

PUBLIC TRANSPORT BENEFITS

Mobility for (Y)EU - Benefits for all



1. BUSTLING CITIES

Public transport keeps cities moving. Up to 2020, the sector counted almost 60 billion passenger journeys per year in Europe, with numbers



on the rise. Imagine the traffic if all those trips were made in cars! Congestion already costs the European economy 1% of its GDP, €100 billion per year. Public transport is essential to reduce congestion and as such, it benefits those not using public transport, as their roads are emptier.

Once autonomous vehicles (AV) will be widely available, traffic will likely increase. On the other hand, if AVs become part of the public transport offer and complement mass transit in the city, it will be possible to take every citizen to their destination while getting rid of 80% of cars!

2. CLEAN AIR



Air pollution affects people's health and can lead to decreased respiratory health, pneumonia, cancer, and other diseases. According to

the World Health Organisation (WHO), some 40 million people in the 115 largest cities in the EU are exposed to air exceeding WHO air quality guideline values.

Thanks to public transport, air quality can be improved, as it produces far fewer quantities of air pollutant per passenger kilometre than individual motorised mobility. As buses become increasingly zero-emission, this will further improve air quality in European cities.

It is in everyone's interest to promote public transport: the cleaner air resulting from a stronger use of public transport would benefit every single person in the entire region, not just those who use it.

3. SAVING THE PLANET

Public transport is the most climate-friendly way of traveling besides walking and cycling, as it uses less energy and emits less



CO₂ per passenger-kilometre than private vehicles. According to the European Environmental Agency, public transport by bus is twice as efficient and by rail four times more efficient than cars*. It is not enough to decarbonise cars, as technological change takes time. For citizens' daily mobility, a modal shift to collective public transport and active mobility is needed and can be achieved over a shorter period. The objectives of the European Green Deal for transport will not be met with more public transport.

4. BOOSTING THE ECONOMY



Public transport entails economic benefits that are around five times higher than the money invested in it. Every €1 of value created from

public transport is linked to a further value creation of €4 in the total economy. How? For example, by connecting people to their jobs, training and leisure activities, enabling the clustering of activities and business development, supporting tourism, increasing land and property value, stabilising property values, and helping to regenerate cities or deprived areas through transport connections. Investment in public transport creates 25% more jobs in the wider economy than the same level of investment in roads or highways would produce.

Annual public investment in local public transport accounts for €40 billion. And public transport companies make huge investments themselves! Urban and local public transport services in Europe contribute between €130-150 billion per year to the economy. This equals 1.0-1.2 percent of GDP.

*EEA, 2021, comparison made in terms of CO₂ emissions per passenger-kilometre

Many sectors such as the construction industry, the supply industry, manufacturing, and IT services are recipients of these investments.

Very often, public transport investments benefit local or regional companies, including SMEs, hence boosting economic development in the region.

5. LOCAL JOBS

The public transport sector is amongst the largest employers at local level, employing in total 2 million people in the EU, i.e. 20% of the 10 million people employed in the overall transport industry. Importantly, public transport provides secure local jobs, which cannot be delocalised abroad. Moreover, every direct job in public transport is linked to four jobs in other sectors of the economy.



Diversity is key: public transport companies provide many different types of jobs, from less qualified to highly qualified profiles, and employ staff with very diverse backgrounds. Most companies offer vocational training positions to huge numbers of young people.

6. ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY



Public transport offers equal opportunities to all citizens, independent of their social standing. It provides access to the most essential

functions of the city (schools, hospitals, offices, shops, etc.) and costs 1/16 of what people pay for owning a personal car. A good territorial coverage and the long-term availability of the service is guaranteed by the public authority; there is no risk that the service stops operating from one week to the next. Politically determined fares and social tariffs ensure affordability for all groups of the society.

Public transport, particularly networks reaching out to suburbs and rural areas, contributes to territorial cohesion, while also reducing traffic congestion by commuters. For rural areas, a basic public transport offer – including transport on demand – can ensure access to economic and social opportunities for the region's inhabitants and local businesses.

7. QUALITY OF URBAN LIFE

Public transport systems are much more efficient than individual motorised mobility in terms of using public space efficiently. At the normal 1.3 persons occupancy rates of cars, a full standard bus can take more than 40 cars off the road, a full metro 600 cars and highspeed metro (like RER in Paris) can replace 1,500 cars. Take this in, while considering that you can see up to 30 metros per hour going one way.



Have you ever dreamt of more green spaces in the city, more safe places for people to meet and kids to play? During the Covid-19 lockdown, some European cities experimented with shutting down road lanes and increasing space for pedestrians and cyclists. More public transport and fewer cars would free up public space that is currently dedicated to cars (driving and parking) and could be returned to citizens. Imagine what cities could be like!

8. HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLE



Public transport encourages an active lifestyle, as most journeys involve walking or cycling to, from and within public transport stations. The

health benefits associated with active travel include positive impacts on diabetes, mental health, dementia, obesity and a decreased risk of cardiovascular disease and different types of cancers. Promoting the combination of walking, cycling and public transport can be a useful tool for public health services and positively impact citizens' health!

9. NUMBER ONE IN SAFETY

Public transport is the safest way to travel the city and the continent. Europe still registers 120,000 seriously injured



people due to road accidents and more than 20,000 road fatalities every year, around 47% of which occur in cars and taxis, 17% on motorcycles and mopeds, and 8% on bicycles, compared to around 0% in buses and coaches. Railways are even safer and appear as the safest mode of land transport in the EU. So if you want to achieve "vision zero": support public transport!

10. INNOVATION



Few sectors have developed and applied as many new technologies as public transport did over the years! Public transport companies provided e-mobility long before we discussed electric cars, and fully autonomous metros have been operating in European cities for over 35 years. For the customers, digitalisation and the use of smart phones makes the planning of journeys and the use of collective transport easier and more fun. Currently, the sector is engaged in new research and development, including the use of hydrogen, artificial intelligence, cross-border digital ticketing, and autonomous road vehicles.

... And since you don't need to drive, you can use your time spent on public transport to come up with the new inventions of tomorrow. Are you ready?

11. NOISE REDUCTION

Road traffic remains the biggest source of noise pollution in Europe, which can lead to sleep disturbances, hypertension,



and premature death. If more people took public transport, traffic volumes would decrease, and so would citizens' exposure to noise. People living in city centres that have been turned into pedestrian areas accessible only for buses or trams, notice the difference. Good news is that electric buses will reduce noise emissions even further!

12. CONNECTING PEOPLE

At times of increasing inequality and social division, it is ever more important to strengthen the social fabric across Europe, and public transport can contribute.



Public transport is a place of encounter. It is a place for people with different backgrounds to meet and interact with each other through a smile, a helping gesture, or a discussion. At major events like concerts or soccer games, it's part of the fun to travel together with other fans. Some people have even made new friends or found the love of their life on public transport!

ABOUT UITP EUROPE



UITP is the worldwide association representing all local public transport stakeholders. In the European Union, UITP brings together more than 450 urban, suburban and regional public transport operators and authorities from all Member States. We represent the perspective of short distance passenger transport services by all sustainable modes: bus, regional and suburban rail, metro, light rail, tram and waterborne.

For more information on UITP at the European level please go [HERE](#).

Follow [UITP Europe on Twitter](#).
