

Transport



Relevance of gender in the policy area

Transportation facilitates access to the labour market, healthcare and education infrastructure as well as to other services and infrastructures necessary for improving the welfare of individuals and households. Despite the fact that transport projects and policies are often considered to equally benefit women and men, there is a large body of professional literature emphasising that transport is not gender neutral. According to these studies, gender is a significant factor in accounting for differences in mobility and travel behaviour.

Firstly, mobility is experienced differently by women and men, as they use different modes of transport for different purposes and in different ways. In general, women tend to have more complex patterns of mobility (usually at a local level), as they have to combine their caring role with their income activities. For example, in most cases, women are responsible for accompanying their children (and other dependents) to different locations (such as day-care centres, school or leisure activities). This may require the use of multiple modes of transport, as the trips are generally shorter, more frequent and more dispersed during the day. Men, on the other hand, tend to make fewer and more direct trips daily, such as to/from their workplace, often on their own and for a single purpose, and often during peak rush-hour times. Furthermore, women and men have a different attitude towards mobility. Women are more willing to adopt more sustainable transport means (e.g. public transport, walking or cycling) than men, not only because of their lower rate of motorisation, but mostly because they pay more attention to the environmental impacts and related ecological issues.

Another noticeable gender difference is in the times when men and women travel: because women are far more likely to be part-time workers, they travel off-peak more often than men. In addition, fear of violence and aggression means that women are far less willing than men to travel after dark. Indeed, women are more concerned than men about their safety while travelling. For example, women prefer not to travel at night, when lighting is poor, for fear of physical and/or sexual assault. Similarly, overcrowded public transport can increase the risk of sexual harassment.

It is also worth emphasising that there are gender differences in time use and time poverty. Women's multiple roles often entail dealing with numerous daily tasks. As a result, women often experience time poverty, which impacts significantly on how much time women can allocate for travel: where they go, for how long, for what purpose, and what trips they schedule. Often, women's travel has to be undertaken in between, or simultaneously with, other daily household tasks (e.g. taking children to school, running household errands, taking care of elderly family members, etc.). The lack of availability and limited performance of transport systems and services thus place different burdens on women and men, with women more likely to forgo their mobility in order to save time.

Second, women and men have different access to means of transport. Men are more likely to have a car, while women are more reliant on slower, non-motorised transport or intermediate modes of transport (such as bicycles). In urban areas, women are generally more dependent on public transport.

Third, women and men have a different behaviour when driving. With regard to the use of cars, fewer women than men in Europe own or use a car. However, women who drive cars are more attentive to other road users and traffic rules, and have fewer accidents than men. According to the INFSTTAR and WIT study, *She Moves: Women's Issues in Transportation*, the relationship between risky driving behaviour and involvement in accidents is more often associated with men than women. Among men car drivers and motorcyclists, the rate of those already punished for speeding is higher by 10 percentage points than among women.

Transport remains an area influenced by a set of gender inequalities, which are as follows:

- gaps in access to transport infrastructure and services
- segregation within the transport labour market
- weak representation of women in the decision-making process in the transport sector
- gender-based violence in transport, which mostly affects women.

Issues of gender inequalities in the policy area

Gaps in access to transport infrastructure and services

Literature on gender and transport pinpoints that existing transport systems are not geared towards women's needs. On the contrary, most transport systems around the world are biased towards the travel needs of men. In urban areas, for instance, transport systems often tend to target radial commuter corridors going straight to city centres. This mostly benefits peak-hour male commuter patterns and the needs of car and motorcycle users, while failing to address women's travel needs and patterns. Furthermore, in rural areas, transport planning has mostly focused on road networks and long-distance transport, neglecting transport solutions for many rural women who lack or have less access to motorised transport.

The privatisation of public transport also impacts more on women than men, because bus companies operating under competitive market conditions are not usually interested in serving the less lucrative routes and connections on which women often depend. Therefore, these routes are more at risk of being cut. However, where services are maintained, this is often accompanied by increased fares, which impacts more on women, whose income is generally lower than men's.

In addition, fares calculated on a per journey and per person basis also disadvantage more women than men, as women's travel patterns are characterised by shorter and more frequent journeys, with multiple stops (often with accompanying dependents and other family members). This means they face higher costs when using public transport which, combined with their lower income level, often results in further restricting women's access to this means of transport.

Women also face a higher share of the transport burden (namely time and monetary costs) to fulfil their economic, social and domestic roles. The costs of unreliable and inflexible transport systems are often borne disproportionately by women, who often cannot afford the lost time. For instance, women may turn down employment opportunities further away from home if the transport system does not enable them to travel to and from work in time to also meet their domestic family care obligations, or provide ample space and flexibility for women to travel with dependents and household goods. This leads them to accept lower-paid local job opportunities or informal income sources closer to or at home, so as to combine their care and work responsibilities.

Segregation in the labour market

Despite an increase in women's participation in the labour market in all sectors, the transport sector remains a segregated field where men predominate as drivers/pilots, technicians, or in occupations involving physical work and a heavy workload, whereas women predominate in service-related and administrative jobs. Furthermore, men work longer hours and account for more full-time jobs in transport, whereas women tend to opt for more flexible work arrangements, which have restricted opportunities. In transport, career prospects are better for men than for women. Access to traditionally men-dominated jobs remains problematic, despite the fact that both women and men have equal access to vocational training. This leads to situations where women are trained in technical professions but cannot obtain a job to match their level of qualification. All these factors contribute to deepening the pay gap between women and men in transport.

Gaps in women's participation in decision-making processes

Men continue to predominate in decision-making in the transport sector. According to a WISE study about women's employment in the urban public transport sector, the share of women on management boards is less than 20% and women represent only 9.3% of drivers. This means there is an unbalanced participation of women and men in planning and deciding on policy actions, which may affect both women and men citizens. Coupled with the lack of capacity on gender issues in the transport sector, this results in reduced gender mainstreaming in the planning and implementation of transport policies, programmes and projects. Ensuring women's participation in the transport sector therefore goes hand in hand with capacity-building initiatives on gender mainstreaming in transport for all actors in the sector.

Gender-based violence in transport

Public transport services often fall short of the quality, safety and comfort measures required by different target groups such as women, disabled people, the elderly and children. When it comes to safety issues, it should be noted that women are more exposed than men to gender-based violence when using forms of transportation (e.g. buses, taxis, etc.), and in particular to sexual harassment. This constrains women's mobility and their independent use of public and intermediate means of transport.

Some European countries, in their efforts to mainstream gender into transport have implemented measures directed at improving the safety of the transport system, accounting for women's specific safety needs. A few of those measures included removing bushes and shrubbery adjacent to bus stops; eliminating dark access ways to bus stops; introducing special taxis for women and women-dedicated park areas; training transport professionals to deal with sexual harassment in transport and others.

See section on "Practical examples of gender mainstreaming in transport" for detailed information on this topic.

Gender equality policy objectives at eu and international level

EU level

European Commission

Transport policy was included, as one of the common policies, in the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Since then the European Commission has taken measures to strengthen the common transport policy in EU Member States. However, recognition of the links between gender and transport has only recently begun to emerge in the Commission's actions and transport policy. The 2011 Commission staff working document accompanying the White Paper Roadmap to a single European transport area: Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system (2011) makes reference to the promotion of gender equality in the following policies in this field:

Promotion of quality jobs and better working conditions

The Commission acknowledges that the share of women workers in the transport sector is lower than the average in the economy. It plans to undertake specific measures to render the sector more attractive to women workers.

Mobile road transport workers

The Commission plans to adopt a Social Code addressed to mobile workers and employers to make them liable or co-liable – as appropriate – for compliance with common minimum working standards. The code will cover the following issues: terms and conditions of employment; health insurance and care; a better organisation of work and resting periods for drivers, to enable the reconciliation of their work and family life; and gender equality.

Working conditions across modes of transport

The Commission maintains that positive spillover can be expected from the exchange of best practices between modes of transport in fields such as promoting gender equality, preventing labour accidents and investing in training. The skills required of workers in different modes of transport can be similar, notably in terms of logistics, where training has to meet a rapid pace of technological and economic change. An improvement in the qualifications of staff in the logistics professions would therefore result in a better performance and more informed decisions. It would also increase labour mobility and career perspectives within and between the modes of transport.

The European Commission's intention to strengthen gender mainstreaming in EU transport policy is also demonstrated by its request for an Opinion from the European Economic and Social Committee on the issue of women and transport in 2015. According to this Opinion, the new Investment Plan for Europe, which aims to promote growth and jobs, must mainstream gender equality by eliminating existing gender impediments and developing a culture of engagement and inclusiveness for both women and men to be equally active in all aspects of transport. Furthermore, it pledges greater recognition of, and prominence to, gender in EU transport policy.

European Parliament

In a similar way to the European Commission, the European Parliament also promotes actions to increase gender equality in the transport field, especially with regard to women's participation in the transport sector labour market. In its Resolution of 9 September 2015 on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport: Taking stock and the way forward towards sustainable mobility, the European Parliament stresses that measures should be taken to boost women's participation in the transport labour market, remove possible existing barriers and ensure equal treatment of men and women by addressing existing remuneration and advancement gaps.

Furthermore, in its 2012 Resolution on the role of women in the green economy, the European Parliament acknowledges that women, as a consequence of the current gender power structure (see above on women's uneven distribution in transport decision-making positions), do not have the same control over, or access to, transport systems as men. The Resolution underlines that it is necessary to introduce more efficient means of public transport, more walking and cycling routes and shorter distances to services, and to develop and enhance knowledge of and innovation in environmentally friendly means of transportation in order to improve women's transport opportunities. Moreover, it calls on Member States to significantly strengthen local public transport by increasing the quantity and quality of transport services, by improving the safety, comfort and physical accessibility of different modes of transport and facilities. It also calls on Member States to provide integrated and additional systems of transport, including to small towns and rural areas, thus strengthening the ability of women, the disabled and the elderly to travel, and in turn enabling their greater social inclusion and enhancing their living conditions. The Resolution also stresses that investment in sustainable transport systems must take into account the fact that women's and men's perception of public spaces is different and is based on different risk assessments, which means that safe environments in the transport system must be prioritised for both women and men.

International level

United Nations

The UN introduced gender issues into the transport agenda in 2008, with the Report to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Executive Committee on the Implementation of the Priorities of the Unece Reform for Strengthening Some Activities of the Committee, prepared by the Inland Transport Committee.

The report underlines that little attention appears to have been paid to women's needs in transport development projects worldwide, even though transport can make a major difference in increasing women's productivity and in promoting gender equality.

Furthermore, it maintains that making transport policy more responsive to the needs of women requires developing a structured approach to understanding their needs, identifying instruments to address those needs, analysing the costs and benefits of those instruments, and establishing an appropriate policy framework. It also requires that women are represented at each step of the planning and design process of transport investments. Government agencies and NGOs, community-based organisations and women's groups that can be used in planning and implementation should be identified and consulted.

Furthermore, in 2015 the UN adopted the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals, which builds on the Millennium Development Goals and aims to end poverty, hunger and inequality, take action on climate change and the environment, improve access to health and education, and build strong institutions and partnerships. Making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable is one of the UN sustainable development goals. In order to achieve this general objective, the UN aims, inter alia, to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems and improve road safety for all by 2030, notably by expanding public transport with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations: women, children, people with disabilities and older people.

Policy cycle in transport

How and when? Transport and the integration of the gender dimension into the policy cycle

The gender dimension can be integrated in all phases of the policy cycle. For a detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in each phase of the policy cycle [click here](#).

Below, you can find useful resources and practical examples for mainstreaming gender into transport policies. They are organised according to the most relevant phase of the policy cycle they may serve.

Practical examples of gender mainstreaming in transport

UK

UK statistics on transport gather sex-disaggregated data. In 2000, the Department for Transport published its first Guidance and Checklist for Gender Auditing on Public Transport. The checklist Women and Public Transport is directed at providers (management) and is intended to inspire them and provide support in carrying out a gender audit in their company and of their services. In 2006 the Department for Transport implemented the Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan 2007 – 2010 as a requirement of the Equality Act 2006 in order to oblige all public authorities to produce a gender equality scheme to eliminate sex discrimination and sexual harassment, and promote gender equality.

Sweden

In 2002, gender mainstreaming in public transport was declared one of the major objectives of the Swedish transport policy. Following the national policy objectives, in 2011 the city of Malmö began a process of mainstreaming gender in the sustainable transport policy. The municipality carried out a series of consultations with secondary school students, commercial employees and representatives of various free time activities, representatives of female-dominated workplaces, administrators and politicians to discuss gender issues in public transport. Following these meetings several measures have been implemented. One of these consisted of improving the safety of the public transport system, by taking measures such as removing bushes and shrubbery adjacent to bus stops and eliminating dark access ways, such as tunnels, to the stops. In Kalmar, night-time security has been improved by having night buses drop off passengers in between regular bus stops (nattstopp = night stop), so that passengers (women and men) can be closer to their destinations.

Furthermore, in the recent planning process for 2 tram lines in Malmo, specific actions were designed to ensure that women and men participate equally in the planning process. For instance, specific methodologies have been designed to encourage women to make their voices heard during the planning meetings.

Austria

In the context of the Gender Mainstreaming Model Districts project, GIS-based analytic maps were developed for all municipal districts of Vienna. These maps comprise both qualities and deficiencies of the respective footway networks. For example, the 'network qualities' parts of the maps show sufficiently wide (projecting) pavements, while the 'network deficiencies' parts inter alia feature too narrow pavements or accident danger spots for pedestrians. Important destinations within districts (public transport stops, social and healthcare facilities, etc.) provide information about expected pedestrian volumes and any special requirements. These district maps are a useful decision-making tool for planning footpath networks at district level and support the setting of priorities for future measures. The district maps are regularly updated by Municipal Department 18 (MA 18) – Urban Planning and Development and can be requested for internal use.

Italy

In 2005, the City of Bolzano adopted a time and schedules plan to improve reconciliation of family time and working time. In line with the plan objectives, the city authority has developed a series of initiatives taking into consideration women's needs in the city transport system:

- 'Taxi rosa' (pink taxi) is a dedicated taxi service available to all women in the evening hours and at night between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. (with an extension, from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., for women over 65) at discounted rates (€3 discount per journey).
 - Women-dedicated parking areas Parcheggi Rosa ('pink parking') are reserved around the city: they are easily accessible (i.e. close to public facilities and commercial stores; avoidance of stairs, etc.), well-lit and near exits in car parks.
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France

The French government has taken several policy measures to fight gender-based violence, and, in particular, sexual harassment on public transport means. On 9 July 2015, the French Government presented the National Plan of Action for fighting sexual harassment on public transport means. The fight against sexual harassment focuses on the following main priorities:

- The Plan will define and measure sexual harassment and sexual violence in public spaces, and in particular in the public transport sector.
- It will also fight this phenomena jointly with transport operators through: adapting the alarm system together with the transport actors and communicate it to all actors in this field; training professionals in the transport sector to deal with sexual harassment and sexual violence in the transport sector and to guide victims of such violence; innovate the organization of the public transport system to better take into account women's needs (e.g. stops on demand; longer hours of the public transport means; etc.); reducing the exposition of both women and men to sexual commercials (slogans, images, etc.).
- The Plan will improve knowledge of public institutions on this phenomenon so they can better recognise it and deal with it by: organising a national awareness-raising campaign constructed jointly with the civil society; integrate fighting against sexual harassment with the public policies for education to equality and sexuality; ensure a better application of the law; ensure the necessary human and financial resources to implement the National Action Plan.

In addition to the Plan, a national awareness-raising campaign against sexual harassment on the public transport means has been implemented by the French Government.

Timeline

The key milestones of the transport policy are presented below.

Treaty of Rome.

Read the Treaty of Rome [here](#).

1957 - 1957

Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council

[Directive 1999/62/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures.

1999 - 1999

White Paper European transport policy for 2010: Time to decide

Read the white paper [here](#).

2001 - 2001

Proposal for a Council Directive of 5 July 2005 on Passenger car related taxes.

Read the proposal [here](#).

2005 - 2005

Directive 2006/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council

[Directive 2006/38/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 amending Directive 1999/62/EC on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures.

2006 - 2006

Communication on "Towards a rail network giving priority to freight"

Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament – [Towards a rail network giving priority to freight](#) {SEC(2007) 1322} {SEC(2007) 1324} {SEC(2007) 1325}

2007 - 2007

Communication on Freight transport logistics action plan

Communication from the Commission on [Freight transport logistics action plan](#) {SEC(2007) 1320} {SEC(2007) 1321}

2007 - 2007

European Parliament Resolution on the Community Strategy to reduce CO2 emissions

European Parliament Resolution of 24 October 2007 on the [Community Strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions](#) from passenger cars and light commercial vehicles.

2007 - 2007

Communication on Single European Sky II: towards more sustainable and better performing aviation

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 25 June 2008: [Single European Sky II: towards more sustainable and better performing aviation](#).

2008 - 2008

Proposal for a Directive on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures

COM (2008) 436: Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 1999/62/EC on the [charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures](#) {SEC(2008) 2208} {SEC(2008) 2209}.

2008 - 2008

Communication on Greening Transport

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on [Greening Transport](#) {SEC(2008) 2206}.

2008 - 2008

Communication on Strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018.

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – [Strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018](#).

2009 - 2009

Communication on "A sustainable future for transport: Towards an integrated, technology-led and user friendly system"

Communication from the Commission on ["A sustainable future for transport: Towards an integrated, technology-led and user friendly system"](#) COM(2009) 279 final.

2009 - 2009

White Paper "Roadmap to a single European transport area – Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system"

White Paper ["Roadmap to a single European transport area – Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system"](#) COM(2011) 144 final.

2011 - 2011

Commission staff working document accompanying the White Paper

Commission [staff working document](#) accompanying the White Paper – Roadmap to a single European transport area – Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system.

2011 - 2011

Communication on "A Resource-efficient Europe – Flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 Strategy".

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on ["A Resource-efficient Europe – Flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 Strategy"](#).

2011 - 2011

Communication on "A new era for aviation – Opening the aviation market to the civil use of remotely-piloted aircraft systems in a safe and sustainable manner".

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on ["A new era for aviation – Opening the aviation market to the civil use of remotely-piloted aircraft systems in a safe and sustainable manner"](#).

2014 - 2014

Current policy priorities at EU level

The 2011 "[Roadmap to a single European transport area: Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system](#)", sets the main priorities of the EU transport policy:

- reduce the EU's dependence on imported oil;
- achieve essentially CO₂-free city mobility in major urban centres by 2030;
- cut transport carbon emissions by 60% by 2050.

In detail, the roadmap identifies the following goals for guiding policy action:

- reduce the use of petrol and diesel cars in cities by half by 2030, phasing them out completely by 2050 and achieve CO₂-free city mobility by 2030
- increase the use of low-carbon sustainable fuels in air transport to 40% by 2050
- reduce EU CO₂ emissions from ship fuels by 40% by 2050
- switch 30% of road freight travelling over 300 km to rail and waterborne transport by 2030, and over 50% by 2050
- triple the existing high-speed rail network by 2030, the majority of medium-distance passenger transport should go by rail by 2050
- establish a fully functioning, EU-wide TEN-T core network integrating all forms of transport by 2030
- connect major airports to rail and core seaports and rail and inland waterways by 2050
- introduce traffic management systems for the various modes of transport, such as rail and road
- develop a multimodal transport information management and payment system by 2020
- halve road casualties by 2020 and reduce these to almost zero by 2050
- fully apply the 'user pays' (i.e. those who use infrastructure pay for it) and 'polluter pays' (i.e. those who pollute pay for it) principles.

As to [TEN-T](#), the main specific current policy priorities foresee the completion by 2030 of the Core Network, structured around nine multimodal Core Network Corridors and, by 2050, of the Comprehensive Network in order to facilitate accessibility to all European regions.[3]

Transport is one of the focuses of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The "[Resource-efficient Europe – Flagship initiative](#)" aims to increase certainty for investment and innovation by forging an agreement on the long-term vision and ensuring that all relevant policies factor in resource efficiency in a balanced manner. It provides a long-term framework for action in many policy areas, among which is transport. When it comes to transport, the initiative seeks to create a competitive transport system that will increase mobility, remove major barriers in key areas and fuel growth and employment by 2050.

Furthermore, transport initiatives are also the core focus of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for Transport and TEN-T Programme which aim to support investments in building new transport infrastructure in Europe or rehabilitating and upgrading the existing one.

Want to know more?