

Gender-related issues in the urban mobility sector in the Canton of Sarajevo

Study and recommendations for improvements



Authors

Amina Dizdar

Program Coordinator on the Women's Rights program
Sarajevo Open Centre
amina@soc.ba

Dajana Bakić

Operational Manager
Sarajevo Open Centre
dajana@soc.ba

Emina Bošnjak

Executive Director
Sarajevo Open Centre
emina@soc.ba

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all the women who took their time to respond to the questionnaire on gendered aspects of urban mobility, providing valuable insights into the lived experiences of women in the Sarajevo Canton.

This publication has been financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Responsibility for the content rests entirely with the creators. Sida do not necessarily share the expressed views and interpretations.

Glossary

Bosnia and Herzegovina - BiH

Canton of Sarajevo

Centrotrans - Private transport company

Community of Madrid

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ

Environmental and Social Action Plan - ESAP

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - EBRD

EU Energy Strategy 2030

Gender Action Plan - GAP

Gender-based violence and harassment - GBVH

GRAS - Public company for transport in the Sarajevo Canton

Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning Design

Law on Public Private Partnership

Madrid Municipal Transport Company (EMT)

Madrid Strategy for Equal Opportunities

Metro de Madrid

Ministry of Transport of the Sarajevo Canton

Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Infrastructure (Spain)

Sarajevo Open Centre

Sexual harassment

Spanish Transsexual Association (ATET-Transexualia)

Sustainable development goals - SDGs

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the Sarajevo Canton and the city of Sarajevo (SUMP)

Urban mobility

Wiener Stadtwerke

Wiener Linien

Wiener Lokalbahnen

World Bank

Executive summary

Sarajevo's urban transport system, once advanced but then devastated during the war, has been patched up to serve its users. However, the increased use of motor vehicles, inadequate public transport, and environmental concerns have led to dissatisfaction, with heavy traffic during rush hours and reliability issues within the system.

The Canton of Sarajevo has significant decision-making power over urban mobility, focusing on sustainable development and aligning its initiatives with the EU Energy Strategy 2030 and sustainable development goals (SDGs). Despite the efforts outlined in the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), gender equality is inadequately addressed, and broader issues such as long wait times and travel distances are overlooked, impacting women's experiences and necessitating a more inclusive urban planning approach. The plan also overlooks the urgent need for gender-sensitive public transport to enhance women's mobility and autonomy. The Canton of Sarajevo's Gender Action Plan (GAP) also falls short in recognising and addressing gender gaps in traffic and urban mobility.

A survey undertaken by the Sarajevo Open Centre in September 2023, with the aim of understanding issues faced by women, was answered by 213 women from the Canton of Sarajevo aged predominantly 35 to 50. The survey included questions on safety and accessibility for mothers, pregnant women, and older women and offered a worrisome view of the vulnerability of women and of gender disparity, both of which as yet remain unaddressed. Expensive tickets in Bosnia and Herzegovina disproportionately affect those families with a single working member and multiple children. Daily public transport use by women is common (49.8 per cent), with 52.6 per cent needing multiple transport modes within a single day. Women usually spend BAM 50 to 70 (EUR 25 to 35) on tickets per month (22.5 per cent). Public transport significantly impacts daily life decisions related to economic opportunities and safety. A significant number of the women surveyed had experienced violence and generally felt unsafe using public transport, particularly female workers working night shifts. Despite high rates of harassment, official statistics are lacking, and 93 per cent of women feel that public transport lacks clear information on reporting and preventing incidents.

However, there are existing practices that can be seen as models, such as those used in Vienna, London and Madrid, which – in synergy with practical mechanisms to enforce gender considerations in public transportation projects by local authorities and with financial institutions providing loans – could offer high-quality public transport that addresses these gender-specific disparities and improves women's overall mobility and autonomy.

‘State of play’ analysis – urban mobility in Sarajevo

Sarajevo’s urban transport system, once advanced but then devastated during the war, has been mended to serve its users. However, due to increasing motorisation, inadequate public transport, and environmental concerns, citizens are dissatisfied with the transportation system, and its quality remains poor. Rush hours often result in heavy traffic, causing long commutes due to insufficient road infrastructure. The city relies on trolleybuses, trams and buses, but the system has reliability issues, aging vehicles and irregular schedules. The high number of private vehicles increase pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and impact public health and the environment. Finding parking in the city centre is challenging due to limited space and illegal parking, which also casts a shadow on alternative modes of mobility like walking and cycling, diminishing their positive impact on urban life. Sarajevo lacks adequate bike lanes, but improvements are gradually being made. Pavements and crosswalks are sometimes poorly maintained, and public transport and fuel costs are relatively high compared to local incomes, posing a burden on commuters.

While the state-level Ministry of Communications and Transport oversees and coordinates the international and inter-entity transportation for the most part – similar to the respective ministry on the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) – the Canton of Sarajevo has more hands-on power in decisions concerning the development of infrastructure and the addressing of the above-mentioned issues in the areas of sustainability, infrastructure, traffic management, and quality in urban mobility. The Sarajevo Canton authorities and stakeholders have recognised these challenges and have been working on initiatives to improve urban mobility, including investments in public transportation, road infrastructure, and efforts to promote sustainable transportation options in line with the EU Energy Strategy 2030 and SDGs.

Towards these efforts, in 2021 one of the key documents, the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the Sarajevo Canton and the city of Sarajevo (SUMP)¹ was developed with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The key guidelines in the development of SUMP were to align it with:

- the goals and target indicators of the EU Energy Strategy 2030: new energy systems and low-carbon technologies);
- Sustainable Development Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities: creating business opportunities, secure and affordable housing, and resilient societies and economies.

While these principles and guidelines are valuable and are key in addressing the main issues plaguing urban mobility in the Canton of Sarajevo, they have resulted in a public policy document that remains gender blind, despite its vast and well-structured goals, activities, budget and indicators. Gender equality is mentioned once and the word ‘women’ twice in this document of over 300 pages. The two measures that include women are listed below:

¹ CEDES d.o.o. Sarajevo, Westport Consulting d.o.o. Sarajevo and NTSI-INSTITUT d.o.o. Sarajevo, [Plan održive urbane mobilnosti Kantona Sarajevo i Grada Sarajevo - SUMP](#), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, July 2020.

- Building a passenger protection and safety system, especially for women, inside vehicles and at public urban transport stops.
- Educational programs on traffic safety with a focus on sustainable urban mobility, including online activities like YouTube channel content, webinars, workshops, and roundtable discussions for citizens. This includes events, demonstrations, and other workshops for citizens, especially women and children/youth, regarding measures and roles in traffic safety.

Although gender equality is recognised as one of the SDGs in the document, the development of the SUMP effectively results in the gender equality aspect only being seen in strengthening the (sense of) security when it comes to women; it doesn't consider possible prevention and reporting mechanisms. In this sense, the SUMP does not specifically address gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH). While physical safety remains one of the key concerns of women in the Sarajevo Canton, the plan also fails to address other issues women experience related to long waiting times, safety, and long distances from facilities such as schools, kindergartens, health centres and shops. These factors were not considered or studied prior to the SUMP preparation. In the realm of transportation, women frequently embrace a variety of modes for a multitude of purposes, navigating through multiple destinations during their journeys from one point to another. This diversity in their transportation choices not only reflects a nuanced approach to mobility, compounded by professional and personal burdens, but also highlights the need for urban planning that accommodates the intricacies of women's travel patterns, ensuring a more inclusive and efficient cityscape.

Furthermore, while the plan acknowledges the higher number of women in the Canton of Sarajevo compared to men, with 221,193 and 198,221, respectively, it stops short of delving into a thorough analysis of this crucial demographic data. This omission is unsurprising, given the severe lack of gender-segregated data in the realm of urban mobility. Unfortunately, this approach neglects to address a substantial gender gap of approximately 10 per cent in the perceived importance of public transport infrastructure services for women in facilitating their participation in education and employment.² It also overlooks the autonomy gap created by owning and driving a personal vehicle, a privilege largely skewed towards men. The data reveals that less than half of female drivers (44 per cent) own a car, while 80 per cent of male licence holders possess their own vehicle. With only 36 per cent of women holding a driver's licence compared to 64 per cent of men in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this disparity further deepens women's reliance on public transport.³ Therefore, there is a critical need for high-quality public transport that addresses these gender-specific disparities and enhances women's overall mobility and autonomy.

Another key public policy document that could acknowledge and address the gender gaps and the lack of recognition of the different needs of women – but so far has failed to do so – is the GAP of the Canton of Sarajevo. Its current content is limited in the scope of its areas of interest to those predefined by the state GAP, and this is in part due to the fact that GAPs on the level of the FBiH entity and state do not specifically target traffic or urban mobility as a key area of interest, and the cantonal GAPs should follow their logic. The plan does, however, prescribe a clear obligation of all the cantonal ministries to establish instruments for the regular impact assessment of the laws, by-laws, and public policies on gender equality. Despite this lofty goal, the current institutional dedication to gender mainstreaming lacks both clear expectations and

² European Institute for Gender Equality, [Urban mobility: Gender-sensitive infrastructure](#), *European Institute for Gender Equality*, 2020.

³ Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Women and men in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), *Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2022.

consequences for the failure of the transport authorities, be it the cantonal assembly or the overseeing bodies responsible for implementing the Sarajevo Canton GAP.

While development financing institutions demand consideration of gender (in)equality in the realm of urban mobility, especially in the progress of public transport, there is a gap in their rigorous follow-up in ensuring the proper implementation of these requirements by loan recipients. Key transport infrastructure projects in the Canton of Sarajevo, with a value in the tens of millions of euros, are raising concerns, as the policies appear poised to remain oblivious to gender considerations. Notably, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) EUR 25 million sovereign loan for the construction of a new tram line connecting Ilidza with the neighbourhood of Hrasnica, secured in January 2023, appears to singularly prioritise a green economy, efficiency, and competitiveness in their strictest sense. However, the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) requires the establishment of an internal grievance mechanism and the implementation of measures to prevent GBVH. Furthermore, the mandatory safety audit for tram track design, tram stations, traffic, and public safety stipulated in the ESAP is a critical aspect.⁴ This will be a crucial litmus test for whether and how to ensure a robust follow-up to guarantee the proper implementation of these requirements before or during the construction phase.

Therefore, it is worth emphasising that the EBRD has its gender equality policies and strategies which state that it has a significant role to play in countering the dynamics of gender inequality, helping countries to leverage the contribution that greater gender equality can make to faster recovery and sustainable, long-term growth. The EBRD recognises that care for the environment and key economical and sustainability factors are not in conflict with achieving gender equality,⁵ but rather are complementary and might even augment one another. Therefore, the key question as to what mechanisms will ensure that loan recipients make practical use of gender equality considerations in implementing public transportation projects remains.⁶

Moreover, in October 2023 the Canton of Sarajevo adopted a new law on public-private partnership. This opens up the space to create more efficient and higher-quality public transport in public-private partnership, but the process will have to be closely followed in the coming period; additionally, pressure on public partners will have to be reinforced to ensure that the partnerships will be good value for money and that the gender perspective is being included.

⁴ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [CrCF2 W2 E2 – Sarajevo E-Tram Extension](#), *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development*, accessed on 24 November 2023.

⁵ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [The EBRD and Gender Equality](#), *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development*, accessed on 24 November 2023.

⁶ Other EBRD public transport projects in Sarajevo with gender/safety considerations: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [GrCF2 W2 - Sarajevo Public Transport e-Mobility](#), *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development*, accessed on 24 November 2023; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [GrCFW2 Sarajevo Public Transport Part 3](#), *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development*, accessed on 24 November 2023.

The main problems and their causes

Tickets are too expensive for BiH standards, especially considering that there are families with only one working member and more than one child, which was shown in the responses to the questionnaire (Annex 1) that Sarajevo Open Centre developed for the purpose of ascertaining which issues mainly women face in public transport. The questionnaire contains 26 questions focused on determining the availability of public transport in the Sarajevo Canton, especially for mothers with children, pregnant women, older women, and women with disabilities, as well as whether they feel protected and safe from sexual, physical, or any other form of violence.

Sarajevo Open Centre collected 213 anonymous responses from women of all ages, with the majority aged 35 to 50 (31.5 per cent), followed by women aged 18 to 25 (27.7 per cent), 25 to 35 (26.8 per cent), and 50 to 65 (12.7 per cent). Only two women aged 65 or over and one woman in the 14-to-18 age group responded to the questionnaire. Eighty point three per cent answered that they do not identify themselves with any of the listed marginalised groups, 10.3 per cent said they were mothers of small children, 4.7 per cent were women with a disability or women who take care of a person with a disability, 3.8 per cent were single mothers, and 0.9 per cent said they were a person of a different gender identity. Most reported that they use public transport every day (49.8 per cent) and the remainder use it a couple of times per week, a couple of times per month, or very rarely. Fifty-two point six per cent of women said they have to use several means of public transport during the day (e.g. a bus and then a tram to get to work), while 85.9 per cent said they regularly travel to other local communities for work, school, shopping, etc.

Citizens of the Canton of Sarajevo have different means of transport at their disposal – trams, buses, trolleybuses and minibuses. These are organised by GRAS, a public company financed from the budget of the Canton of Sarajevo, and the private company Centrotrans. In the past, if citizens had to use the transport of both companies, they had to buy different tickets. This practice was changed in 2023 when the Ministry of Transport of the Sarajevo Canton and Centrotrans reached an agreement whereby monthly tickets bought at either of the companies could be used in all vehicles.

GRAS enables citizens to use public transportation by buying an individual ticket for a single ride which costs BAM 1.80 (EUR 0.92) regardless of the length of the ride, daily tickets, 10-day tickets, or monthly tickets, the prices of which vary depending on the category.⁷ The transport is divided into four zones – A, B, C and D. Those represent the parts of the canton in which it is possible to use the ticket.

In table 1 below, we can see that workers have to spend the highest amount of money on tickets, since there is no yearly ticket for all four zones available for them to buy. This means that if they had to buy tickets for all four zones, they would have to pay BAM 1 380 (EUR 705.55), which is EUR 340.55 more than a yearly ticket in Vienna, a city that has one of the most outstanding public transport systems in Europe.

⁷ Students, employees, unemployed persons and retirees pay different prices for tickets.

Table 1: Sarajevo public transport pricelist

PRICE LIST OF SUBSCRIPTION TICKETS (BAM)						
Zones structure		A / B / C / D	A+B / B+C / C+D	A+B+C	B+C+D	A+B+C+D
1	Daily	5,30 (€ 2,70)				
2	10-days ticket	37,20 (€ 18,96)				
3	MONTHLY TICKETS					
	Workers	53,00 (€ 27,01)	83,00 (€ 42,30)	102,00 (€ 51,98)		115,00 (€ 58,61)
	High school students (distance > 2 km)	18,00 (€ 9,17)	25,00 (€ 12,74)	30,00 (€ 15,29)		33,00 (€ 16,82)
	High school students (distance < 2 km)	19,10 (€ 9,73)				
	Regular students (all zones)					20,00 (€ 10,19)
	Irregular students	33,00 (€ 16,82)	47,90 (€ 24,41)	60,60 (€ 30,88)		78,70 (€ 40,11)
	Elementary school students (6-15 y.o.)	FREE TICKETS				
	Unemployed persons (all zones)					12,00 (€ 6,12)
	Retiree with pension ≤ 400,00 (€ 203,86)	FREE TICKETS				
	Retiree ticket for persons who have pension:	400,01-450,00 (€ 203,86-229,34) = 4,00 (€ 2,04)				
		450,01-500,00 (€ 229,35-254,82) = 6,00 (€ 3,06)				
		500,01-550,00 (€ 254,83-280,31) = 7,00 (€ 3,57)				
		550,01-600,00 (€ 280,32-305,79) = 8,00 (€ 4,08)				
		600,01-650,00 (€ 305,80-331,27) = 9,00 (€ 4,59)				
		650,01-1000,00 (€ 331,28-509,65) = 10,00 (€ 5,10)				
		>1000,01 (€ 509,65) = 28,00 (€ 14,27)				
	War-disabled, families of fallen fighters, war honors recipients	FREE TICKETS				
	Victims of war and hearing impaired persons	29,30 (€ 14,93)				
	Paraplegic, persons with dystrophy, cerebral palsy and MS	21,70 (€ 11,06)				
	Persons with visual impairment	21,70 (€ 11,06)				
	Spouse of a retiree	31,90 (€ 16,26)				
	Retirees living outside the Canton Sarajevo	31,90 (€ 16,26)				
	TEMPORARY TICKETS FOR RETIREES					
	Three-month ticket: zone A - 202,00 (€ 102,95); zone A, B, C, D - 255,00 (€ 129,96)					
	Six-month ticket: zone A - 394,00 (€ 200,80); zone A, B, C, D - 489,00 (€ 249,22)					
	Annual ticket for all four zones (A, B, C, D) - 766,00 (€ 390,39)					

Most women spend BAM 50 to 70 (EUR 25 to EUR 38) on tickets per month (22.5 per cent),⁸ and five of them responded that they spend more than BAM 130 (EUR 66) per month. Sixty-four point three per cent of them do not think ticket prices are appropriate and believe they should be adjusted, especially for different groups (such as students and marginalised groups) and according to ride length.

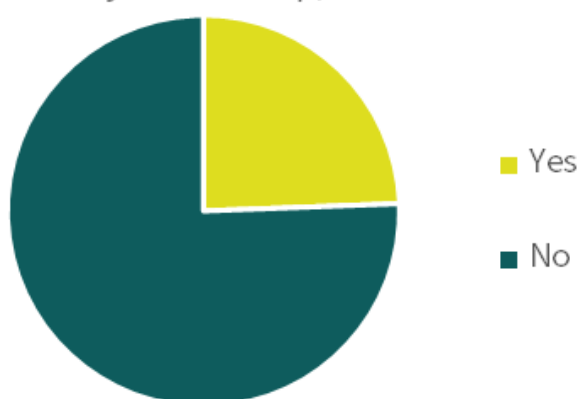
The answers to the questions show that public transport can produce multiple effects in users' everyday lives. Based on the availability of public transport, people make decisions that can affect their health and social and economic well-being. Forty-three point two per cent of women said they gave up job opportunities because a potential new workplace was far away, meaning they would have to spend more time using public transport. Twenty-three point five per cent of them missed medical appointments or regular therapy because of public transport, 54 per cent skipped social gatherings because of poor public transport, 10.8 per cent decided on a different kindergarten for their children because it was closer to their home, meaning they would not have to use public transport, even though it was not their first choice, and

⁸ In this question we asked them to estimate how much money they spend on tickets per month, and if they had children, to include the prices of their tickets as well.

13.1 per cent decided to go to the school or college that was closer to them even though it was not their first choice.⁹

Public transport is an important part of everyday life in cities, and that is why it is important to feel safe while using it. Unfortunately, 75.6 per cent of women responded that they do not feel safe on public transportation or on the way to bus stops and stations. The main reasons are fear of sexual violence (36.1 per cent), physical violence (34.3 per cent), and pickpocketing (59 per cent). Other reasons include verbal attacks and defective vehicles, and some women said they are afraid because stops and linking routes are unlit and isolated.

Figure 1: Do you feel safe while using means of public transport or on your way to the stop/station?

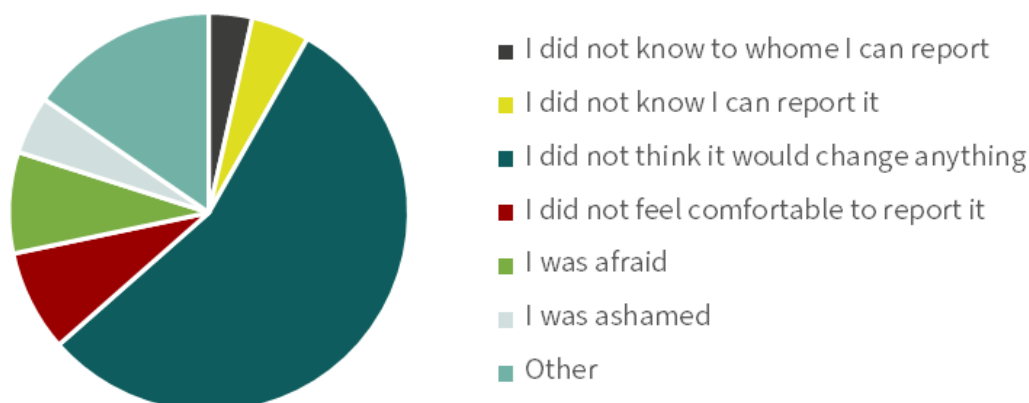


These percentages are not surprising given that 63.4 per cent of women have experienced some kind of the above-mentioned behaviour. Fifty point seven per cent of them confided in someone they are close to, 27.5 per cent reported it to the police, 9.2 per cent to the driver, and 31 per cent never reported it to anyone. The main reason for not reporting violence was because they thought it would not change anything (55.3 per cent), they did not know they could report it (4.7 per cent), they did not know to whom they could report it (3.5 per cent), they did not feel comfortable (8.2 per cent), or they were afraid or ashamed (12.9 per cent). Other answers included the following:

I reached out to the people in the vehicle and they helped me by talking to me; even now I am not sure that throwing insults and someone rubbing their genitals against your body is something that can be reported; nobody cares because they know who all the maniacs are but still let them go because they do not think sexual harassment and pickpocketing are “prison worthy”; I reported the robbery to the police officer nearby, but it was useless – he said he did not see anything.

⁹ The reason percentages in some places in the text do not add up to 100 is because respondents had the option of choosing multiple answers.

Figure 2: Why did you not report the violence?



One hundred and seventy-six women (82.6 per cent) reported that access to the stops/stations are unapproachable and unsafe. The main reasons are bad lighting (72.5 per cent), no video surveillance (79.2 per cent), no police officers nearby (55.6 per cent), that they are unadjusted for women with children in strollers or persons with disabilities (62.4 per cent), no seats for pregnant women or older women (48.9 per cent), and that stops and stations do not have covered areas (60.1 per cent). Among other reasons, the stops and stations are neglected and filthy, and there are a lot of careless and drunk drivers on the roads who endanger the lives of people waiting at the stops.

Almost half of the women (48.8 per cent) stated that vehicles are not adjusted to their needs, meaning vehicles are not comfortable or spacious (47.1 per cent), the entrance and aisle are not adapted for persons with disabilities or women with children in strollers (42.8 per cent), and the heating and cooling systems are non-functioning (89.9 per cent).

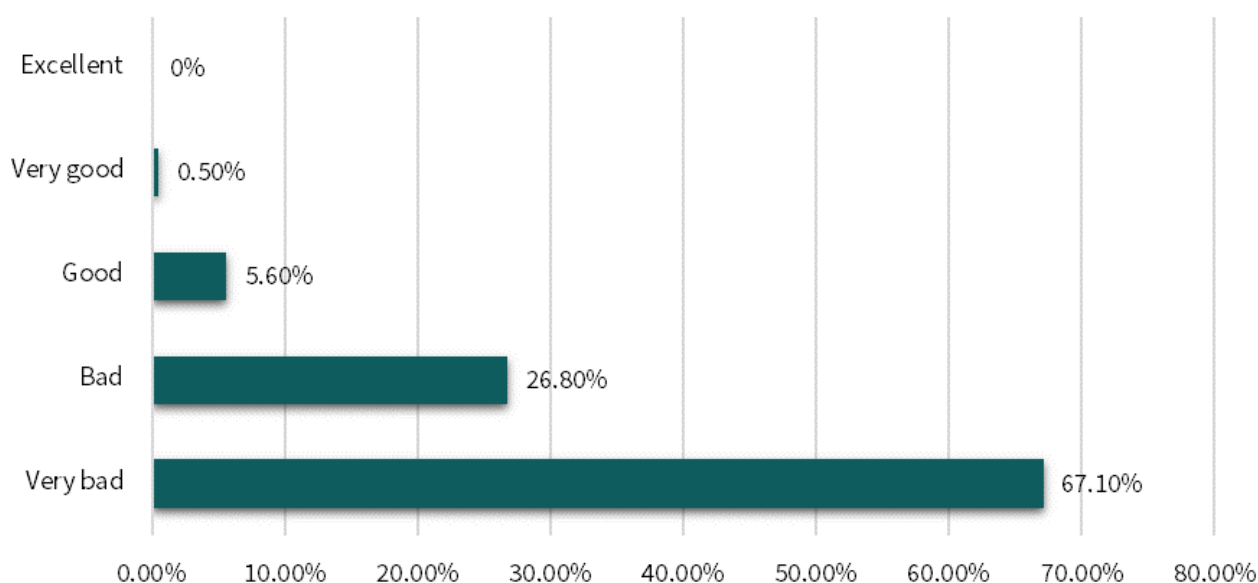
Having regular and punctual public transportation is important primarily in the context of finances, because women are forced to pay for expensive taxi rides to get to work even though they have valid monthly tickets. But well-designed public transport plays a big role in feeling safe as well. According to research conducted in three cities of BiH – Banja Luka, Mostar and Sarajevo – 65 per cent of women have experienced inappropriate comments/catcalling, 24 per cent stalking, and 11 per cent physical assault.¹⁰

Skipping a ride and not having functional public transport throughout the night is a big factor for women’s security. Sixty-seven point two per cent of women work in the service industry, in comparison to 46.9 per cent of men (data published for 2020).¹¹ These jobs often require working late shifts, which means a person will probably come back from work late at night. People in general tend to feel less safe at night in comparison to walking in daylight, but women are more likely to be victims of sexual violence. That is why Sarajevo Open Centre asked them how they would rate information on transport schedules, delays, and changes in timetables at stops/stations. These are their responses:

¹⁰ Lajla Leko and Sabahudin Harčević, [Women's Security in Local Communities](#), Centre for Security Studies, 2023.

¹¹ Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).

Figure 3: How would you rate availability of information on driving schedules, delays and changes in timetables at stops/stations?



Public transportation is a place where everyone can become a target of physical/verbal violence or pickpocketing. For women it can be additionally degrading and intimidating, considering they are more exposed – not just because they are more likely to use public transport, but because of the patriarchal society which normalises name-calling, sexual harassment, and all the other forms of violence women are subjected to and which fails to provide protection for them.

At the beginning of 2022, a young author shared her traumatic story about the sexual harassment she was a victim of while on a tram.¹² An older man sitting behind her rubbed against her body with his hands and legs. When she realised what was happening, she started screaming at him, while he pretended she was not talking to him.

Her traumatising experience makes us all think about situations in which we or our friends went through the same thing. And suddenly you realise that every woman you know has been a victim of some sort of sexual harassment on public transportation or in a public place in general. Unfortunately, this information is not collected or evidenced in any sort of official statistics. We only have individual stories of brave women who were courageous enough to share them or even report them, says one of the authors.

But reporting itself does not bring much satisfaction, which we can see in a Facebook post of a woman who shared her experience. She even brought the perpetrator to the police station. A police officer asked her if she had any evidence, while another, who was passing by, said hello to the perpetrator and told him to get in touch if he needed anything.¹³

Unfortunately, these public testimonies of sexual harassment are not the exception, but the rule. Women feel ashamed, afraid, helpless, and discouraged about sharing their stories. Some are not even sure sexual harassment, verbal or physical, is something they can or should report, which can be seen in the answers

¹² Nikolina Todorović, [O još jednoj rutinskoj praksi: seksualana uznemiravanja i nasilja u sarajevskim tramvajima](#), *Prometej*, 31 January 2023.

¹³ Ferida Duraković, [Durakovic: Dokazi da se trljao o tebe u tramvaju](#), *Nomad*, 2 February 2022.

to the previous questions. Therefore, Sarajevo Open Centre asked them if public transport vehicles contain clear enough information on forbidden behaviour (physical or sexual assault, pickpocketing, etc.) and what to do if users experience it. Ninety-three per cent of respondents provided a negative answer, which indicates what should be done as a first step to prevent and condemn this kind of behaviour.

Good practices

What can be done to improve women's mobility in cities? The answers could be found in some European cities which took various actions to ensure their inclusivity and sustainability.

Vienna is an example of a city that has been committed to gender mainstreaming since the 1990s; this can be seen in the way that public transport is organised and run by the female-led public companies Wiener Stadtwerke, Wiener Linien, and Wiener Lokalbahnen. Initiatives taken by these local public transport companies have made women's safety in Vienna a priority. The practical steps they have taken include installing additional lights in previously dark spaces, making alarm and assistance buttons easily accessible, taking the security of women into consideration when assigning night shifts, increasing security staff, and other measures.¹⁴

Vienna has also developed mobility infrastructure with high-quality public lighting, more seating in public areas, and a pedestrian-friendly design.

The capital of Austria was once again named the world's most liveable city in 2023, according to the Economist's annual index.¹⁵ The report noted that Vienna continues to offer 'an unsurpassed combination of stability, good infrastructure, strong education, and healthcare services, and plenty of culture and entertainment'.

Another good example of a systematic approach to promoting the gender perspective in terms of mobility is Madrid. In 2020, the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Infrastructure confirmed¹⁶ that the Madrid Executive is meeting the specific objectives defined by the Transport Consortium to integrate the gender perspective into urban planning, as reflected in the Madrid Strategy for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women (2018-2021).¹⁷

Pioneer steps in ensuring diversity and inclusion in urban mobility were taken in 2016, when Metro de Madrid and the Spanish Transsexual Association (ATET-Transexualia) initiated a framework of cooperation for the purpose of promoting the full social integration of transgender people in the Community of Madrid.¹⁸

¹⁴ European Commission, [Transport has to be comfortable, clean and on time. The fact that it must be safe is beyond discussion.](#), *European Commission*, accessed on 24 November 2023.

¹⁵ David Walsh, [Vienna named world's most liveable city again in 2023. Other European cities slipped out of top 10.](#), *Euronews*, 18 August 2023.

¹⁶ Comunidad de Madrid, ['We promote the gender perspective in terms of mobility'](#), *Comunidad de Madrid*, accessed 24 November 2023.

¹⁷ Consejería de Políticas Sociales y Familia- Dirección General de la Mujer, [Estrategia Madrileña para la Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres 2018-2021](#), *Comunidad de Madrid*, 2018.

¹⁸ Metro Madrid, [Metro Madrid and Transexualia are embarking on a plan of cooperation to promote the full social integration of transgender men and women](#), *Metro Madrid*, 24 January 2016.

Metro de Madrid has also been promoting gender equality in social campaigns such as #muévete, seeking to raise awareness about equality for women and celebrating the International Day of Women. A campaign that gained international attention was to stop men from manspreading on public transport. Madrid's Municipal Transport Company (EMT) came up with the initiative in partnership with Madrid City Council's equality department and the Microrrelatos Feministas collective in order to encourage men to respect boundaries on bus seats and keep their legs closed.¹⁹

Sexual harassment on public transport is a common issue throughout Europe. Several cities have launched awareness campaigns about how to react to harassment.

London implemented the Zero-Tolerance campaign to fight sexual harassment in the transport system. Victims and those who were witnesses are encouraged to report any form of sexual violence. The reporting of sexual harassment cases is low, and one of the reasons is a poor understanding of what sexual harassment is. London tackled this issue by disseminating information for passengers on common behaviours which represent sexual harassment. They also trained staff with body cameras, included 2,500 community support officers (including police) who patrol the public transport, and they developed informative tools on how to act if you witness sexual harassment, how to report it, and how to recognise it.²⁰

Several European cities, such as Madrid, have also opted for request stops on buses, primarily at night.²¹ The idea is to help improve the safety of women and minors by reducing their journeys home from public transport.

The goal of these local actions is to provide equal access to city resources. Thus, gender mainstreaming in practice means that city administrators create laws, rules and regulations that benefit men and women equally. It is policy-making that enhances gender equality, as well as diversity and inclusion and ensures sustainability.

In creating these important tools, the above-mentioned good practices can be used, as well as documents such as the groundbreaking study done in Ireland in 2020, *Travelling in a Woman's Shoes: understanding women's travel needs in Ireland to inform the future of sustainable transport policy and design*,²² and the guidelines in the *Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning Design* developed by the World Bank.²³

¹⁹ Sam Jones, [Madrid tackles "el manspreading" on public transport with new signs](#), *The Guardian*, 8 June 2017.

²⁰ Transport for London, [New campaign launches to stamp out sexual harassment on public transport](#), *Transport for London*, 27 October, 2021.

²¹ Michiel Modijefsky, [Stops on demand for women and minors in all night interurban bus lines Madrid](#), *Eltis*, 16 December 2020.

²² Rachel Cahill et al., [Travelling in a Woman's Shoes](#), *Transport Infrastructure Ireland*, 2020.

²³ World Bank Group, Eva Kail and Kounkuey Design Initiative, [Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design](#), *World Bank Group*, 2020.

Conclusions and recommendations

Women and men have different mobility needs and travel patterns, related to their often different economic and social roles. Women tend to rely on public transport more than men, but face more problems when it comes to accessibility, safety and affordability.

The results of the questionnaire that was created to support this study show that the key issues that women face in public transport include:

- lack of access to public transport and inadequate service frequency;
- inadequate facilities on vehicles and in stations, including overcrowding and poor lighting and video surveillance;
- limited provisions for pregnant women, women with children, and women with disabilities such as spaces for goods, strollers and wheelchairs;
- exposure to sexual harassment and violence;
- high transport fares that disproportionately affect women because of their lower socio-economic status.

As presented in this study, the already developed and adopted studies and policies by the relevant authorities and stakeholders in the Canton of Sarajevo that address issues in the areas of sustainability, infrastructure, traffic management, and quality in urban mobility are almost entirely blind to gender equality.

Policies and services that are not gender-responsive result in gender differences concerning access to mobility and create limitations for female passengers. This is a barrier to women's access to opportunities and participation in public life.

The successful outcomes of what decision makers and public transport companies in several European cities have done to ensure inclusive and sustainable environments are clearly visible. These offer quality and creative solutions that ensure accessibility and provide safety and comfort to all citizens.

Based on the evaluation of the problems and needs of women who use public transport, of policy analysis, and of good practices, Sarajevo Open Centre has provided recommendations for the Canton of Sarajevo authorities and stakeholders for the improvement of public transport in the canton.

Improving physical accessibility and affordability:

- Improve road and signal infrastructure to ensure access to public transport stations for women with children (in strollers), people with disabilities, and older people.
- Adjust public transport vehicles to the needs of women with children, people with disabilities, and older people. Accessible vehicles should be marked with special signs/colours/audio signals.

- Include more seats for pregnant women, women with children, people with disabilities, and older people.
- Ensure service pricing that will enable access to mobility options for women and vulnerable groups, as they heavily depend on public transportation.
- Improve communication with citizens about public road network routes and schedules. We recommend placing maps and timetables at every bus stop across the canton, as well in every public transport vehicle.

Development and establishment of mechanisms and resources to prevent and address physical and sexual violence:

- Implement dedicated and clearly marked vehicles for students throughout the academic year to alleviate congestion. Ensure entry through the front doors for proper monitoring and control.
- Organise campaigns and establish information/communication channels, both physical and digital. Consider implementing a dedicated helpline or chat service.
- Educate drivers and ticket inspectors on how to proceed if they witness these forms of harassment or someone reports it to them.
- Increase the availability of public transport during rush hours, providing more vehicles in the mornings and afternoons when people are going to and coming back from work to reduce overcrowding, giving women more space so that they will feel safer.
- Introduce video surveillance, in proper balance with citizens' right to privacy.
- Introduce night services – public transport vehicles which would operate during the night.
- Introduce requested stops on buses at night, which would improve the safety of women and minors by reducing their journeys home from public transport.
- Hire one person per vehicle who will be in charge of order in the vehicle and to whom any issues can be reported.
- Introduce a real-time information system for public transport that would help women better plan their trips with regards to time and safety.

Policy recommendations:

- Collection of gender-segregated data that informs future policies and measures undertaken in the area by the relevant authorities (Ministry of Transport of the Sarajevo Canton or public bodies in charge of urban planning); public policies based on evidence are crucial to enhancing women's experiences on public transportation and their overall well-being and urban mobility. This can be done using digital technologies, while respecting private data and the right to privacy. This is especially relevant for further planning for SUMP, which should take a look at gendered mobility patterns and recommend solutions accordingly.

- In light of recent investments in public transportation infrastructure and the development of urban mobility, new gender action plans on all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and specifically in the Canton of Sarajevo, should look at transport and urban mobility as one of the areas of interest to women, both through addressing it within the issue of gender-based violence and as a stand-alone issue that differently affects women in their everyday lives and in their access to education, employment, and services.
- The next Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the Sarajevo Canton and the city of Sarajevo needs to take into consideration the gender analysis, assess the impact on gender equality, and develop gender-sensitive goals and measures, especially in relation to addressing issues women experience related to long waiting times, safety, and long distances from facilities such as schools, kindergartens, health centres and shops.
- Define financing needs to operationalise and condition the authorities to mainstream gender equality in the development of urban mobility public policies, specifically in the area of public transport.
- Ensuring that any possible public–private partnerships in the area of public transport, under the future implementation of the recently adopted new law on public–private partnerships in the Sarajevo Canton, are good value for money for the public and ensure affordability for public transport users; and that they take into account gender equality and marginalised groups, as well as their access to public transport and their role in urban mobility, in addition to ensuring the efficiency and overall quality of public transport.

Annex 1: Questionnaire on safety and availability of public transport

What is your age?

- 14-18
- 18-25
- 25-35
- 35-50
- 50-65
- 65+

Do you belong to one of the following groups?

- Mother with a toddler
- Single mother
- Woman with a disability or woman who takes care of a person with a disability
- Person of a different gender expression
- Roma woman
- None of the above

In which local community of the Sarajevo Canton do you live?

- Ilijaš
- Trnovo
- Hadžići
- Ilidža
- Vogošća
- Novi Grad
- Novo Sarajevo
- Centar
- Old Town

Which type of public transport do you use the most? (Multiple answers are possible)

- Bus
- Trolleybus
- Tram
- Minibus

Do you need to use multiple modes of public transport during the day in your everyday life (e.g. for getting to work, college, school or any other everyday obligation)?

- Yes
- No

How often do you use public transport?

- Every day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Rarely

What are your main reasons for using public transport? (Multiple answers are possible)

- Going to work or college/school
- Shopping
- Going out (meeting with friends, a partner, etc.)
- Going to medical appointments
- Going to films/theatre
- Other

Do you have to go to another municipality for some of the reasons you selected above?

- Yes
- No

If the answer to the previous question was yes, please specify which municipality.

Short answer

How much money do you spend per month on tickets/coupons? If you have children, include the prices of their tickets in the total.

- BAM 0-5
- BAM 5-10
- BAM 10-20
- BAM 20-30
- BAM 30-50
- BAM 50-70
- BAM 70-100
- BAM 100-130
- More than BAM 130

Do you think the ticket prices are appropriate?

- Yes
- No

Do you think it is necessary to adapt the prices of tickets for different social groups (single mothers, mothers who have more than one child, free tickets for children younger than 15, etc.)?

Long answer

Have you ever:

- Given up a business opportunity because your new potential workplace was far away and you would have to change transport more often
- Missed a medical appointment or therapy because of public transport
- Missed out on participating in social/cultural events (meeting friends, going to concerts, visiting religious institutions, etc.) because of public transport
- Decided to apply to a different school/college because it was closer than your initial choice and you would not have to use public transport as often
- Decided to enrol your child in a different kindergarten/school/college because it was closer than your initial choice and you/they would not have to use public transport as often
- None of the above
- Other

Do you feel safe while using public transport and on the way to the stop/station?

- Yes
- No

If the answer to the previous question was yes, was it because of:

(Multiple answers are possible)

- Fear/risk of sexual harassment during the ride or on the way/at the stop/station
- Physical assault
- Pickpocketing
- All of the above
- Other

Have you ever experienced anything mentioned above?

- Yes
- No

If yes, did you report it to anyone? (Multiple answers are possible)

- Yes, to the police
- Yes, to the driver
- Yes, to a lawyer
- Yes, to a relative/close friend
- No

If not, why?

- I did not know to whom I could report it
- I did not know I could report it
- I did not think it would change anything
- I did not feel comfortable reporting it
- I was afraid
- I was ashamed
- Other

Do you think stops/stations are accessible and safe?

- Yes
- No

If not, why? (Multiple answers are possible)

- Poor lighting
- No security cameras
- No police officers
- They are not accessible for women with small children or with strollers or for persons with disabilities
- There are no seats/benches for pregnant women or older women
- Stops/stations do not have covered areas
- Other

Are vehicles adequate for your needs?

- Yes
- No

If not, why? (Multiple answers are possible)

- Vehicles are not comfortable or commodious enough (not enough space for children, purses, grocery bags, etc.)
- The entrance and aisle are not adjusted for persons with disabilities
- No seats or space for persons with disabilities
- Heating and air-conditioning are non-functioning
- Other

How would you rate the availability of information at stops and stations regarding timetables, delays, or changes in timetables?

- Very bad
- Bad
- Good
- Very good
- Great

Do you think there is enough information on public transport regarding prohibited behaviour or how to act if you experience physical assault, sexual harassment, pickpocketing, etc.?

- Yes
- No

What would you change to make public transport more adjusted and approachable for women?

Long answer

Do you want to add anything related to public transport?

Short answer