INTRODUCTION

Cities are becoming more diverse due to globalisation and urbanisation. Urban mobility is shifting towards on-demand and personalised services. Society is recognising people in their individuality and within their minorities. These changes require public transport actors to adopt to a culture of inclusion which extends to both customers and employees, to offer well equipped services. These Action Points aim to offer a better understanding of diversity and inclusion in public transport, and the benefits that come with promoting it in the sector. Sector-specific recommendations and key actions are proposed in this paper for employers to build a more diverse and inclusive environment. Having a diverse and well-included labour force is directly linked to innovation and creativity, which translates into better customer experience, improved service quality and stronger branding.

The document is complemented by a Diversity and Inclusion Case Study Tool Box and a list of literature references, which are available on MyLibrary.
More companies are starting to look at diversity and inclusion as a source of competitive advantage. An essential part of being inclusive is to understand that everyone is biased when receiving and processing information, therefore public transport companies should address it with staff. Ultimately, employees will be able to consider all travellers, with different characteristics.

In this sense, for public transport networks to be inclusive, they need to be accessible. Public transport needs to create solutions that can be used by anyone and to be available to as many people as possible. When this happens, networks become inclusive by design.

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**BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Recognising the benefits does not mean that any changes incurred will become any easier for the sector. Challenges and situations will also vary considerably depending on the local context, but the analysis of various case studies allows us to draw some general action points which could help public transport companies in their mission to become more inclusive and diverse.

**IMPROVE PERFORMANCE AND INNOVATION**

The importance of diversity in the staff can be translated into the capacity to leverage talent. It often results in an increase of both innovation and performance.

Research conducted by McKinsey & Company involving 180 companies from France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, evidenced that not only can a diverse workforce provide higher creativity, innovation and faster problem-solving, but companies’ financial performance improved. The same research showed that when diverse teams made a business decision, they outperformed individual decision-makers up to 87% of the time. In addition, joint recommendations from UITP and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) encourage a greater diversity of labour in the transport sector, to improve the functioning and efficiency of the service for passengers by better representing the diversity of the passengers.

**METRO DE MADRID**

Metro de Madrid developed a new navigation assistance tool, L.A.R.A., for travellers with intellectual or development disabilities, and trained 275 employees to better assist these travellers. As a result, the metro now reaches a population of 32,000 potential customers, in the Madrid region alone.

A culture of inclusion in the workplace extends to customers services. Including individuals in their workforce with mobility issues, sight/hearing loss, and cognitive disabilities will help companies to understand and learn from experiences by involving them in the process of improvement. Companies will have a direct impact on customer experience and quality of service.

“Diversity enriches our reflections, brings colour to our daily lives. It allows us to surpass ourselves by going beyond our prejudices and discerning more objectively the real need of our colleague, our client and our environment.”

Frederic Demars, STIB, Senior Vice President Human resources
HAPPY & ENGAGED STAFF

Companies which are embracing all differences of employees, adapting working conditions to employees’ needs and creating an inclusive culture will make their staff happier. Research conducted by Deloitte, which captured the views and experiences of 1,550 employees in three large Australian businesses, shows that companies with greater diversity in their workplace have a higher levels of staff engagement and lower turnover rates. Only satisfied employees can make satisfied customers and engaged staff equal happy customers.

TRANSPORTS METROPOLITANS DE BARCELONA (TMB)

Transports Metropolitan de Barcelona (TMB) has taken specific measures to increase the recruitment of people with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds: it signed a framework agreement with Barcelona City’s Office for Non-Discrimination, adapted its recruitment processes and reinforced the recruitment of station assistants from different backgrounds to better engage with customers of the same origins.

METRO DE SANTIAGO

Metro de Santiago collaborated with an NGO specialising in gender issues in order to support one of its employee’s sex-change operation. In addition, the Metro also assumed the financial costs of the operation.

STRONGER BRAND AND REPUTATION

As part of the CSR of companies, diversity and inclusion will improve their reputation towards investors and partners. By monitoring the level of the diversity and inclusion of their workforce, the public transport sector can contribute towards many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those aimed at reducing inequalities and supporting decent work.

ATTRACTING NEW TALENTS AND SKILLS

Diversity and inclusion improve companies’ reputation and branding. They appear as a more desirable place to work. A survey conducted by Glassdoor found that 67% of job seekers said a diverse workforce is important when considering job offers.

With the ageing workforce in many regions of the world and subsequent labour shortages, enlarging the scope of recruitment beyond the usual job market is one of the solutions to look at diversifying the public transport workforce.

RUTER

Ruter, the public transport authority of Oslo, has selected eight of the SDGs to build their sustainability strategy, including: Decent work and economic growth and reduced inequalities. The aim is to become an inclusive, responsible and fair organisation, contributing to the reduction in inequality in the city and at work.
ADAPTING VALUES

Corporate culture refers to the shared values, attitudes, standards, and beliefs that characterise employees and define the nature of a company. Employees can only feel included in a company if they can adhere to its values. Companies have to demonstrate that they have adopted diversity and inclusive values.

MOVE BERLIN, LIVE DIVERSITY!

Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG) has a strategic and systematic approach of diversity management. It embraces a culture of understanding and respect, regardless of origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disabilities.

Dedicated internal communication activities have been developed including reports, trainings and events. An annual diversity day is organised for employees and BVG’s diversity strategy is available online. An internal LGBTQ network has been created and BVG and every year joins Christopher Street Day (Pride) in Berlin, a European celebration and demonstration for the rights of LGBTQ people and against discrimination and exclusion.

The company has put in place measures for preventing sexual harassment at work, reintegrating refugees to working life with specific qualifications or preparatory courses for apprenticeship, and women promotion plans.

ACTION POINTS

EMBEDDING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INTO THE CORPORATE CULTURE

Aligning vision, mission and strategy

Having a diverse and inclusive workforce cannot be achieved without a clear vision which translates into a strategy and a concrete action plan. The vision of public transport is often initiated by political decisions. For example, the current Mayor of London, Sadiq Kahn, has set his own vision for a diverse and inclusive city with inclusive employers and transport networks.

To go from vision to implementation, it is necessary to set goals, procedures and activities.

An internal diversity forum can be created to lead and coordinate diversity and inclusion initiatives within the company.

INTEGRATING DIVERSITY INTO STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

Creating organisational diversity is a priority for Västrafik. The company values employees who think differently from one another, as they believe it will foster innovation and create values for their customers, employees and wider society. To ensure a variety of skills, experiences, personalities, cultural backgrounds and references in their staff, the company has developed a set of tools: diversity and inclusion short-term and long-term strategies, action plans and programmes.

These programmes include: mandatory trainings on equal rights and opportunities for management and leaders, on-the-job training to help people to get back into the job market, and internships for young people, immigrants, and people with physical and/or psychological disabilities.
In 2017, Helsinki Regional Transport Authority, Helsinki City Transport and the Finnish League for Human Rights organised a campaign against harassment and discrimination on public transport. The End stop for discrimination campaign encouraged people to tackle harassment and discrimination on public transport and to support the victims of harassment. It involved people who had personally experienced discrimination, as well as other public transport users and public figures.

Creating a sense of belonging

The feeling of belonging can serve as an easier entry point to diversity and inclusion across diverse cultures and countries. While diversity and inclusion may take different forms across cultures, the need for a sense of belonging in the workplace is universal.

To foster this sense of belonging, companies can implement initiatives which recognise employees’ accomplishments, to provide opportunities for them to express their opinion freely and publically value their contributions.

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WOMEN PROGRAMME

RATP’s Executive Management decided to turn gender diversity into a strategic objective. Its Woman programme aims to encourage and facilitate women’s access to employment opportunities and overall inclusion. The programme delivers proposals about new management and organisational models to create a better working environment. It assists the different departments in implementing the proposed measures. In the end, the programme benefits all employees, being also open to men.

By helping to build a network of relationships to share experiences and advice, the goal is to stop women feeling isolated. This network exists across different job fields and promotes several initiatives to enhance women’s visibility in the company.

Branding

The commitment towards diversity and inclusion should be reflected in the brand of public transport companies, with their vision, mission and strategy.

Staff must be committed before they can communicate them to customers. Employees and customers should affiliate brands with clear and consistent values.

CAMPAIGNS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

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PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY BEYOND THE CORPORATE COMMUNITY

Partnerships with non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) or local civil society working on issues related to diversity and inclusion can help in reinforcing the values, the brand and the sense of belonging to the corporate community.
MANAGING DIVERSITY AMBASSADORS

Diversity is one of Hochbahn’s strategic priorities. The company wants to make diversity an integrated part of its culture. The goal is to create acceptance from its staff and enhance their diversity skills through training and seminars.

To engage its managers, Hochbahn has included diversity in leadership seminars and made them Diversity Ambassadors. To enhance gender parity, a network of women managers has also been created.

ALSTOM GROUP

1) Tell: communicate internally and externally about the positive impact of diversity & inclusion via all communication channels, events and programmes;

2) Train: Provide learning tools for all employees to sensitise on the importance of diversity and inclusion and to develop more inclusive behaviours.

3) Track: Measure regularly the impact of global diversity and assess inclusion.

4) Collective Enablers: Adapt internal practices and/or implement new ones, to foster a truly inclusive place to work for everyone, also encouraging communities, suppliers, customers, partners and other stakeholders in this commitment.

MANAGING DIVERSITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP

It will be easier for employees to adopt an inclusive attitude at work, if their manager leads by example. By first training leaders, staff will be more inclined to develop themselves.

This concept of Diversity through leadership has been recently recognised by the European Commission. They recently launched the Diversity and Inclusion Ambassadors in Transport Sector Initiative, gathering all sectors of public transport. Some of those nominated Ambassadors are members of UITP.

Improving and sustaining representation and integration of women at all levels in the urban public transport sector requires a package of activities and initiatives.

METRO OF LISBON

As part of their Policy to support inclusion of employees, the Metro of Lisbon initiated a project of a public theatre play involving two deaf female employees with a dedicated advertising campaign with posters, flyers and a sign language poster.

Developing a human resource strategy to adapting employment practices

Having a diverse workforce goes beyond setting recruitment targets. It not only requires an examination of corporate policies and culture, but also identifying how everything from wages to working conditions and access to all jobs, training and promotion can be adapted and improved to guarantee diversity within the company.

Having a people-oriented human resources strategy will increase the sense of belonging and motivation of employees and therefore should also result in a more inclusive and diverse workforce.
**WOMEN MOVING THE CITY**

In partnership with Greater Accra Passenger Transport Executive and GIZ, Scania has set up a recruitment and training programme dedicated to female bus drivers in Ghana’s capital city.

The project aims to even out the gender gap in the transport industry while providing women with free access to training and improved career prospects. The initiative is supported by Miss Taxi Ghana. In total, 72 women have been employed by Aayalolo which operates the local bus and rapid transit (BRT) network.

Thanks to the local training academy set up by Scania, women have also been trained as truck drivers and mechanics. As a result, transport services became safer and more reliable.

**ENCOURAGING HEALTHY WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR MEN AND WOMEN**

Believing that achieving a healthy work-life balance will produce a synergistic effect, JR East has initiated a series of initiatives to support its employees.

In order to address irregular working hours, JR EAST has introduced initiatives such as shorter working hours and fewer working days. In 2018, the company opened eight workplace day-care facilities that can provide 24-hour childcare and is planning to open more.

They improved their ‘banked leave system’ for accumulating paid leave that would have been forfeited by increasing the number of reasons for which it can be applied, and the number of days that may be accumulated. Leave can now be taken for reasons such as child care, nursing care and medical examinations.

‘Spousal childbirth leave’ has also been recently introduced by the company. More than 100 male employees took childcare leave in 2018, and approximately 20% of all employees taking childcare leave were men. JR EAST is also proposing seminars to employees to help them in finding a better balance between work and family life. As a result, their employee retention rate is steadily growing.

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Ensure equal treatment & work-life balance

To attract diverse profiles of employees, companies need to adapt their employment practices to better fit the different needs of employees. Facilitating work flexibility is one way to attract different profiles and retain talents, for example offering more senior roles on a part-time basis.

Improving working conditions and supporting a work-life balance will also result in a more diverse and inclusive workplace. For example, setting up on-site child-care facilities, and adapting the design of uniforms, facilities, work stations and tools to the different types of people. Coaching, trainings and qualification programmes adapted to gender, age and different level of abilities will ensure an equal treatment of staff. Pay gaps should also be carefully monitored to avoid discrimination.
Increasing protection against violence, sexual harassment and discrimination

Companies embracing diversity and inclusion as core values should have accessible tools and means to ensure that all employees are properly protected against violence, sexual harassment and discrimination through collective agreements, prevention measures and mechanisms for investigation and responding to complaints.

Victims should know what to do and who to approach; they should feel free to speak without any fear or shame. Clear process and guidelines for reporting violence and harassment should therefore be in place.

Prevention is also key; taking practical measures to stop violence at the workplace, to ensure safety when travelling to and from work, alongside diversity advocacy programmes. These should be part of the human resources strategy. Employees should be aware of rules and penalties if they don’t respect them. Awareness training on discrimination could be helpful.

Operators of public transport are already taking actions to protect their staff and customers. In this regard is worth mentioning the UITP-ITF Joint Statement Recommendations for Combating Violence and Insecurity on Urban Public Transport and the European Social Dialogue Framework Agreement on Harassment and Violence at work.

Monitor progress and enforce measures

By adopting standards or signing charters, companies will be able to refer to common indicators to benchmark their results with others. They will have stronger incentives to enforce diversity and inclusion measures in order to maintain their reputation. Several countries and even companies, have adopted their own Charters on Diversity and Inclusion, such as Australia, Germany and Sweden.

Beyond their goodwill, companies will need to report on progress made towards their diversity and inclusion objectives and targets, to uphold trust of staff and customers. Some companies have also developed internally their own set of indicators. Audits could also be ordered by companies to reinforce their commitment.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**EMBEDDING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INTO THE CORPORATE CULTURE**

- Integrate diversity into the corporate strategy: it is not only an issue for human resources or CSR.
- Use diversity and inclusion as core values of the company.
- Provide a framework including values and corporate culture to accompany and sustain proximity management, and encourage local initiatives.
- Communicate internally on a regular basis about values, providing concrete examples of non-ethical, non-respectful or discriminatory behaviours towards colleagues and customers.
- Go beyond the gender parity by engaging men in the process.
- Inform employees about the benefits of inclusion and diversity: reassure people who may be afraid of the differences.
- Make diversity inclusive: Address internal biases which will enable public transport to include all travellers.
- Strive to be inclusive by design: Become fully accessible, develop solutions that can be used by anyone, and available to as many people as possible.

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IMPACT ANNUAL REPORT**

In 2019, Transport for London (TfL) published a diversity and inclusion impact report combining two previous documents: the Action on Equality and Annual Workforce Monitoring report, showing how they met their duties as an employer, in addition to their public service duty. They combined the two documents because they believe that the two duties are intrinsically linked. By having a workforce that represents the city they serve, and whose talents are harnessed by inclusive processes, behaviours and culture, they can better deliver safe and inclusive end-to-end journeys for all.

The report includes detailed information on the progress made on defined performance indicators and case studies. For Diversity, TfL reports on six protected characteristics, as defined and protected in the Equality Act 2010, broken down by their different services. It looks at the level of diversity in senior management, gender and ethnicity pay gaps, and hiring. For inclusion, the report presents the results of their employee survey to determine how engaged their workforce is. From one of the six themes addressed by the survey, an inclusion index has been created. It is calculated based on the agreement rating of a list of predefined statements.

This provides TfL with an indication of how successful they are in creating an inclusive culture, where everybody feels they are treated equally, no matter their age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity or career status.

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BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY & AN INCLUSIVE BRAND

- Engage employees to champion diversity and inclusion values and reward outstanding behaviour
- Build a sense of community (feeling of trust, support and security) for the staff and the customers
- Exchange best practices internally or with other local companies
- Develop partnerships with NGOs, public authorities or local civil societies working on related issues
- Break the mental barriers and value differences: One person from a minority does not create an inclusive culture
- Adapt internal and external communication language and imagery
- Adapt your branding and advertising to appeal to all backgrounds: Use targeted campaigns

MANAGING DIVERSITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND ENPOWERMENT OF STAFF

- Empower people to initiate actions and activities to reinforce the sense of community
- Provide internal dedicated capacity to lead and coordinate efforts and programs to support diversity and inclusion: Create a Differentiation & Commitment Department, nominate Diversity Managers and Ambassadors...
- Ensure management is leading by example

DEVELOPING A HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- Set up compulsory training programmes for all employees
- Ensure that recruitment processes are non-discriminatory and do not include unfair conditions of employment according to the different characteristics of diversity
- Adapt the work environment and conditions: working time, infrastructure, language...
- Embrace digitalisation and new technologies to attract different employee profiles
- Engage with Governments and Trade Unions which should guarantee proper conditions for workers
- Facilitate ways for employees to report any issue of discrimination, harassment or violence

MONITOR PROGRESS AND ENFORCE MEASURES

- Set up clear objectives and targets at strategic level
- Monitor progress and benchmark with others networks and companies: Data is key!
CONCLUSION

Diversity and inclusion should not be seen as a challenge but as an opportunity for public transport companies. By becoming more diverse and inclusive, companies will improve the quality of their services directly for to their evolving employee and customer base. It will allow them to leverage talents and attract new ones. Ultimately, it can foster innovation and bring business growth.

Yet, diversity does not go without inclusion. Having a diverse workforce is not enough, and companies should also guarantee suitable working conditions and foster a sense of belonging with all workers, despite their differences.

While a clear vision, strategy and action plan dedicated to diversity and inclusion is a step in the right direction, companies should still enforce measures and monitor progress. Integrating and promoting diversity and inclusion should be commonplace practice in our organisations. These recommendations, together with the Diversity and Inclusion Case Study Tool Box and list of literature references, are available to support the public transport sector.