

Press Office
Press Release

May xx 2022

TMB to deploy purple officers to help combat sexual harassment and LGBTI-phobia on the metro

Santa Coloma de Gramenet City Council and TMB are to start a pilot test at the municipality's seven stations with the aim of promoting zero tolerance towards any kind of sexist or LGBTI-phobic violence and re-enforcing information and assistance to victims of harassment

Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) will have purple officers at the seven metro stations of Santa Coloma de Gramenet as from 2 May, in an initiative being carried out with the City Council of this municipality as a pilot test that will eventually be extended throughout the metro network. In addition, purple points will be set up for large-scale events on the metro. The presence of these officers, TMB professionals who are already trained in this field, seeks to foster zero tolerance of any manifestation of sexist or LGBTI-phobic violence, re-enforce information and care for victims of harassment and generate equitable public spaces and respectful coexistence.

Purple officers will provide assistance to people who have suffered some type of harassment, an initial help point to give proper support to the victim of any kind of abuse or gender violence. These figures will also make referrals and provide support to the competent authorities in each case. This TMB operation is the result of an initiative from Santa Coloma de Gramenet City Council, which already runs purple points in other municipal establishments, and their expansion into the TMB metro network will mean an exponential growth in the number of people they are able to help.



TMB staff have been trained to act as violet agents / Photo: Pep Herrero (TMB)



Press Office
Press Release

The chair of TMB, Laia Bonet, pointed out that "station staff will be the first point of support for victims, in an initiative that comes in addition to the installation of more cameras on trains, better lighting at stations, and ongoing awareness campaigns on the metro network". She also added that "public transport must be a safe place for everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender, and for TMB this issue is an absolute priority".

The Mayor of Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Núria Parlon, commented that "this new initiative is inspired by other measures carried out in the city, such as the 'Protocol for a Public Space Free of Gender Violence' and 'Santa Coloma, Purple Network', which is made up of more than 300 establishments and entities, making Santa Coloma a role model in the fight against gender violence and LGBTI-phobic violence".

Zero tolerance

This new initiative is part of TMB's social responsibility policies, an international example in the fight against sexual assault and LGBTI-phobia, as demonstrated by the prize the company was recently awarded by the International Transport Union (UITP) for diversity, inclusion and gender equality.

This network of purple officers is a pioneering initiative on public transport, coming in addition to other measures that include completing the installation of cameras – currently numbering more than 8,000 (between trains and stations) – with real-time transmission to all trains on the metro network by 2025, and upgrading the lighting in the facilities. In addition, all buses will have online video surveillance through a project already under way and set to end in the first quarter of next year.

TMB already has prevention, detection and intervention protocols against LGBTI-phobia and against sexual and gender-based harassment on the metro and bus networks. These are protocols that enjoy the collaboration of organisations working with women and the LGBTI community, such as the Observatory against Homophobia, plus the support of institutions such as Barcelona Provincial Council, through its Area for Social Cohesion, Citizenship and Welfare.

Likewise, awareness campaigns will continue to combat anti-social behaviour and will be geared towards empowering victims and warning assailants about the consequences of their actions, as well as generating a general sense of shared responsibility in this area. 'Santa Coloma, Purple Network'.

This initiative is also part of the policies resulting from the commitment of the city of Santa Coloma to preventing and eradicating gender violence and LGBTI-phobic violence. During the pandemic, Santa Coloma consolidated various measures under the 'Santa Coloma, Purple Network' programme to re-enforce the 'Protocol for a public space free of gender violence'. These include deploying a team of purple officers in the city's



Transports
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Press Office Press Release

neighbourhoods (#LaCIBAmbTu) to approach women who are experiencing a situation of violence, and provide them with resources and specific assistance services.

On the other hand, the network of safe spaces and purple shelters has been re-enforced, with the participation of over 300 establishments, entities, social clubs and associations in the city to contribute to a public space free of gender violence, which anyone can contact if they are facing or witness sexist aggression and/or LGBTI-phobic aggression. This innovative initiative, the only one of its kind in Spain, has seen community participation and involvement multiply fourfold since it was launched two and a half years ago (November 2019).



When there are events with a massive influx of users, violet spaces will also be installed / Photo: Pep Herrero (TMB)