

The Future Is
**PUBLIC
TRANSPORT**

ENGLISH

Public transport global coalition statement



INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORT
WORKERS'
FEDERATION

We need to give everyone access to public transport if we're going to stop the climate crisis

Using public transport, whether it is riding a bus, a tram or the subway instead of driving, is **one of the most effective actions that people can take to help stop the climate crisis**, the greatest threat to humanity according to the recent IPCC report.⁰¹ Public transport is a simple solution to a complex global problem. But without equitable access, not everyone is able to use public transport.

Every person living in an urban area should have access to safe, frequent, affordable and accessible public transport within a 10 minute walk from their home.⁰² We must invest in a green and just recovery that **collectively doubles the proportion of public transport journeys in cities**, and advances a just transition to zero-emissions public transport **by 2030.**⁰³ Without this transformation, it simply won't be possible for countries to deliver on the urgent goal to halve emissions this decade and limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C.

Worldwide, millions of people have already made the switch to public transport, and new research shows **more than three quarters of residents** in global cities - from Jakarta to Johannesburg, from London to Milan - support national governments prioritising investment in public transport in their COVID-19 economic recovery packages.⁰⁴ Public transport is also essential to enable residents

in peri-urban, rural areas and informal settlements access employment and vital services in cities, yet only half of the world's population has convenient access to it.⁰⁵

This is a global call for greater investment in public transport, without which the world won't meet its climate goals. We, as leaders of some of the largest cities on the planet, as leaders of trade unions and leaders of transport authorities, are committed to improving and increasing access to our public transport systems. Workers and civil society organisations are mobilising support. We call on national governments to join us in taking the action needed to deliver it.

Emissions have to reduce drastically now. **Transport is responsible for a quarter of CO2 emissions from burning fossil fuels.**⁰⁶ **The improvement, expansion and de-carbonisation of public transport is one of the most immediate and powerful levers we have to cut greenhouse gas emissions.** Sustainable, long-term investment in public transport will also create and maintain **decent jobs, access to work and a better health and quality of life for all** in a post-pandemic world, achieving the aims of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 11 to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Stronger public transport will benefit:

01 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_Full_Report.pdf

02 This vision is inspired by ITDP's 'People Near Frequent Transit' indicator: <https://naindicators.itdp.org/>

03 Data from [McKinsey](#) suggests 40-80% of miles travelled in cities needs to be from walking, cycling and public transport to limit global heating to 1.5 degrees. Using current ratios this is roughly 30-60% for public transport. Pre-pandemic data (2019) from Google's Environmental Insights Explorer indicates that an average of 29% of distance covered across 60 cities is by public transport

04 Polling data conducted on behalf of C40 by Clear Path Strategies

05 UNDESA, SDG11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>

06 <https://www.wri.org/insights/everything-you-need-know-about-fastest-growing-source-global-emissions-transport>

The economy

Public transport is vital for city economies. **It provides access to more and better paid jobs, and gives employers access to the skills they need.** Good quality public transport attracts businesses to cities and enables them to thrive, as it frees up valuable space for deliveries and servicing.⁰⁷ It also directly provides jobs for millions of people. Investing in public transport generates 30% more jobs than building roads, and could create up to 4.6 million high quality jobs just in the nearly 100 C40 cities,⁰⁸ reviving economies post pandemic (for example, 403,000 in Jakarta, 144,000 in London and 23,000 in Milan). By supporting a just transition to decent work, including greater involvement for public transport workers, formal and informal, we can ensure those who have been at the forefront of the pandemic have a central place in our future. And by providing equitable access to employment opportunities, we can increase women's participation in the workforce. Investment in public transport is investment in cities and beyond: for example London Underground's supply chain supports 43,000 jobs, 68 per cent of which are outside London.⁰⁹

Society

Equitable access to public transport is a cornerstone of equality. Everyone in a city benefits from public transport, whether it's through accessing work, education, healthcare, culture and entertainment, or through reduced traffic congestion, air pollution and road crashes. **Private transport generates social costs for the community 28 times higher than those of public transport.**¹⁰ In developing countries, informal transport systems are the most prevalent and fast expanding modes of transportation.¹¹ Investment in sustainable mobil-

ity infrastructure and staff will significantly improve transport systems, ensuring that women and girls, migrants, young people, older people, and people with disabilities as well as precarious and informal workers can fully participate in society and work in safe and secure environments, with better air quality, improved health, improved incomes and social security; all of which can help build their resilience to the climate crisis and any future pandemics. Public transport should play an essential role in supporting the livelihoods of the urban working poor, and provide affordable and flexible services, including the ability to carry goods to and from workplaces, markets and customers.

The climate

Enhancing public transport and designing cities around it in order to reduce car dependency could contribute **20-45% of the total emissions reductions required to limit global heating to 1.5°C. By 2030, a mode share of active travel and public transport of between 40% and 80% is needed** - dependent on the type of city¹² - alongside electrification of vehicles. Investing in public transport not only increases public transport mode share, but also increases active travel as people walk and cycle to access networks. Prioritising investment to improve and expand public transport, thereby shifting journeys from cars, will make the most significant contribution to reducing emissions. We must also advance in decarbonising public transport: this is why many C40 cities have already committed to procuring only zero-emissions buses from 2025.¹³

Our health

When measures recommended by health authorities are implemented, the risk of catching COVID-19

07 <https://www.centreforcities.org/reader/delivering-change-making-transport-work-for-cities/transport-essential-growth-cities/>

08 <https://thefutureispublictransport.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/C40-The-Future-of-Public-Transport-Research.pdf>

09 <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/financial-sustainability-plan-11-january-2021.pdf>

10 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/248515960_Transport_cost_analysis_A_case_study_of_the_total_costs_of_private_and_public_transport_in_Auckland

11 <https://www.ssatp.org/publication/myths-and-realities-informal-public-transport-developing-countries-approaches-improving>

12 [McKinsey](#) found that strategies for urban mobility should consider city differences in per capita income and population density. (Page 46-47)

13 <https://www.c40.org/other/green-and-healthy-streets>

on public transport is very low.¹⁴ Moreover, better air quality will reduce the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, creating healthier cities. **Public transport remains one of the safest ways to move around the city:** it is ten times safer per mile than traveling by car¹⁵; and public transport makes streets safer by reducing the dominance of motor traffic. People who use public transport are more physically active than people who drive.¹⁶ We must ensure that women, girls and minority groups - indeed everyone - can use and work in public transport without fear of violence: investments should put in place the right measures so it is always a safe environment from every point of view.

The use of public transport has changed in the past two years.

Following the drop in travel resulting from COVID-19, we are now seeing consistent increases in urban residents' expected ridership post-pandemic.¹⁷ People don't want less public transport but more: **more widespread and frequent, more efficient and connected**, cleaner, faster and with more space on board. This can be achieved when investment is made available, and cities are already leading the way. **Jakarta**, for example, has a target that public transport services should be within 500 metres of 95% of their residents' homes by 2022.

Cities, metropolises and territories need immediate, long-term and stable governmental financial support.

Mayors, trade unions, and transport authorities believe that the best approach is to work together on just transition pathways towards creating decent employment opportunities that incorporate informal and formal workers whose jobs will change in the transition to electrified public transport. **These workers**, who have been on the frontline of the pandemic guaranteeing millions of people the ability to move **have the skills and knowledge that can improve the operations of public transport and**

make the introduction and the maintenance of new mobility solutions a smoother process. An experienced, well-trained and motivated workforce is essential to rolling out the public transport systems that we need.

To deliver the vision that we share as mayors from across the globe, transit and public services unions and workers, climate activists and our fellow citizens, investing in public transport must be made a priority for national economic recovery plans, and increasing public transport mode share must be made a key goal in climate plans. The current funds allocated for post COVID-19 public transport recovery are not sufficient.

C40 research shows that **\$208 billion a year is needed every year this decade to deliver this mass transit transformation for the nearly 100 C40 cities that together contribute to 25% of the global economy.** All cities must be supported in order to double the proportion of public transport journeys globally this decade. We urge national leaders to urgently **raise their ambition on public transport in line with this vision as part of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)**, and immediately set out on a path towards delivering it within a year as part of their economic plans, using appropriate and agile legislative and financial tools to **deliver the scale of public investment required for a significant commitment to modal shift to public transport.** As an integrated system, public transport requires a holistic government approach. National governments, local authorities, mayors, and international institutions must work together to ensure equitable public transport access for all.

Let's transform our streets into places of opportunity for everyone, putting people at the heart of our cities and building a green and just transition by investing in the backbone of urban mobility. The future is public transport.

Glasgow, November 10th 2021

14 <https://www.uitp.org/publications/public-transport-is-covid-safe/>

15 <https://www.apta.com/research-technical-resources/research-reports/public-transit-is-key-strategy-in-advancing-vision-zero>

16 <https://academic.oup.com/jpubhealth/article/41/2/222/5035071>

17 Polling data conducted on behalf of C40 by Clear Path Strategies

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