



Public transport: Not just jobs for engineers! A wide range of job opportunities in a dynamic sector

The public transport sector is changing its corporate culture from that of a fleet manager with a production focus to that of a service industry fully focused on customers, with new management and business models to attract entrepreneurship, capital and talent, as stated in UITP's sector strategy. The sector is becoming more dynamic and diversified and hence needs new talents with different educational backgrounds ranging from law, business, communication, marketing, urban planning and psychology to engineering.

Offer your students wider career opportunities through a more international and multidisciplinary approach!

Set of recommendations for universities on the subjects that should be addressed in order to best suit the needs of public transport companies

1. Adapt to the new career possibilities in the public transport sector

In general, it is mainly engineering faculties that offer public transport studies while the sector's needs and job opportunities have evolved. University programmes should reflect the fact that, in addition to engineers, new profiles – such as lawyers, economists, urban planners and psychologists – are needed in public transport companies. More reference should be made to urban mobility and public transport in those programmes. In addition, dissertations and theses related to public transport topics and internships in the public transport sector should be promoted in all faculties.

2. Multidisciplinary should be enhanced in public transport courses and programmes

Polyvalence is highly valued by public transport operators. A multidisciplinary approach to public transport study programmes is thus required, as they should also address diverse aspects of the public transport sector such as legal frameworks, financing structures, IT solutions, security policies or sustainable development. The importance of marketing activities and knowledge of political affairs should also be underlined. Universities need to keep in mind that the public transport sector also needs decision-makers. Knowledge of English is a very important tool as well.

3. Courses require an international approach

The public transport sector increasingly needs people with public transport training who have an international approach and international skills in a context where competitive tendering is becoming more widespread and international public transport operators are growing. Student exchanges with foreign universities or foreign internships, of at least 6 to 12 months' duration, should be organised. An international approach could also be introduced into the programme. Foreign experts and professors could be invited to give special lectures and report on international case studies. Cooperation between the different universities inside the UITP Academic Network could be increased. A closer collaboration with public transport companies could also be implemented.

Suggestions to improve the visibility of the public transport sector as an employer and enhance communication between universities and public transport companies

Generate interest in public transport studies and careers

Joint actions by academics and companies are needed (e.g. the promotion of a Masters course in public transport) and cooperation should be increased.

List of cooperation examples between universities and public transport companies

- Invitation of public transport professionals as visiting professors or during seminars.
- Technical visits.
- Internships at public transport operators or organising authorities with job opportunities afterwards.
- Public transport professionals as mentors to supervise research and theses, which can lead to common projects regarding data collection, technology needs, etc.
- Inclusion of real case studies through cooperation with public transport authorities and operators.
- Involvement of public transport operators or authorities in university Career Days.

Promote the fact that job opportunities in the public transport sector have changed

Promotion of public transport careers should be made beyond engineering faculties. Indeed, public transport companies do not only require engineers but also decision-makers.

Professors in social science/ soft skill faculties should be encouraged to raise their students' interest in the sector by addressing public transport topics in their courses. The public transport sector needs political and social knowledge.

Adapt educational programmes addressing public transport

Educational programmes must reflect the change in the human resources needs of the public transport sector and must develop a multidisciplinary approach. Law, Social Science and Economics faculties should play a greater role in transport studies.



The International Association of Public Transport, UITP, has over 3,200 members in 90 countries throughout the world and represents the interests of key players in this sector. Its membership includes transport authorities, operators, both private and public, in all modes of collective passenger transport, the industry, universities and research institutes. UITP addresses the economic, technical, organisational and management aspects of passenger transport, as well as the development of policy for mobility and public transport worldwide. UITP's current strategy for the sector is to double the worldwide public transport market share by 2025.

Its academic members form the UITP Academic Network, which organised a seminar with public transport practitioners to discuss the contents of educational programmes incorporating a public transport dimension and to enhance the visibility and appeal of careers in the public transport sector for students. Indeed public transport operators and authorities are potential future employers for university graduates specialised in transport studies or those that have been familiarised with public transport within their studies and as such are well aware of the specific knowledge, skills and abilities required to access jobs within their companies. This is why we are delighted to share the outcome of this seminar with you and hope that your university will benefit from this information.

**Making educational programmes
match the public transport sector's
recruitment needs**

