace, a leading area respondents wanted to see change.

"It is not enough to state you do not discriminate on the basis of sex."

Quote from survey respondent.

Many recognized that women-focused recruitment initiatives may be boosting the numbers of women, yet they also noted the sector is often unprepared for them when they join and is not adapting its cultures and practices, rendering women feeling like outsiders. Even when antibias actions are implemented many remain ad hoc with respondents challenging the overall effectiveness of these measures in instigating change. Existing approaches to counter masculine cultures are failing to make the transformational changes required. This was cited in several interviews from the boardroom down.

"If I am the only women on the board, I act differently and do not find I contribute in a collaborative fashion, compared to boards where there are two or more women."

Comment from female CEO in interview.

Women train drivers in Sydney, Australia

Women account for 18% of Sydney Trains' driver workforce,^a and one-third of trainee drivers—a 64% increase in new recruits in a single year, with 125 new train drivers and 235 new guards graduating.^b This has been achieved through Sydney Trains having recruited widely and broadly to improve gender equality over the past two years. Trainee intakes include both male and female applicants but a specific woman's stream is part of a targeted marketing campaign in efforts to increase the workforce gender balance.

Notes:

- a. <https://7news.com.au/news/nsw/sydney-trains-to-reword-women-only-trainee-job-ad-c-1180776>
- b. <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/news-and-events/media-releases/record-growth-driver-and-guard-graduates-at-sydney-trains>

“My female apprentice was left feeling like a ‘burden’, when her uniform took longer to procure and she had difficulty using existing tools; we were unprepared for her needs.”

Quote from interviewee.

Uniforms and the provision of protective clothing are still deficient. Facilities, which are basic needs for women workers—such as segregated bathrooms, changing facilities for those working off-site like truck, train, bus, metro, and taxi drivers, construction workers, station staff—are often poor. These may appear to be small inconveniences but represent part of the value set that women look for in employment and which employers should provide.¹

Ensuring the correct clothing and apparatus in Ghana

Urban transport union, General Transport, Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Union (GTPCWU) in Ghana found that the personal protective equipment (PPE) provided for both women and men failed to accommodate differences in body shape and size. Many women found difficulties in using it and sometimes ended up not using any PPE at all. The union's women committee took up the issue with management and were able to negotiate for a local manufacturer to produce the PPE.

The new manufacturer takes measurements from the women to ensure that the PPE is tailored to their bodies. As a result, women can now choose to wear skirts or trousers, whichever they find more comfortable. The union also successfully negotiated for the provision of breastfeeding facilities and washrooms specifically designated for women in terminals.

Source: https://www.itfglobal.org/sites/default/files/node/page/files/Women_in_Public_Transport_OPT.pdf,

Women leave the transport sector because of a combination of circumstances and this study suggests that the combination depends largely on the culture and work practices. Survey and interview respondents reported that although pay was important, benefits such as flexible hours and schedules, health, safety and hygiene, and work family options—such as help or access to childcare—were key determinants to retain women employees. In many parts of the world women work in transport, especially urban transport, under informal or casual contracts, which excludes them from social safeguards such as health insurance, pensions, maternity leave, or other benefits. The role of organized labor and trade unions in the protection of all workers, but especially women, is an area that has not been extensively researched by others. However, in some regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa women have found the cost to join these bodies has often been worthwhile and proved beneficial in improving working conditions.

Social movements have provided an impetus and helped accelerate action, underpinned by a greater understanding of discriminatory treatment. Individuals, particularly from the maritime sector, disclosed a significant change in female employees' readiness to speak out against inappropriate actions or encounters, as well as in the emergence of networks and platforms such as safer waves²—a confidential support service for seafarers who have experienced sexual violence or gender discrimination. Addressing violence in the workplace was a major part of this service.

However, respondents repeatedly warned that despite these movements and the plethora of networks that have emerged over the past few years—which have elevated and amplified discussions around gender equality—the transport sector cannot expect inclusive practices to occur spontaneously. Change requires deliberative and continued monitoring and action. At present, the overwhelming sentiment was that although acknowledging positive steps are in the right direction, these remain fragmented and heavily dependent on efforts from individual line managers and executives.³

“There are now many networks that help create supportive communities for women, but this alone does not help change operational practices.”

Quote from interviewee.

Several international⁴ and national policies⁵ have emerged that help protect women and other vulnerable workers. They have, to a certain extent, enshrined women's rights to equal treatment in the workplace, but impact is determined by implementation, monitoring, and enforcement.

However, survey and interview responses revealed that such policies do not, and cannot, facilitate the changes in individual and collective behaviors, which often create and sustain patriarchal workplace cultures. Policy provides a framework for inclusive, safe, and secure working environments. Nonetheless, organizations themselves need to take action to facilitate awareness and understanding of the behavior changes required to ensure workplaces are inclusive to all genders and other underrepresented groups.

Trade union cooperation to tackle gender-based violence

The International Transport Workers Federation's (ITF) Women's Advocate Programme—based on a successful model originally developed by ITF affiliate union in Canada—supports unions to train union activists as women advocates to support women workers facing gender-based violence (GVB) at home or at work and provide a workplace response to GVB. This includes early intervention, confidential support, and help to access community services and advocate for workplace safety planning and job security. The initiative is implemented by local unions and responsible workplace management and helps not only to empower women as individual survivors, but also collectively to lead and shape change.

“Trade unions are important for women’s visibility, activism and leadership in an industry where women are under-represented, and men’s needs are still the default for normal. This space enables women transport workers to be heard and collectively shape industry and government priorities, to identify and address the needs of women workers that are so often overlooked in research, policy, planning, industry development and monitoring. We are supporting trade unions to put in place strategies that shine a spotlight on the systemic exclusion of women workers from decent and secure work in the transport industry and help end violence against women transport workers, which if not addressed will undermine any intervention to increase women’s employment in transport.”

Says Claire Clarke, Deputy Women Transport Workers and Gender Equality Officer at the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF)—the global federation of 670 trade unions in 147 countries representing over 18 million working men and women in all transport sectors.

Find out more here: <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/focus/women/violence-against-women-transport-workers-and-the-itf-global-women%E2%80%99s-advocate-programme>

3. Lack of flexibility and childcare provision: finding the balance

Lack of flexible working opportunities and childcare were identified as key barriers to women’s participation in the transport sector. These barriers resulted in poor work-life balance, particularly to family caring responsibilities. It obstructs the retention of women especially as they start families. The capacity for progress is clear, but transport must go beyond national policies. Difficulties coordinating professional employment and caring are a logistical and psychological challenge for women, who still fulfil most of family—direct and indirect—caring roles, and many of our respondents did not feel supported by their employer.

“[Childcare] then falls on the mother, who has “mental load” and chooses to work part-time to make sure that the family, and the children do not suffer.”

Quote from survey respondent.

International literature shows that women are about [twice as likely to work part-time or part-year than men](#),⁶ regardless of educational attainment. Globally, maternity and shared leave provisions have increased over the last decade, however, this remains fragmented at national level. For example, Estonia offers 84 weeks full rate equivalent, while Mexico affords 12 weeks, and the United States remains the only OECD country without a national statutory paid maternity, paternity, or parental leave.⁷ The impact of childcare responsibilities on women’s career opportunities has been identified several times in previous studies,⁸ with calls to revise and reform national maternity leave policies and state childcare provisions.

Childcare provision in Nepal

One of the policy recommendations emerging from research on rural road and bridge transport projects in Nepal, is that skills training is crucial to gender mainstreaming, and that the timing, duration, and location of the training must be made appropriate for women. Facilities such as childcare may also determine the extent to which women can participate and so upgrade their skills and salaries.

In Nepal, contractors often operate with very different gender guidelines, due to weak contractual requirements, compliance, and enforcement. The studies indicate that if the full potential of gender mainstreaming in rural infrastructure and transport is to be realised, the transport sector needs to work with other social development actors to address all these issues.

Survey and interview data revealed that regardless of maternity leave policy, inability to balance childcare obligations was a major physical, and psychological, challenge for women, even in countries with some of the most generous provisions. Across the board, in transport and other sectors, pregnancy forces women to abandon their careers. In this research too, pregnancy was identified as a key cut off point with women leaving the sector or moving to a new position further entrenching occupational segregation.

“Childcare is becoming a big deal to attract women to the sector, when I am offered these services, as a mother, I feel like an incredibly valued employee.”

Quote from interviewee.

The importance of policy was recognized particularly for those in informal employment; however, due to the specific working hours demanded in many cases across all modes—aviation, maritime, freight and public transport particularly—the call was rather on the transport sector’s unions and individual employers to introduce and then tailor flexible and parttime working offers to provide more suitable support for women and men during and after pregnancy.

The impacts of childbirth and childcare on women's careers in the United Kingdom

In 2022, UK based career site, "That works for me,"^a conducted research into women's experiences of maternity leave in the UK and their return to the workplace. The resulting 'Careers After Babies'^b report found an astounding 85% of women surveyed leave the fulltime workforce within three years of having children. Nineteen percent leave the workforce altogether, most often because their work cannot offer any flexibility, or they cannot afford childcare. Furthermore, almost three-quarters of women are earning less or the same as before they had children.

Notes:

a. <https://www.thatworksforme.co.uk/>

b. <https://www.thatworksforme.co.uk/guides-and-tools/careers-after-babies>

Indications, in part prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, are that the transport workforce, not just women, is increasingly demanding more flexible work patterns. Many employers are recognizing this as critical to attract and retain talent. Yet, while flexibility has, in some instances been introduced, this is not necessarily configured around gendered childcare arrangements, and there remains lack of collective understanding of the family responsibilities many, particularly women, hold.

"There is a new program for "job sharing" two people in one position. It can work, but also the working conditions need to be more flexible and there needs to be more understanding concerning meetings for people with families."

Quote from survey respondent

In practice, this means understanding people's requirements between, and—especially for women — throughout the pregnancy, childcare cycle, and exploring where adjustments could be made. Employers should also consider the necessary practical changes to schedules, rostering, and recruitment. Alongside these changes, clarity around the rights, opportunities, and procedures for flexible work are essential. Employers should remove unnecessary bureaucratic measures to access benefits such as holiday, extended leave, and adjusting shift schedules if necessary.

4. 'Invisible' glass ceilings and restricted career options: Its tough at the top... if you even get there

The transport sector needs more gender diversity at all levels; change remains slow albeit some improvements. Accelerating this pace is instrumental to diversify decision making and encourage more women into the sector.

Supporting female-owned transport businesses

Los Angeles Metro's Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department helps firms that are economically and socially disadvantaged win contracts with Metro. Since 2015, under the MetroConnect program, Metro has awarded more than US\$900 million to small, minority, women- and veteran-owned businesses. Within this program, Metro has teams assigned to help firms win the certification they need to bid for contracts — Metro has more than 2,000 certified firms. The MetroConnect program also helps small businesses learn how to work with Metro through events such as "How to do Business with Metro" workshops and informal 'Coffee and Conversation' meetings.

What is it like being the ‘first’?

Marta Serrano is EMT Valencia’s first female CEO, and founder of the association “*Mujeres en Movimiento*” (Women in Movement)—a network whose aim is to promote inclusion and equity in the construction of sustainable and safe cities and support women’s leadership in the mobility sector.

Ms. Serrano has long championed for gender equity in transport, yet she is also open about the challenges involved, and the physical and psychological toll this often takes on those (often women) who find themselves responsible for pushing through change, in addition to their primary job.

“Female leaders in our sector do not find themselves on the same footing as men. If I use the same tools which my male colleagues use, being direct or deliberative, I am accused of being arrogant or even rude. I need to manage my language and behaviors to ensure they do not feel uncomfortable or having the feeling that I try to underestimate them; it is not easy. When I entered my current role, I was in a meeting with the social unions and then one of the men said, ‘I have read your CV, and you are not prepared to manage this company, you do not have the abilities. I have been working in this sector for 15 years, and I am sure they would not say this if I were a man.’”

“International forums- which have the privilege of coming from outside the national political context- need to lead, pushing for change beyond the political cycles which often interrupt positive action. Social changes regarding equality should not be a debate topic, as women deserve a fair treatment.”

Securing more women in leadership is essential for fostering diversity throughout an organization; and in those that have succeeded in doing so, changes to entrenched cultures, recruitment, and procurement practices often followed. Interviewees also indicated a strong business case for increasing diversity, citing how diverse teams can solve problems and find creative solutions more quickly, thereby increasing productivity.

“Women are often more capable of solving difficult and complex problems—and our leadership skills are different. Women should recognize this and be more ambitious.”

Transit Services Department, City of Ottawa

Some organizations indicate that women are making headway in transport leadership. Indeed, almost 90 percent of respondents stated leadership and senior positions in their organizations are or were in the recent past) held by women. Over 60 percent of respondents indicated that the volume of leadership positions occupied by women has risen over the last decade, with many noting the last few years have seen particular progress.

The number of positive action measures is encouraging; more than half of the organizations surveyed have schemes that support women’s job retention and career progression and of this, over 50 percent hold equal pay policies, 20 percent have mentoring schemes designed to fast track or support women and just over 40 percent assist internal networks to champion women and wider diversity.

Although such progress is to be celebrated, it discloses the insufficient scale of advance. In a third of instances, no progress has been made over the last decade. Such impasse was palpable across these interviews with women in leadership positions, many of whom were one of just a handful of women in such a position in their organization. Racial diversity was also lacking, and women of color were also not being given the same opportunities as their white counterparts.

Providing scholarships and educational support: WTS Advancing Women

The **Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS)** Foundation awards scholarships to students pursuing careers in transport through undergraduate and graduate programs.^a The Foundation provides close to US\$700,000 annually in money to students seeking educational opportunities in undergraduate, graduate, trade school, and community college programs.

For example, the Molitoris Leadership Scholarship is to motivate and reward women who demonstrate leadership in the transport industry, ensuring that the essential leadership skills and perspectives of women are included in planning the transport systems of the future.

WTS also offers a youth educational program at local chapter level, Transportation YOU, which focuses on partnering with other youth organizations and schools to introduce mostly middle and high school age students to a variety of transport sectors, presented by volunteers who are members of WTS.

"Transportation is a wide-ranging and complex sector, with multiple different pathways and educational tracks allowing for entry into the industry, while specific training is still necessary for specific roles (i.e., civil engineering.) This is a really complex issue, with multiple high-level investments and intensive research being performed throughout the transportation industry, but also in human resources and beyond the sector."- says WTS

Notes:

- a. <https://www.wtsinternational.org/mission/wts-foundation/scholarships>

The career pipeline for women to gain a foothold in leadership positions remains inadequate — some referred to this as 'leaky'—many good candidates resigned before reaching senior positions. Many employers reported that even when quotas for senior positions were imposed, not enough potential female candidates had reached senior levels to promote. This is often generated by a rigid system of promotion, which defends a historic culture of working one's way up through an organization, rather than external recruitment for leadership roles, making progress toward gender balance almost impossible, although this is beginning to change.

"Women are often less likely to push for leadership positions, many would benefit from specifically being pushed into that by training/mentoring."

Quote from survey respondent.

National policies on leadership may be gaining ground, nonetheless, in practice, progress is still impelled by what was described as "behind the scenes work" to encourage and in some cases compel, leadership to implement targeted measures to bring gender diversity to leadership and board level. This remains a complex, slow and often a disheartening process for those individuals, often women, attempting to spearhead this shift.

Mentoring for success

Many organizations oversee mentoring schemes that support women in advancing their careers, including Transport for London, Stagecoach, the Victorian Government's Women In Transport (WiT) Mentoring Program.^a Also available are sectorwide mentoring schemes such as **Advance** from Women in Transport,^b **WTS' Mentor Match program**,^c and the Alta scheme for women in aviation and aerospace^d (see case studies section for full details).

In Malaysia, APEC Women in Transportation implemented a pilot leadership and mentoring program, which implementers designed in cooperation with TalentCorp Malaysia, a state agency dedicated to connecting employers with qualified human resources^e.

The European Observatory for Gender Smart Transport (**TInnGo**) **provides a useful guide**^f on how to identify and reach out to potential mentors.

Notes:

- a. <https://dtp.vic.gov.au/about/women-in-transport/mentoring>
- b. <https://www.womenintransport.com/mentoring-advance-2023#>
- c. <https://www.wtsinternational.org/resources/mentoring>
- d. <https://www.aerosociety.com/get-involved/alta-mentoring/>
- e. <https://www.nathaninc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2017-APEC-WiT-Best-Practices-Compendium-Update.pdf>
- f. <https://transportgenderobservatory.eu/>

5. Gender and its relationship with wider diversity, behavior and culture change: Gender inequity needs to be seen in coordination with wider diversity

Although it is widely recognized that a more diverse workforce is essential, there remains less understanding of the ways gender equity and wider diversity intersect, and the impacts of it on everyday workplace behaviors. This research also revealed the need for clarity about the roles and responsibilities to make workplaces more inclusive for underrepresented groups from all backgrounds.

“Training is essential but without special attention to workplace cultures and the impacts on women transport workers, it will not be equal, and it will not resolve problems.”

Quote from survey.

The researchers heard how even when diversity quotas are filled, and gender balance at senior level achieved, longstanding behaviors and cultures persisted further down the organization, and environments were still structured and dominated by masculine values and behaviors. This has implications not just for gender inequality but is detrimental for wider diversity too.

“A greater knowledge is needed on what it means to be part of an underrepresented group and a greater responsibility needs to be put on the organisation/company that welcomes women or other underrepresented groups and make sure there is an active work in relation to inclusion.”

Quote from survey.

The World Road Association (PIARC): Projects mechanism for addressing inequity

PIARC is an association fostering and facilitating global discussion and knowledge sharing on roads and road transport with 125 government members worldwide and consultative status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Diversity, with a particular focus on gender, was decided to be an organizational value for PIARC in 2022 and the organization adopted a strategy on gender inclusion and diversity, because the organization recognizes the needs of a diverse body of members—public and private sectors—and the need for PIARC outputs to address diverse audiences.

This is prompted by the recognition that the organization must address its existing gender imbalance across its governing bodies and committees and push for action from many colleagues at PIARC.

PIARC's Council—which decides the strategy of PIARC, approves the budget, and elects the officers—consists of 354 members of which 305 are male (85%) and 49 are female (15%). On the executive committee, 80% are men and 20% are women.

The PIARC strategy on gender inclusion and diversity is guided by three equally important strategic priorities:

1. Raise awareness about gender inclusion and diversity within PIARC
2. Create an inclusive culture in PIARC
3. Technical practice (PIARC reports and products should reflect the diversity of road transport users).

PIARC launched a call for proposals for a project to develop awareness-raising materials targeting the governing bodies and members of PIARC. The project is expected to be finalized by the end of 2023 and implemented in the next strategic plan cycle 2024–2027.

“To work with gender inclusion and diversity is a long term commitment that needs to be incorporated in all parts of the organisation. In PIARC we have just started and it will be interesting to follow this journey,” says Lina Granlund, Technical Advisor, Strategic Partnerships and Promotion of gender inclusion and diversity.

The importance of defining diversity

Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) introduced the position of Chief Equity Office (see case studies for further detail). They view one of their largest successes as creating a common language around the terms: diversity, equity and inclusion.

Diversity at the core is about representation; diversity includes race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, socioeconomic status, thinking and communication styles.

Equity at the core is about access. Equity seeks to ensure fair treatment, equality of opportunity and fairness in access to information and resources.

Inclusion at the core is about empowerment. Inclusion ensures that individuals are contributing and participating in building a culture of belonging; every person's voice adds value and creates balance in the face of power differences.

Fifty-three percent of survey respondents indicated that their organization does not provide training to avoid stereotyping and unconscious bias within the workplace. Lack of collective dialogue about the impacts of individual action and the roles and responsibilities for creating more inclusive spaces, has generated confusion and, in many cases, backlash, or hostility.

Discriminatory behaviors and cultures have tangible repercussions not just on women's wellbeing, but their physical ability to do their job, creating a workplace, which is simply not equipped for them. It was also noted that these types of behaviors persisted when employees, both men and women, did not have the voice or confidence to speak up or speak out against mistreatment for fear of repercussions.

This returns to the way policies are implemented and the extent to which training on inclusive behaviors and values are established at all levels within the organization. Some progressive organizations now include bystander as well as unconscious bias trainings, although this was not commonplace.

“Awareness, with associated supporting environments for all to learn and develop, are critical to ongoing progresses of improvement.”

Quote from survey.

Male Champions of Change (MCC): Closing the gender pay gap

An initiative of Australia's Sex Discrimination Commission, MCC is a coalition of male leaders who advocate for gender equality within companies, organizations and communities. Its 2017 report, “Closing the Pay Gap,” addresses how employers can bring about greater equality in compensation through better use of data. The report sets out an approach for all types of employers to uncover and address various aspects of income differences between their workers. It calls on all business leaders to measure their pay gap, take action to close the gap, advocate for others to do so, and to make efforts to deliver on the principle of equal pay for equal work.

In particular, the MCC report:

- Defines the elements of pay gaps between men and women;
- Identifies “warning signs” of gender-based pay differences;
- Sets forth an approach to measuring pay gaps;
- Provides insights that help business leaders understand, in various contexts, why pay gaps exist;
- Lists actions that employers may take to address their pay gaps; and
- Helps businesses understand how to articulate a commercial rationale for equal pay, secure leadership buy-in, ensure quality of pay-related data, and invest in a full pay-gap analysis.

The report is signed and endorsed by more than 120 leaders of various public agencies and private companies in Australia.

In addition, getting more men engaged as allies in this process and developing their understanding of the benefits of increased equity and diversity are also suggested as promising and high potential entry points for implementing behavior change.

The survey and interviews revealed that misconceptions remain about the changes in language required and the effects of small or unconscious actions. Few clear and safe forums exist to highlight concerns and hold exchange of experiences and guidance for colleagues to understand the impacts of their actions and adapt their behaviors.

The researchers heard how this limitation often unfolds in strong male dominated environments, such as in maintenance areas or bus depots, where female recruits felt male colleagues monopolized spaces or assumed responsibility for their tasks. Without clear avenues for meaningful conversations, people felt intimidated and were unable to voice grievances for fear of how it will be received and the potential repercussions of speaking out.

“Only taking a 30-minute diversity class once a year does nothing unless leadership actively avoids stereotyping and addresses bias in the workplace.”

Quote from survey respondent.

Critically, this is seen as being part and parcel of the difficulty of navigating wider questions and confusion around diversity. It is widely recognized that the sector cannot approach gender in isolation from racial, sexual, or socioeconomic equality.

In many cases, reviews of diversity policies and internal practices were prompted by race equal movements such as Black Lives Matter, which exposed the often invisible, passive or latent experiences of racism, and the interconnections with gender inequality. Although recent race equality movements have played out in distinct ways in different geographic contexts, an intersection between gender and race relations is evident, with antiracism and gender equality movements opening dialogue about the urgency for wider diversity.

“Wider representation of all groups will lead to greater diversity of ideas and opinions.”

Quote from survey respondent.

The transport sector has to develop capacity for co-learning opportunities and clear dialogues on diversity and where male colleagues and those from majority ethnic groups can learn more about allyship and support in establishing more inclusive workplaces.

A more methodological and responsible approach is needed, starting with: (i) collection of gender disaggregated data on employee experiences, (ii) systematically sharing these concerns with leadership, (iii) providing forums for discussion, and (iv) providing clear feedback channels.

The rich data set of quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study shows the state-of-the-art situation in 2023. Those data allowed us to identify common entry points for action and the processes behind the implementation of gender equality actions. Further progress requires actions that respond to these challenges and that address gender and equity imbalances in the sector.

Notes

- 1 The ITF Sanitation Charter was launched on World Toilet Day 2019 and provides guidance on what action should be taken by employers and governments to ensure access to toilets for transport workers, and includes a checklist for workers and their unions to assess current toilet provision. <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/reports-publications/itf-sanitation-charter>
- 2 SaferWaves - <https://saferwaves.org/about-us/>
- 3 Interestingly few respondents cited violence in the workplace as being a major deterrent to them joining the sector. It was nonetheless mentioned as a risk but not a determining factor. We assume that this was due to the professional bias of respondents, as few were client facing.
- 4 ILO Convention 190, the first ever international standard on violence and harassment in the world of work. It recognizes transport as a sector that is more vulnerable to violence and harassment, but also notes that violence and harassment threatens equal opportunities – and so provides an important foundation to address violence and harassment and achieve gender equality.
- 5 The United Kingdom’s 2010 Equalities Act to India’s Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2013 (POSH Act 2013), as well as national laws or regulations in Albania, Niger and Puerto Rico. International Labour Organization (2022) Violence and harassment at work: A practical guide for employers Geneva: International Labour Office (WWW) https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_857915.pdf
- 6 OECD (2019), PISA 2018 Results (Volume II): Where All Students Can Succeed, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://gpseducation.oecd.org/revieweducationpolicies/#!node=41753&filter=all>
- 7 World Population Review (2023) Maternity Leave by Country 2023, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/maternity-leave-by-country>
- 8 Heckl, E., & Pecher, I. (2012) WIR – Women In Rail Good Practices and Implementation Guide, CER. <http://www.cer.be/publications/brochures-studies-and-reports/wir-%E2%80%93-women-rail-good-practices-and-implementation-guide>

SECTION 4

The Toolkit for Gender Equitable Employment in the Transport Sector

This toolkit section brings together the findings from across the previous sections to provide a clear and comprehensive set of recommendations for targeted positive actions, which are available to employers and practitioners across the sector. They are complemented by in-depth case studies of existing actions and initiatives, which provide insights into how to develop such actions, the partnerships required, the tools available and lessons learned by those involved. Appendix B on networks and tools also provides further resources.

How to use this toolkit

The toolkit is designed as a resource for all those interested in improving the diversity and gender balance in the transport workforce. It provides a broad overview of the existing status of gender equal employment alongside the lived experiences of women and men working in the sector. It presents five key entry points for transformative change with suggestions for positive action. The following list of actions—illustrated and expanded upon by case studies—is designed to inspire action and can be adapted to local needs. Taking action and developing measures according to the available resources and needs will help move the sector in the right direction, toward greater diversity and inclusion in the workplace for the benefit of all. We therefore recommend taking the five steps: read, review, relate, revise, and share.

Read

We encourage a full reading of the findings from the literature review and primary research, which provide a background to the situation on the ground. Each region and transport subsector are different, and the gender equity and policy landscape vary. A thorough understanding of how transport is performing institutionally, organizationally and in practice is key. This provides background to the necessity and urgency for action, and the policy environment in which positive action can and will shape the future of the transport sector.

Review

The toolkit's entry points are a resource for reflecting on your organization's prevailing approach to equity and its potential for advancement. Examine the condition of each of the entry points within your existing recruitment procedures, workplace policies, processes, and career advancement opportunities.

Where can you identify opportunities for improvement? Which case studies can you replicate? Which actions could be implemented immediately?

Relate

The toolkit can also serve as material to kick-start or focus discussions on the workforce composition, both internally and externally. To put in place effective strategies, employers must understand the needs and demands of female employees, identify success and recognize shortcomings, and build solidarity and allyship. The questions asked in this survey may provide a blueprint for shaping the language deployed and questions posed in such dialogue.

The toolkit can also be used as a resource for actions, coalition building, partnerships, and data collection across the sector. We encourage networks, support groups, and those involved in existing positive action initiatives to use the entry points to identify opportunities for global, crossmodal partnerships. Transport networks, professional associations, federations, unions, and lobbies can use it as a catalyst for further peer to peer learning. We encourage circulation among memberships to stimulate further discussion.

Revise

Time for action! One thing is certain actions need resources, both financial and human. However, small changes can start to deliver greater parity in workforce participation without major budget investments. Indeed, the business case for change depends on several variables that are outside the scope of this work. That said the toolkit provides tools and examples, which are free of charge and can be applied according to the local context and need.

Based on the examples in this toolkit, those who have started on this journey have already begun to reap the rewards.

“Diverse teams tend to solve problems quicker and by themselves without the need to use expensive senior management time - this is a tangible business benefit.”

Quote from interview.

Share

This toolkit is designed to share good practice; and much is out there. However, continued success requires continued sharing. Communicate your own approaches with your professional contacts and across your channels, ask for guidance from others, and create forums for sharing within your own organization and with others.

The Toolkit

The following section goes into greater detail on possible actions in respect to the five key entry points identified from the study:

1. Barrier: Gender stereotyping for certain jobs
Entry point: Eradicate stereotyping for certain jobs
2. Barrier: Discriminatory work cultures
Entry point: Eradicate discriminatory work cultures
3. Barrier: Lack of flexible working and childcare provision
Entry point: Provide flexible working for childcare
4. Barrier: Invisible glass ceilings and restricted career options
Entry point: Smash the glass ceiling and open up career options for women
5. Barrier: Gender equity and its relationship with wider diversity, behavior and culture change
Entry Point: Achieve gender equity through wider diversity, behavioral and culture change

Each section has at least one case study that outlines how organizations have addressed this. A short description is included in this section and the full case study is available in Appendix C. In addition, a list of networks and tools can be found in Appendix B. A list of useful resources and documents can be found in Appendix E.

These recommendations are primarily targeted at transport actors from the public sector—national, local, and regional ministries—operators and mobility service providers, as well as those involved in the supply side such as manufacturers. While they do examine the role of education institutions and the critical role, they play in enhancing gender balance across the career pipeline, such stakeholders may not find all the recommendations apply to them.

1. Eradicate gender stereotyping for certain jobs

Gendered stereotyping was scored as the biggest barrier for women entering the sector in this survey. Despite the presence of equal opportunity policies, stereotyping for certain jobs in the sector remains strong, particularly for engineering and technical roles. Organizations in all regions are struggling to attract women and reach new audiences to encourage women to enter the sector and enable them to ascend the career ladder.

Getting recruitment right

1. **Watch your language:** Changing the terminology used to describe job functions and the skills and qualifications required in recruitment advertisements encourages a greater diversity of applicants. A range of web-based tools can identify gendered language and advise adjustments for more gender-neutral language (see London Council's case study).

2. **Use scenario-based questions:** Adapting application processes to ask more scenario-based questions rather than an explicit list of qualifications enables potential candidates to recognize how their skill sets may add value to the job, while still allowing recruiters to identify candidates with the correct profile.
3. **Expand outreach to attract candidates outside of traditional channels:** Disseminating job advertisements through nontraditional channels such as social media groups, which advocate for gender equality in the sector. For instance, Women in Cycling,¹ Women on the Move Transforming Transport in Asia,² Women in Transportation Leadership (WiTL) Knowledge Network (Australasia³ or Women in Mobility⁴ and through existing national and international diversity networks such as Women's Transportation Seminar⁵ or Women in Transport,⁶ and across university recruitment channels. Reach is also expanded and diversified when individual leaders within an organization promote upcoming roles and emphasize the need for diverse candidates.
4. **Face-to-face contact is still essential:** Changing women's and other underrepresented groups' preconceptions of the transport sector, particularly driver and engineer roles, requires connecting with them directly, to allow them to experience the functions of a role and talk directly to those in similar positions. Try conducting recruitment days to establish direct contact with women, where potential recruits can have a hands-on experience of the role and have their concerns addressed. For example, UK bus operator, Stagecoach conducts regular recruitment days, where interested candidates have the chance to put their questions to management and try out bus driving for themselves.
5. **Partner with others:** Establishing connections and partnerships with universities, colleges and schools can demonstrate the breadth of opportunity within transport. However, this should be more than ad hoc visits, and commit to coordinated programs, which create clear channels between secondary and tertiary education and a career in transport. This can include workshops, site visits, and work experience opportunities.
6. **Ensure that interview panels reflect the diversity that you desire to achieve:** The job interview stage is often the first direct connection between an applicant and the potential employer. A diverse selection and interview panel helps reduce bias in candidate assessment, and also demonstrates your organization's existing diversity to an applicant so she or he can see that they belong.
7. **Use tools to reduce selection bias:** Blind resume selection for interview candidates can be transformational in improving gender and wider diversity. Many organizations are trialing this when selecting candidates to interview and combining it with other tools to avoid unconscious bias.
8. **Make training affordable:** Subsidizing or paying the cost of training and related examinations can provide a strong encouragement for women to take up professional roles such as engineers, drivers and crew members.

CASE STUDIES

London Councils: Addressing bias in job advertisements

London Councils, the collective of local governments in London, altered how they advertised roles, the way they assessed skills and qualifications, and reviewed applications. They practiced a coordinated approach, which addressed the language used in job advertisements, the information demanded from applicants, and how candidates were assessed.

They assessed their existing recruitment techniques to examine how to ensure the entire process could encourage diverse applicants and create a fair evaluation of candidates. They removed gender-biased language through the online platform that assesses the masculinity of language used.

This led to an increase in the number of female employees and staff from black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities. London Councils staff currently comprises 61 percent women and 39 percent men, with the percentage of female staff increasing since 2019 from 53 to 61 percent and 82 staff. London Councils has also seen an overall increase in black, Asian, and ethnic staff from minorities from 25 percent in 2018 to 28 percent in 2022.

EMT Madrid and Comillas University's Stem Chair: Partnerships for change

Spain experiences a very low number of female students who opt for STEM subjects at tertiary level; and despite a growing number of students enrolling in vocational training, the gender balance remains heavily imbalanced. In the academic year 2019-2020, women made up just 29.8 percent of students,⁷ with this figure dropping substantially at intermediate and higher VET. While the gender gap is closing, this is failing to translate into the workforce, and Comillas University's report "STEM Education in Spain, and women's participation. Vocational Training, an opportunity for the future",⁷ revealed the persistence of Spain's STEM gender division. This is creating substantial challenges for employers facing labor shortages such as Madrid's transport operator EMT, especially in the light of their intention to develop its digital payment platforms and accelerate its electrification strategy.

A partnership between Comillas University, EMT Madrid, and electricity company Iberdrola created a Chair for the Promotion of Women in STEM Vocations in Training Professional for Sustainable Mobility. The initiative has examined the gender balance in Spain's higher education and vocational training (VET) to understand why women and girls are not entering STEM fields or continuing to higher education and to promote the field and related professions in mobility to students.

Their collaboration has successfully mobilized interest from young people, teachers, and education counsellors. A total of 709 people, of which half were women, attended the Chair's activities carried out in the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years.

Kochi Metro: Gender diverse recruitment drives

The state government of Kerala in southwest India, where Kochi is situated, has identified gender equality as a key priority and has been including gender as part of its policy and urban development plans with its Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, adopting gender mainstreaming as the key approach. This has been supported by international development agencies such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Agence française de développement (AFD). India's Kochi metro was inaugurated in 2018 and is operated by the state-owned entity, the Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL).

KMRL signed an agreement with Kudumbashree, a women's self-help group in Kerala in 2016 to engage it for facilities management at metro stations including ticketing, customer relations, housekeeping, parking management, and running the canteens. Facilities at the Kochi metro station are now managed by all-women staff from Kudumbashree, making it the largest crew of women to be employed by any metro in India. Moreover, in accordance with the transgender policy of the Kerala state government, KMRL also introduced a policy to recruit members of the transgender community. Sixty members of the transgender community were hired for a variety of roles ranging from handling ticket counters to maintaining the metro line.

From the start of its operations, approximately 80 percent of Kochi metro's staff have been women working across a wide range of positions: cleaning staff, ticket machine operators, train drivers, station managers, and more, including eight women metro operators out of a total of 39.

Tesla: Respectful workplace and equal opportunities across the whole supply chain

Despite some high-profile concerns around HR practices, Tesla have adapted their hiring processes to promote inclusivity and diversity. Tesla expanded access to hiring opportunities to underrepresented communities by putting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their hiring processes. Tesla focuses on using gender-neutral language in job descriptions, broadening sourcing efforts, revamping interviewing guides, building community partnerships, and educating on unconscious bias and facilitating training for recruiters, hiring managers and interview panelists. They publicly state that candidates do not need to have a college degree to work at Tesla. This characterizes an enormous opportunity for high school graduates from underserved communities to join Tesla and be able to grow their careers.

They have initiated several national and international targeted initiatives. For example, in the USA, they have attended more than 75 diversity hiring events targeting women and students of historically Black colleges and universities and Hispanic-serving institutions and have been able to connect with more than 3,000 students from various disciplines at the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) National Convention, the US's largest annual gathering of Hispanic STEM students and professionals.

At the end of 2020, 34 percent of US directors and vice presidents were non-white, this is considered high considering that only 0.3 percent of employees are director level and above at Tesla. Comparing Tesla's diversity data with that of other tech companies, they found that in nearly all categories, Tesla's representation of people of color exceeds that of peer companies and in nearly every job category, Tesla's employee base is more racially diverse than the automotive industry average per US figures.

2. Eradicate Discriminatory working cultures and workplaces

These findings revealed that gendered discrimination, bias, and toxic work environments are still prevalent across all modes and regardless of geographic location. This is jeopardizing women's safety, security, wellbeing, and ability to conduct their jobs. Organizations should take active steps to counteract this and create inclusive workplaces.

Implementing inclusive workplaces

1. **Create a specific role or dedicated position for addressing gender, equality, diversity and inclusion (GEDI) workplace experiences, including intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination:** Coordinating effective procedures to ensure that everyone feels valued and able to contribute is a major task. Creating a dedicated role to oversee delivery of data collection and coordinated follow up necessitates dedicated human and financial resources.
2. **Getting the right data:** Employee surveys are regularly deployed by organizations to understand workplace experiences. However, more comprehensive, regular, and flexible audits are needed to gain a better insight into gendered experiences. Many products are available that create and disseminate employee surveys and that collect disaggregating data, which help organizations better understand employee satisfaction. As the case study of Go-Ahead Group's employee survey outlines, investment in IT services and digital platforms—which enable more comprehensive data collection that includes indicators that allow disaggregated information—are proving to be essential to understand the employee experiences better.
3. **Provide secure and safe forums for reporting and voicing concerns:** Anonymous reporting is an HR tool that allows employees to submit an incident report confidentially and share real-time feedback on issues regarding workplace harassment. With anonymous reporting, employees have access to a safe space to express their concerns without self-identification or fear of retaliation. Low reporting does not mean low incidence but is more likely to reflect a silencing low speak-up culture. Such forums must also clearly outline the processes for review and response, allowing employees to understand how their reports will be dealt with, to enable trust and transparency.
4. **Support internal and external forums and networks which raise awareness:** Many organizations have set up their own support forums and networks. However, for smaller organizations with limited resources, a range of independent transport foundations, networks, and forums work to raise awareness among industry leaders and decision makers about the impacts of discriminatory workplace environments—Women Offshore⁸ and Safer Waves⁹ are such examples. Organizations can partner with these entities to demonstrate their commitment to gender diversity and inclusion. Many organizations already have employee networks or mentoring programs—including reverse mentoring—which provide a forum for voicing and discussing concerns. However, to be able to draw on these learnings, it is imperative to establish transparent and regular feedback mechanisms with management and leadership. Several examples of successful grievance mechanisms provide confidential channels for complaints.
5. **Provide training:** Several different types of training to help build capacity and awareness such as anti or unconscious bias or sexual harassment in the workplace can be embedded within existing

required training and development programs, and their completion monitored within employee appraisal structures.

6. ***Infrastructure and gender responsive workplaces:*** Women's needs are often overlooked; establishing a set of clear standards for the design and number of sanitation facilities required per factory, office, or depot as well as for the tools that are required—such as machinery, workstations, uniforms, PPE—will provide a barometer for measuring inclusive procedures and identifying shortfall.
7. ***Including stipulations for facilities and working conditions in contracts:*** Terms in contracts between management organizations and operating companies should address decent work and labor rights, such as minimum wages, hours, facilities, and include gender equality measures such as sexual harassment policies, promotion, and training opportunities.

CASE STUDIES

Central Ohio Transit Authority: Creating a dedicated Diversity Officer position

The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) is the regional public transit provider for Greater Columbus and Central Ohio (USA) serving an area with more than 1.2 million residents making more than 19 million trips every year.

COTA sought to make itself an inclusive employer, to attract and retain personnel from a wide variety of backgrounds. The creation of a new division dedicated to equity, diversity, and inclusion was led by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) based on COTA's prior research that involved climate and culture surveys, focus groups, individual interview, organizational assessment, data gathering and analyses.

In 2020 a Chief of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) was hired to enable the organization to double down on its approach to inclusive and equitable recruitment, promotion, and workplace cultures, bringing diversity and inclusion into all aspects of COTA's work.

Key to COTA's development of this role was the commitment from board members and senior executives including the CEO and Deputy CEO. The EDI Officer was given full support from the top-down to move individuals beyond their comfort zones to ensure that equity was interwoven into all systems, from hiring, promotion, recruitment, and succession. The Human Resources department is now reviewing all policies to ensure inclusive language, creation of paid-family leave, and domestic partnership benefits and five employee resource groups—focusing on women, veterans, ethnicity—have been created. Additionally, all members of the leadership team have completed the IDI intercultural development inventory (IDI) assessment to determine the group profile cultural competency. All have developed individual plans of action to expand our cultural knowledge and humility as a leadership team.

Go-Ahead Group: collecting and analyzing data on employee satisfaction

The Go-Ahead Group¹⁰ is an international transport operator, responsible for several global operating companies, including ten UK bus companies, three international bus companies in Ireland, Singapore, and Sweden, a UK rail company, and two international rail companies in Germany and Norway.

The Go-Ahead Group has measured colleague engagement and throughout its operating companies for many years, predominantly on an annual basis. They are now in the process of rolling out a new approach to survey employee satisfaction, which will enable a greater insight into diversity and inclusion, to identify challenges for employee retention, particularly for underrepresented groups.

Go-Ahead's strategy of "The Next Billion Journeys"¹¹ highlights employee engagement and seeks to enable leadership teams to have access to data and resources, understand how people experience work in a systematic way to create a better and improved sense of belonging. It is re-evaluating the way in which they undertake colleague survey, while reinforcing the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents.

This included the redesign of existing employee survey to be able to analyze data from different angles for example, comparing locations and drilling down by different levels of management. They are seeking to give leadership more insight into and ownership of employee satisfaction, and to collect data more frequently than once a year. They have used examples from outside of transport to bring in new thinking about how to manage diversity and inclusion such as using the "Six Cs" of commitment and courage, cognizance of bias, curiosity, cultural intelligence, and collaboration" promoted by Deloitte.

They use a hosted engagement survey platform, so individuals receive an online link to complete their survey, uniquely coded to each individual and is preloaded with key data about that individual such as location, role, and gender. Managers are given access to dashboards, which allow them to filter data in a number of different ways, with the opportunity to link with other key metrics such as absence, turnover, and operational performance. Such data will further help leaders understand the impact of colleague engagement on other key drivers of performance.

This process is ongoing, costs have been calculated and key stakeholders are providing feedback. This process has been enabled by the creation of the role 'Head of Colleague Experience' who, with the support of leadership, has been empowered to pioneer and oversee this process effectively.

3. Address lack of flexible working and childcare provision

Inability to balance childcare obligations was a major physical, and psychological, challenge for women, even in countries with some of the most generous provisions. Across the board, pregnancy often forced women to abandon their careers in transport, with pregnancy identified as a “key cut off point”. Accommodating maternity and parental needs was regarded as imperative to women’s ability to remain in the sector and access career progression opportunities.

Finding flexibility

1. **Fill the gaps:** Adjusting shift patterns and expanding maternity or paternity or parental provisions may, at least in the short term, create challenges for employers, particularly for those with existing personnel shortages. However, particularly for entry level and nontechnical roles, many groups such as students who are seeking temporary and unsocial hours, may benefit from such roles.
2. **Combine mandatory or standardized work time with flexible hours:** Office-based roles can be made more flexible through hybrid options. This can be very successful for some roles when they are deployed in ways, which improve productivity.
3. **Testing out flexible patterns first:** Workers with caring responsibilities, still disproportionately women, have particular work-life needs. No one-size-fits-all solution exists, and finding the optimum working arrangements often takes time. Therefore, time periods where employees can pilot flexible hours and other working arrangements will ensure the correct balance is found.
4. **Discuss flexibility from the start:** Discussing and agreeing flexible options from the outset with new employees alleviates the psychological burden and practical challenges of childcare and provides a clear channel of communication, which will mitigate the prospect of complications and struggles further down the line.
5. **Facilitate re-entry:** Establishing avenues for women to re-enter the sector postmaternity leave, guaranteeing their jobs during this period of absence is critical. Examples such as Ford India’s partnership¹² with local organizations provides support for women during this process and enables returning women employees to make a smooth transition back to the workplace after a long absence.
6. **Explore childcare provision:** Several workplaces, including factories, provide creche facilities to ease childcare pressures for employees and support re-entry into the workplace after maternity leave. For those who do not have such facilities or resources, consider improving the support provided to employees about how and where to access suitable childcare services.
7. **Connect with networks and forums such as parent groups:** Employers who engaged regularly with these forums were able to understand specific employee needs. They can also help comprehend specific challenges of adoptive and foster parents, and of those whose children require additional physical or mental health support.

CASE STUDIES

Transport Infrastructure Ireland: Hybrid working and job sharing

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is a state agency in Ireland dealing with road and public transport infrastructure, established in 2015 by merging the former National Roads Authority and Railway Procurement Agency. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, TII has implemented a hybrid working arrangement, which is designed to support a more flexible work-life balance while allowing managers to maintain oversight of performance and retain the in-person contact necessary for a cohesive workplace. This is offered alongside possible parttime or workshare options.

Employees are requested to attend the office a minimum of two full days each week, one team day to be agreed with the respective line manager aligned with the head of department. They can select three options for start and finish times.

Parttime and workshare are also available. Parttime work means working fewer hours than a comparable fulltime worker. Examples of parttime work attendance patterns may include mornings only, afternoons only or three or four days per week, with hours and patterns of work arranged to suit both TII and the employee. Workshare is where two or more employees work parttime share one TII role by working alternate attendance patterns resulting in a fulltime role being fulfilled.

TII now has a clear request and implementation procedure for flexible working, which it can showcase in its job offer and which has been shown to encourage female candidates. This has enabled employees with a variety of flexible working needs to adapt the structure, while retaining managerial oversight.

Stagecoach: Creating a better work-life balance for bus drivers

Founded in 1980, Stagecoach is the UK's biggest bus operator with services connecting over 100 major towns and cities in England, Scotland, and Wales. Recognizing the need to improve drivers' work-life balance to retain staff and create a more attractive job offer, they have sought to make bus driving more attractive to women and to others that need to prioritize work-life balance.

They have achieved this by adapting rosters and holiday allowances to provide flexibility, while enabling more constancy around rest days for drivers. This has been combined with a range of outreach initiatives, endeavoring to reach a more diverse pool of candidates and support women through their training and development.

Importantly, these measures were established with clear communication between managers and drivers. "Meet the manager days" have been a time for staff to bring opinions to their attention.

Stagecoach has also explored innovative options for filling unpopular shifts with groups such as students who are seeking more flexible, irregular shift patterns at shorter notice. This has been combined with additional actions to support women into driving and other STEM related roles, where they remain significantly underrepresented.

Stagecoach recruits most of its apprentices externally, but also hosts a "trade up" scheme. This allows existing employees to commence an engineering apprenticeship, helping to facilitate movement into STEM based roles.

Stagecoach received a 19 percent improvement in staff satisfaction based on staff surveyed in December 2022 compared to staff surveyed in March 2022. Staff retention across that period has improved by 19 percent also across all sites, with some sites exceeding this. They are also seeing a gradual increase in the number of women on their apprenticeship schemes.

Swiss Federal Railways: Supporting return to work and childcare

Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) is the national railway company of Switzerland, employing 33,000 employees from 84 nations with 150 occupations. SBB has extensive flexible working offers and a return-to-work scheme, which supports parents in maintaining their career while managing family life. The organization offers a wide range of options, which can be tailored to individual preferences and needs, as well as childcare provisions.

One of the key themes to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic has been the challenge in recruiting and retaining talent. As a public transport operator, this has affected SBB's service delivery and also transformed their employment offer in their effort to attract and retain talent, especially female talent.

SBB's retention rate of women is far below that of men and the retention of female employees drops off dramatically after five years, then again between 10–20 years. Whereas male employees above the age of 30 remain in the organization, retaining female employees after childbearing age is a challenge and dramatically drops in the number of women.

Flexible working can be arranged on a daily, weekly, or annual basis, with the ability to trial reduced working hours before committing to this on a long-term basis. Employees can reduce working hours by up to 20 percent for a period of three months, so long as this does not fall short of 50 percent of total hours. During this time, they can test whether this option is suitable for them and return to their original hours without any problem if it is not.

Employees are also offered advisory services, which support new parents with childcare advice and help locate suitable childcare services. Their scheme, Kidz Care supports in organizing and financing childcare. Depending on income, Kidz Care means up to 90 percent of childcare costs are taken care of.

Their return-to-work scheme provides parttime training roles before returning to fulltime employment. For example, their civil engineer return-to-work program comprises a six-month introduction to all areas of civil engineering and to risk and safety management for railway infrastructure. The program can be followed at a 50–80 percent working percentage. Smaller projects are implemented in parallel to the courses, and participants are mentored throughout. Similar schemes are offered for passenger attendants and customer consultants.

Although the number of female employees remains just under 20 percent, this figure has risen gradually over the last decade. The number of part time employees has also risen, suggesting this scheme has been successful in supporting employees in working in a diversity of formats.

4. Smash invisible glass ceilings and restricted career options

The career pipeline for women to gain a foothold in leadership positions remains inadequate. Enabling women to access career progression prospects is critical to enhance their representation and create a pipeline of opportunities for women across the sector.

Leveraging leadership potential

1. **Clear pathways for advancement:** Women are less likely than their male counterparts to broach the subject of career progression. Therefore, managers should actively establish clear criteria and metrics for promotion and conduct regular reviews of employee performance. Training for women can support this.
2. **Strengthen networks:** Internal colleague networks play a key role in promoting opportunities for women's career advancement. However, those which are proving most successful are developing connections with national and international networks to learn from what others are doing.
3. **Diversity as a metric for performance evaluation:** Inserting diversity of hiring into compensation and performance evaluation for management and leadership helps shift cultures at the top and encourages male allyship.
4. **Partnerships for change:** Engaging in initiatives or shared pledges promotes a unified voice and movement on diverse leadership across the sector, enabling organizations to share experiences and learn from one another.
5. **Mentoring schemes:** Placing new female recruits in direct connection with female managers and leaders helps inspire and showcase the capacity for career advancement. However, examples surface when mentoring has not worked so effectively for progressing careers. Other tools, such as ensuring that senior managers are aware of high potential diverse candidates and sponsor them up the organization are also useful.
6. **Clear discussions and strategies on quotas:** Quotas at board levels are increasingly used in policy development but how this is implemented requires routine engagement of leadership and open dialogue to prevent negative kickback from those that feel that their career progression is being negatively affected by those who may be less qualified but fit with the quota requirements. While quotas have been introduced as a legal requirement in some countries such as Norway, other countries have chosen to introduce quotas without sanctions for noncompliance while others, like the UK have chosen to go down the voluntary targets route.
7. **Diverse panels at transport events:** Several organizations now stipulate that they will only attend conferences and events if the panels are diverse in composition. This can be embedded into internal company committees and leadership can play an important role by highlighting this when participating in external events.
8. **Supporting women and minority led enterprises in procurement:** Implementing diversity into contracting procedures can also support women-led smaller transport enterprises.

CASE STUDIES

EmpowerWism: Supporting women-led businesses

In 2021 MOVMI, an agency focused on shared mobility—micromobility, carsharing, Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS)—launched EmpowerWism,¹³ a competition that promotes and supports one women-led mobility venture for 12 months. A winner is selected from a pool of applicants and that winner is helped to take their start up to the next level through free consultancy support, places at leading transport events, and tapping into EmpowerWism’s network for connections and other opportunities to promote and grow their business.

Women-run businesses—particularly in the transport sector and technology led companies—remain incredibly low. The award is gaining international recognition and applicants now come from all over the world. It now provides a platform for past and present winners and runners-up to meet and exchange, building a cohort of shared knowledge and experiences.

The winner in 2022 was Wheel!, a Norwegian based cargo bike company, and last year’s winner was SINGE Network, now HALO, who develops digital safety guides that integrate into mobility apps with a focus on gender equality and migration.

The program publishes a call for applicants from around the world and selects a winner through a formalized and transparent process judged by a jury panel. Applicants must:

- Provide a product, service, or technology usable for personal mobility or transportation—can be in shared mobility but doesn’t have to be.
- Be majority women owned and have at minimum one female co-founder and C-level executive—cis or transwomen, nonbinary, gender-fluid or gender nonconforming people. Additional points are given for more female representation.
- Applicants’ organizations must be less than five years old.

Despite a slow start, 17 applications were received for the 2023 edition, with applicants from across Europe, Australia, Asia, South America, and Africa. The competition partners with UITP, ITS America, Stanford University and others who provide funding and opportunities for winners.

Alta: Establishing durable mentoring schemes

Alta is an on-line mentoring platform launched in 2019 to tackle the underrepresentation of women within the aviation and aerospace industry, especially at the highest levels. It connects female mentors and mentees from across the industry. It is designed to attract more women to the industry and to retain those women already present, with a focus on supported career development.

Funding to design and launch Alta was provided by the Economic and Social Research Council and the University of the West of England and the project was match funded by the co-founding partners—the Royal Aeronautical Society, Airbus, the Royal Air Force, and Little Blue Private Jets Ltd. The scheme was also awarded the ESRC prize in 2022 for outstanding impact in business and enterprise. It is supported by the careers service at the Royal Aeronautical Society and donations from the industry. Alta provides mentor-mentee training, regular networking events, and advocates the tackling of gender inequality across the industry.

It also seeks to broaden action from internal positive action to a sectorwide movement, providing women with long-standing contact networks, support systems, and wider knowledge and expertise crucial to enabling their success in aviation and indeed across the transport sector.

The program now has more than 500 individual members, mentors and mentees, from across the globe. It is free for individuals to sign up, and companies can also sign up for a small annual fee, allowing their employees to gain access too.

UPS: Women's leadership development

UPS, the world's largest package delivery company and a leading global provider of specialized transportation and logistics services, launched a Women's Leadership Development (WLD) programme in 2006. UPS has long been committed to the professional development of women, who today constitute about 20 percent of its workforce. One of its core values that helps drive and shape its gender, equality and diversity programs is creating a culture of belonging under the banner of 'You Belong at UPS'.

The employee-led Business Resource Group¹⁴ (BRG) has 185 chapters in more than 30 countries. The chapters allow employees to connect better and offer networking and learning opportunities outside of regular work teams, serve as an extension of the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, and reflect UPS's commitment to employee development and engagement.

The WLD groups focus on enhancing its members' personal and professional skill sets in order to prepare them to step confidently into leadership roles at UPS. In addition, the program aims to retain the women it already has in management, by finding ways to be responsive to their needs and priorities.

This is reflected throughout the organization and Carol B. Tomé is the twelfth CEO in UPS's 115-year history and the first woman to serve in this role. The UPS Board of Directors consists of 46 percent women, far above the average for other US Fortune 50 companies and she has served as a member of the board since 2003. In addition, UPS Information Technology (I.T.) has been named as one of the "2021 Best Places to Work in I.T."

5. Achieve gender equity and its relationship with wider diversity, behavioral and culture change

Gender inequality is part and parcel of the difficulty of navigating wider questions and confusion around diversity. Across the survey and interviews, it was clearly recognized that the sector cannot approach gender in isolation from racial, sexual, or socioeconomic equality.

Delivering diversity beyond gender balance

1. **Create a specified role for overseeing diversity initiatives:** This will help ensure initiatives are coordinated, targeted, and linked to an organization's wider goals and ambitions. This also means that such activities do not fall as additional burdens on employees who are responsible for other tasks.
2. **Reassess how diversity is measured, and the language used to do so:** Ensuring inclusion means moving beyond how we measure diversity and its relationship with inclusive workspaces. This is undoubtedly a complex process; nevertheless, including questions around employees' sense of feeling valued and ability to voice difficulties will enable an insight into the extent to which inclusion is being achieved.
3. **Integrate training into onboarding for new staff:** Ensuring new personnel understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, setting clear principles and guidance from the outset is critical. Training should be part of how new staff are welcomed into the organization. This will also ensure new employees from underrepresented groups feel comfortable in the organization.
4. **Establish a diversity advisory board:** Create a staff committee consisting of individuals who are able to represent the concerns and requests of employees. To be effective, such a committee must be able to provide feedback to management boards on a regular basis, and hold leadership to account including representation of any recognized trade union.
5. **Create spaces for peer-to-peer exchange between colleagues:** Creating opportunities for colleagues of all backgrounds who can socialize and learn from one another's experiences, will help to foster a broad understanding of behaviors and their impacts. These schemes have been an effective way of creating links, sharing knowledge, and breaking down barriers both within and between organizations.
6. **Reinforce internal support forums and networks:** Many organizations have internal networks that support women and minority groups. However, too often these work in siloes; enabling networks to work together to share experience, identify common goals and- importantly where these may diverge are critical to establish cohesive movements toward inclusive workplaces. Combined network social events or workshops have proved to be helpful. These networks and forums should be enabled to feed into diversity advisory boards and leadership decision making, which will ensure lived experiences inform action.
7. **Consider conducting workshops on colleague wellbeing and inclusive communities:** The workspace is not immune from one's personal life, therefore many organizations are increasingly turning to such workshops or roundtables where colleagues can learn more about valuing personal and others' wellbeing.

CASE STUDIES

ILWU: Bystander intervention training on British Columbia's docks

ILWU Canada¹⁵ is a union representing more than 7,200 men and women throughout British Columbia. The 'Be More Than a Bystander' program is an intervention model, run by the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) and implemented by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), an ITF affiliate and dock workers union in Canada.

Over the last several years, British Columbia's docks have become increasingly diverse, with employees from many different backgrounds. However, challenges have remained to create inclusive cultures, which employers and trade unions have sought to confront. Bystander intervention training increases workplace safety by addressing gender workplace harassment, bullying and violence, and creates more respectful and inclusive workplaces.

Focused on providing practical tools to empower people to "stand up instead of stand by", this program addresses the complex and challenging subject of workplace harassment and bullying.

A three-day intensive training course covers a range of topics to provide an in-depth understanding of the bystander intervention model including:

- Why these are men's issues
- What role socialized masculinity plays toward violence in society
- What is sexism and misogyny?
- The pressure to be tough and not empathetic
- Media literacy and understanding the role of media in establishing and maintaining social norms
- The power of men stepping in and speaking up
- Role of bystander intervention as a men's leadership issue
- Know what options are available to speak up or interrupt abuse and violence; with people they know and with strangers.

The ILWU has trained more than 6,000 of their members and representatives speak passionately about the roadmap for behavioral and cultural change this program has brought to their workplaces and the communities their workers represent. The ITF interview "Men can be part of the solution"¹⁶ with ILWU docker Cam Sture, a Be More Than a Bystander trainer, reveals powerful truths about what needed to change in his workplace.

LA Metro: employee led positive action with a Women and Girls Governing Council

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) looks to provide gender sensitive services and to improve the diversity and gender balance of its workforce. This includes developing a gender action plan (GAP) based on the recommendations from the 2019 "Understanding How Women Travel" (UHWT) study¹⁷ to understand and better serve the needs and preferences of women riders. GAP is a tactical plan to implement safety, fare policy, service, and design changes that will improve the travel experiences of women.

LA Metro currently has a significant gender imbalance in its employee profiles, and forecasts that it will need to add more than 700,000 jobs. Thus, it is seeking to find new ways to make the organization attractive to female recruits. GAP includes actions to help attract and retain women workers. Twenty-nine percent of Metro's workforce is female, 73 percent are within childbearing years.

Among other actions, it also established the Women & Girls Governing Council (WGGC) in September 2017. The WGCG Council¹⁸ comprises a diverse group of Metro employees representing every department—union and non-union, entry level to executive—that meets monthly to develop recommendations to the CEO to help advance and empower women and girls. It looks to find opportunities to remove barriers to success and expand opportunities, as well as examine gender sensitivity on transit services themselves.¹⁷ The council has also addressed sexual harassment prevention, implementing an effective reporting, reviewing, and responding process to reduce or prevent sexual harassment.

The council has helped guide and support actions, which it has identified as key to transform recruitment and workplace cultures. The group recommends effective actions or business cases to LA Metro's leadership, recommendations borne from embedded and situated experiences from a diverse range of colleagues on the WGGC.

LA Metro is updating job specifications to remove gender bias. Specifically, minimum qualifications have been removed for jobs such as cleaning or custodial work and service attendants, because these minimum qualifications may have been creating a barrier to employment for women. It has also incorporated a pilot of blind screening for job applicants. Applicant scores are determined based on qualifications of the applicant, without including any personal demographics. The agency also hosts a childcare centre, begun in 2012, which provides subsidized childcare for all LA Metro employees. Metro has recently partnered with a private, not-for-profit childcare and development agency to further provide family support services to increase access to high-quality child development programs and resources to Metro employees.

This has resulted in an increased hiring of women. One year after implementing this process 30 women were hired into service attendant roles; compared with only three women hired in the previous three years.

Critically, GAP has been supported and reinforced by LA Metro's leadership. The council's founder, Stephanie N. Wiggins, is now the Metro's CEO and continues to embed inclusion and diversity and was honored as Los Angeles Business Journal's CEO of the year in their 2022 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards.¹⁹

Notes

- 1 Women in Cycling <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8980325/>
- 2 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/women-on-the-move/WiTL> <https://witl.info/>
- 3 Women in Mobility <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8639164/>
- 4 <https://www.womenintransport.com/jobs>
- 5 <https://www.wtsinternational.org/resources/career-center>
- 6 https://www.comillas.edu/documentos/catedras/STEM-mujer/Estudios_STEM_en_Espa%C3%B1a_y_participacion_de_la_mujer_dic_21.pdf (bilingual in Spanish and English)
- 7 Women Offshore - <https://womenoffshore.org/about/>
- 8 Safer Waves - <https://saferwaves.org/about-us/>
- 9 <https://www.go-ahead.com/who-we-are/overview>
- 10 Go-Ahead Group strategy - <https://www.go-ahead.com/who-we-are/strategy>
- 11 Ford India - <https://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/ford-increases-recruiting-training-of-women-engineers-in-asian-markets/57553764>
- 12 <https://movmi.net/blog/category/women-in-shared-mobility/>
- 13 <https://www.jobs-ups.com/diversity>
- 14 <https://www.ilwu.ca/about/>
- 15 Men can be part of the solution - <https://www.facebook.com/itfwomen/videos/904416796884573/>
- 16 http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/2019-0294/UnderstandingHowWomenTravel_FullReport_FINAL.pdf
- 17 <https://www.metro.net/about/wggc/>
- 18 <https://labusinessjournal.com/business-journal-events/2022-diversity-equity-inclusion-awards/>

SECTION 5

Conclusions and Next Steps: Preparing for a Gender Balanced Future?

Although the full effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are yet to be ascertained, initial reviews from across the globe suggest women's employment has been negatively affected.¹ Ramifications concern women's ability to balance professional employment and unpaid care work and access to healthcare and sanitary facilities, with sectors where women are concentrated² being some of the hardest hit by the impacts of the pandemic. The transport workforce remains male dominated but it also faces critical shortages in key areas, especially driving.

Despite progress in global and national policy arenas, **women working across the transport sector continue to face multiple impediments to enter, remain, and advance their careers.** Gendered stereotyping, discriminatory and unsafe workplace cultures, lack of flexible working and childcare provision and invisible glass ceilings constrain progress toward a more gender balanced workforce, with detrimental impacts on those women already working there.

Although international and national equal opportunities and antidiscrimination policy frameworks lay the foundations for change, **decision makers in the transport sector cannot rely solely on these to generate the transformative shifts necessary at the rate required.** This study highlights that in addition to gender, we also need to think about intersects and multiple forms of discrimination and aim for greater diversity—including age, qualifications and ability—so the workforce better reflects the populations it serves.

The growing number of gender equality policies, initiatives and programs established at organizational level and the sentiments shared in this research, reveal unmistakable ambition to address the prevailing imbalance. **Failure to do so will not only impact the workforce, but also the services delivered and the future sustainability of operations.**

Nevertheless, targeted, sustained, and effective action is imperative, and change will demand **comprehensive and sustained positive action** from all those involved in the sector for women and other underrepresented groups to be able to contribute fully.

Given the immense shifts required, this is a formidable but necessary mission. The initiatives and procedures showcased in this toolkit provide insight into the value of smaller, yet explicit and coherent efforts, which can be replicated and scaled for immediate impact.

At the same time, it is important not to overlook or minimize the **systemic behavioral and mind set changes, which must underpin longer term gender equality strategies.** Much of the discriminatory culture unearthed in this research is the result of entrenched, historic gendered perceptions of transport, which continue to shape organizational operations. These are often unquestioned, and all too often, their

impacts are underestimated. Ongoing efforts to address these— such as reverse mentoring schemes and antibias training—are essential but must now be embedded within individual performance reviews and organizational audits. Indeed policies, practices, and behavior change must reinforce each other because by themselves alone, they will not make the required changes.

Actions in this field are more successful if they follow **a women-centered process of co-creation with support from top management and inputs from employees, trade unions, and internal and external networks and support forums**, to establish, guide, and evaluate measures and initiatives, with women actively participating in decision making and monitoring.

Simultaneously, we must **recognize the spectrum of experiences** of those who are underrepresented in the transport workforce and the degree to which a network or forum represents these experiences. Such representation is necessary and may serve to provide helpful support and opportunities for dialogue and exchanges, but they cannot be expected to solely provide the solution, which also requires industry and employer commitment and action. Nevertheless, **fostering exchange between different networks and with leadership can further aid effective change.**

Significantly, the common entry points for action revealed in this research demonstrate the potential for and value of cross-sector conversation and collaboration, learning from one another, and combining resources to enhance the scale and scope of positive action. This can be: (i) horizontal cooperation, using approaches such as shared networks or joint antibias training for leadership; and (ii) vertical partnerships such as those we have profiled between universities and recruiters.

Role models and bold, committed action are requisites to break through the invisible glass ceiling. As such, clear opportunity and responsibility present themselves for transport representative bodies and networks to mobilize action. Given the cross-sector commonalities, these organizations can and must play a central role to build coalitions and erode the often-siloed action observed.

The lack of data was also highlighted both across and within the sector. Thus, more regular gender disaggregated quantitative data collection and qualitative information are essential, such as lived experiences to ensure advances can be measured and persistent obstacles are identified.

The volume and breadth of information and data on gender equal employment strategies must also be shared more widely. Many do not recognize the value of their own good practices for others. There remains a lack of awareness about the positive action implemented by peers across the sector and how these can be replicated, and most do not look beyond national boundaries for inspiration, despite the common challenges faced regionally and globally. The practise of circulating information on action, the achievements—and even failures—will help enable others to replicate and build on tried and tested methods.

This research also revealed **the importance of adapting the questions we ask and the language we use when seeking to understand women’s experiences of employment.** By combining questions on women’s personal experiences and their opinions with quantitative questions on gender balance, identifies nuances, inconsistencies, and discrepancies between what women need and what is being provided. We recommend that future research builds on this approach to help direct more targeted action. As part of this, it is also important to **consider who asks the questions, recognizing the vulnerability of disclosing sensitive experiences.**

Success demands strong and sustained effort and attention. It also requires a level of visibility and transparency, which is not always easy or comfortable for many organizations.

The future is bright, equality will take work, but it will be worth it.

Notes:

- 1 UN (2022) Progress on The Sustainable Development Goals The Gender Snapshot 2022, (WWW) https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2022-en_0.pdf
- 2 UN (2020) From insights to action: Gender equality in the wake of COVID-19, (WWW) <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2020/Gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf>

Glossary of Terms

Gender: Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls, and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviors, and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time. Gender interacts with but is different from sex, which refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of females, males, and intersex persons, such as chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs.

Gender identity: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither; how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming has been embraced internationally as a strategy toward realizing gender equality. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programs, with a view to promoting equality between women and men and combating discrimination.

Gender bias: Gender bias refers to a person receiving different treatment based on the person's real or perceived gender identity.

Discrimination: Treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in an adverse way to others, owing to their race, gender, sexuality, among others.

Intersectionality: Intersectionality is an analytical framework for understanding how a person's various social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege. Examples of these factors include gender, sex, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion, and disability.

Gender wage gap: The gender wage gap is defined as the difference between median¹ earnings of women relative to median earnings of men.

Non-traditional roles: jobs that have been traditionally dominated by one gender.

Male dominated sector: Where men own- or occupy the majority of the decision making roles at every level in organizations and companies.²

Gig work: Temporary or freelance work performed by an independent contractor on an informal or on-demand basis. Gig workers enter into formal agreements with on-demand companies to provide services to the company's clients.

Platform economy: Economic and social activity facilitated by platforms. Such platforms are typically online sales or technology frameworks. By far the most common type are "transaction platforms", also known as "digital matchmakers". Examples of transaction platforms include shared mobility companies such as Uber.

#MeToo movement: #MeToo is a social movement against sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and rape culture, in which people publicize their experiences of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. The phrase “Me Too” was initially used in this context on social media in 2006, on Myspace, by sexual assault survivor and activist Tarana Burke.³

#TimesUp movement: The Time’s Up movement was founded on January 1, 2018, by more than 300 Hollywood celebrities, with the goal of connecting those who experience sexual misconduct in the workplace or in trying to advance their careers with legal and public relations assistance. The group’s focus is getting legislation on gender parity issues passed and increasing opportunities, particularly for women and women of color in low-wage industries.

Flexible working: A situation in which an employer allows people to choose the times that they work so that they can do other things, for example spend time with their children.

Glass ceilings: An invisible barrier to career advancement in a job or profession, especially affecting women and members of minority groups.

Gender stereotyping: The practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of women or men.⁴

Occupational segregation by gender: Describes the extent to which women and men occupy different sectors and jobs and at different levels.

Womyn/Womxn: Some womyn spell the word with a “y” or an “x” as a form of empowerment to move away from the “men” in the “traditional” spelling of women.

Notes

- 1 OECD (2023), Gender wage gap (indicator). doi: 10.1787/7cee77aa-en (Accessed on 13 March 2023)
- 2 Goldstein, M., Gonzalez, P., & Papineni, M. (2019) Tackling the Global Profitarchy Gender and the Choice of Business Sector, Policy Research Working Paper 8865, World Bank (WWW) <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/734371558715932769/pdf/Tackling-the-Global-Profitarchy-Gender-and-the-Choice-of-Business-Sector.pdf>
- 3 Ohlheiser, A. (2017). The woman behind ‘Me Too’ knew the power of the phrase when she created it – 10 years ago, Washington Post, (WWW) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2017/10/19/the-woman-behind-me-too-knew-the-power-of-the-phrase-when-she-created-it-10-years-ago/>
- 4 United Nations (2014) Gender stereotypes and Stereotyping and women’s rights (WWW) https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/OnePagers/Gender_stereotyping.pdf

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASEAN - Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ASX 200 - Market-capitalization weighted and float-adjusted stock market index of stocks listed on the Australian Securities Exchange

ATA - American Trucking Association

BRT - Bus Rapid Transit

CCTV - Closed Circuit Television

C-suite - Executive level managers within a company

EIGE - European Institute for Gender Equality

ETF - European Transport Workers' Federation

EU - European Union

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

GRA - Global Roadmap of Action

HDV - Heavy Duty Vehicle

ILO - International Labor Organization

IRU - International Roads Union

ITF - International Transport Forum

ITF - International Transport Workers' Federation

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PPE- Personal Protective Equipment

SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

SuM4All - Sustainable Mobility for All

TUMI - Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative

UITP - International Association of Public Transport

