



## Advancing Social Equity in Urban Public Transport Planning: A Critical Review of Concepts, Methods, and Research Gaps

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DOI: [10.33329/ijer.13.1.1](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijer.13.1.1)



### Abstract

The issue of *social equity* is a key consideration in the planning and development of urban public transports. In growing and diversifying cities, providing equitable and inclusive access to mobility opportunities is increasingly considered crucial for sustainable urban development and social justice. This paper offers a critical review of how the notion of social equity is conceived, measured, and incorporated in the planning and design of urban public transport. Based upon an international literature review, the study seeks to answer three major research questions: how has social equity been conceptualized and applied in relation to public transit; what are the dominant methods and indicators to measure equity and accessibility; and what are remaining research gaps and challenges to the further operationalization of equity in planning practice? Using a qualitative critical review methodology, the study compares and contrasts quantitative and qualitative methods noting advantages and disadvantages of both designs. Main results reflect increasing complexity with measurement, an emerging trend towards a multidimensional approach; however, barriers are evident—specifically, the practical implementation of equity-directed policies and inclusion of marginalised communities. Recommendations are made for progress in terms of the pursuit of equity within policy and institutional frameworks, a call for more contextual and participatory assessment tools, and the need for effectively integrated equity goals.

Keywords: Social equity, Urban public transport, Accessibility, Planning, Assessment, Methods, Policy, Research gaps



## Introduction

Urban Public Transport is essential to the social, economic, and environmental success of cities today. With rapid urbanization, public transport systems are acknowledged more than a mobility tool but as a basis for a long-term sustainable urban growth that allow diverse people to have access to employment, education, medical care, and social participation [1], [2]. Effective and equitable transportation systems are crucial to achieving global development agendas, specifically, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim to provide adequate, affordable, safe and sustainable transport options to all city residents [3], [4].

Nevertheless, with increasingly complex cities and more diverse populations, the issue of to whom investments in public transport accrue has taken a more central role in both academia and policy discussions. Although conventional transportation planning has tended to prioritize efficiency, ridership, and cost efficiency, in recent years there has been an increasing recognition of the need to address deep-rooted social injustices regarding mobility and access [5] and [6]. Transport disadvantage is characterized as an uneven distribution of reliable, affordable, and frequent public transport in many metropolitan areas, which often serves to perpetuate more general socio-spatial inequalities [7], [8].

In this context, social equity has, however, come to serve as a guiding principle of how planning for urban transportation can be thought of differently. Social justice in public transportation consists not only of equal allocation of resources, but also entails equitable procedures, attention to particular needs, and purposeful redistribution to narrow gaps affecting disadvantaged populations such as low-income households, the elderly, the disabled, and minority groups [9], [10]. This reframing has reignited interest in not only distributive, but also procedural justice in the planning, provision, and control of transport systems. In

particular, equity is now increasingly perceived as a multidimensional goal—going beyond physical access to also include affordability, safety, quality of service, and user involvement [11], [12]. Current research suggests an increasing maturity of both the understanding and measurement of equity in urban transport. There is a push away from skinny, numbers-focused indicators towards fuller frameworks that account for not just what is but how things unfold in space, socially, institutionally. One example is the bit by bit improvements made in geospatial analysis and big data as well as composites that enable better mapping of the access shortfall and identification of transit deserts where a population continuously faces systemic access barriers to shortcuts and connects [13], [14]. Qualitative, participatory methodologies, meanwhile, are becoming more prominent, drawing attention to the importance of lived experience and local knowledge in informing more sensitive and equitable modes of transport [15]. However, while much progress has been made, there are still major challenges that need to be addressed in making social equity part of everyday transport planning. Many current tools and approaches are not yet fully consistent with the circumstances confronted by more vulnerable populations, and the implementation of research evidence in policy-making decision-making is frequently hampered by institutional barriers, limitations of access to data, and competition among policy priorities [16], [17]. Finally, empirical research has largely focused on high-income settings, limiting knowledge about the equity concerns in fast growing cities of the Global South [18]. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored and, in some cases, exacerbated these inequalities, with a disproportionate effect of service cuts, fare changes and changing mobility trends on those groups of the population at a transport disadvantage [19].

Now is therefore a good timing as well as a need for a critical assessment of existing concepts of quality, methods of measurement,

and needs for research. Following urban centers around the world seeking to create more inclusive, resilient and sustainable futures, there is a growing demand for researchers and practitioners to produce methodologies and instruments that promote understanding of how decisionmakers can appraise, monitor and optimize social equity performances in urban transport. Such work entails not only technological proficiency, but also a dedication to the principles of participatory governance, as well as an understanding of the structural and political circumstances in which planning decisions are taken [20], [21].

This review seeks to integrate recent international literature on social equity in urban public transport, with emphasis on three main questions: How social equity is conceptualised and operationalised in the urban transport context? What are the most common approaches to measuring equity and access, and what are their respective strengths and weaknesses? What are the remaining evidence gaps and operational barriers for operationally integrating social equity into urban transport planning? In addressing these questions, the review aims to advance a more differentiated and actionable understanding of equity in urban mobility – one which has relevance for both academic debate and on-the-ground policy and practice [22].

## Research Aims and Scope

In the context of the challenging field of social equity in urban public transport planning, this review takes an integrated and multidimensional view. The emerging literature demonstrates that progressing equity in this field will require critical consideration of three interrelated areas: the conceptual underpinnings of equity and access, the methodological and measurement tools created to study them, and the ongoing limitations and actionable barriers that prevent them from being translated into policy and practice. Now instead of being taken in isolation, this review will combine these dimensions' interrelations to generate a

comprehensive overview that's also practical in a way. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework underpinning this review. The diagram illustrates how the advancement of equity in urban public transport emerges at the intersection of:

- Conceptual Foundations, encompassing theoretical definitions and frameworks of social equity and accessibility;
- Methods and Assessment Tools, which include both quantitative and qualitative approaches for measuring and evaluating equity outcomes;
- Gaps and Practical Barriers, representing the challenges, unresolved questions, and institutional limitations encountered in translating theory into effective policy.

At the heart of the diagram and our review is the ambition to better inform both research and policy by connecting these three domains. Underlying this attitude is an understanding that the movement towards truly inclusive and just urban mobility systems is contingent not only on conceptual clarity or technical breakthroughs but also on an honest appraisal of working scenarios and the work that remains to be done. Through setting the conversation at this crossroads the reviews intend to be conceptually and practically meaningful, generalizable and applicable.

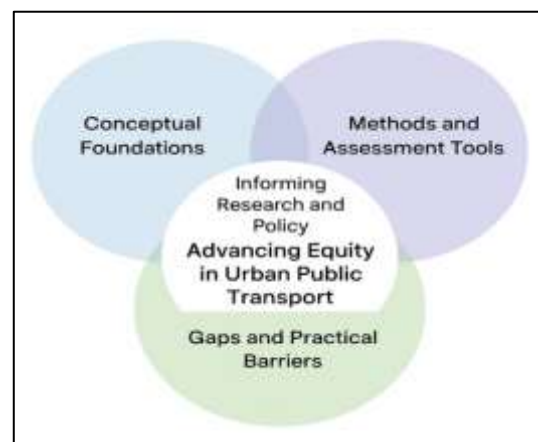


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the review: advancing equity in urban public transport

emerges from the intersection of foundational concepts, methodological tools, and recognition of practical barriers.

### Methodology

The paper uses a critical qualitative synthesis method to locate and appraise the social equity critique of urban public transport planning, and to synthesize this in an accessible fashion. Instead of presenting overviews or reviews on the progress of the research of a specific topic, this procedure provides the possibility to a detailed analysis of conceptual frameworks, methodological advances and practical challenges in the discipline.

A detailed list and description of all studies within the review – including details about their focus, methodology and findings – is included in Appendix A to provide transparency relating to the selection process and allow replication or further investigation by interested readers.

### Study Selection Criteria

Peer reviewed articles, high quality conference proceedings and policy reports from 2021-2014 were the focus of the literature search. Searches were performed on bibliographic databases (Scopus, Web of Science, Sciondirect) using a combination of several keywords such as “social equity” and “urban public transport”, “mobility justice”, “transport planning”, but also “assessment methods” and “policy”. Only paper in which equity/accessibility in the urban context was explicitly discussed and empirical/methodological/conceptual

contribution were considered. Publications outside the realm of urban or irrelevant without analytical rigor to ensure quality review and relevance.

### Screening and Analytical Process

A multi-stage screening approach was adhered to for rigour and transparency. As shown in Figure 2, the search started with a search of the public database and initial screening by titles and abstracts. Full text articles of relevant studies were reviewed for methodological quality and fit with the themes. Primary research and studies across disciplines were then thematically and temporally coded in order to extract central themes, methodological patterns, and policy implications.

### Analytical Tools and Procedures

The authors employed qualitative thematic coding and a temporal map to determine trends in emerging research. In cases where applicable, bibliometric software (CiteSpace) was applied to display the co-citation networks and thematic clusters. A variety of analytical and measurement tools – from quantifications such as indices to participatory processes were used across the papers reviewed; a detailed summary of these tools and their use is found in Appendix B. This methodological mix allowed both depth and breadth in the synthesis to identify the gaps in knowledge and direct future research.

Figure 2 below provides a visual summary of the literature review and analysis workflow, underscoring the sequential and iterative nature of the process

Table I: Comparative Analysis of Social Equity Frameworks in Urban Public Transport

Framework	Conceptual Basis	Key Indicators & Metrics	Practical Applications	Unique Contributions	Limitations
Distributive Justice	Fair allocation of resources & services	Coverage ratios, Gini index, access scores	Stop density, resource allocation	Tangible, actionable	May overlook procedural fairness



Procedural Justice	Fairness & inclusiveness in planning processes	Participation rates, stakeholder diversity	Advisory councils, participatory design	Builds legitimacy, stakeholder trust	Harder to quantify/standardize
Vertical Equity	Prioritizing the disadvantaged	Targeted subsidies, access for vulnerable	Fare discounts, accessible routes	Focuses on structural disadvantage	Can cause resistance, stigmatization
Horizontal Equity	Equal treatment among comparable groups	Uniform fares, standard access	Timetable fairness, equal stop spacing	Easy to communicate and benchmark	Ignores diversity of user needs
Capabilities Approach	Enhancing substantive opportunities	Empowerment indices, opportunity mapping	Barrier removal, universal design	Captures multidimensional disadvantage	Difficult to operationalize

This multidimensional understanding recognizes mobility as a key lever for urban opportunity and social inclusion. Leading agencies now integrate distributive and procedural equity in both strategy and evaluation, fostering systems that are not only efficient but also just and responsive to diverse community needs [27].

## A. Analytical Methods for Equity and Accessibility: Strengths, Innovations, and Limitations

The equity and accessibility analysis in transit has transformed from being based on just coverage statistics to complex multilayer analysis. Macro-methods such as the Lorenz curve and the Gini index offer macroscopic glimpse of inequities in access [28], [29], but may mask intra-group disparities or overlook

process-based issues. The adaptation of GIS for spatial analysis makes it possible to accurately map and measure “transit deserts” and service mismatches, while indices of accessibility evaluate the ease of access to a set of essential urban services (jobs, healthcare, education) under real conditions [30], [31].

Analyses have more recently used optimization models and composite indices that can model the effects of different types of intervention and trade-offs among competing objectives (e.g. efficiency and equity), or have captured the lived experiences and priorities of the affected people using participatory and qualitative methods [32], [33]. Table 2 provides more detailed analysis on these state-of-the-art methods.

Table 2: Comprehensive Comparison of Equity Assessment Methods in Urban Public Transport

Method/Tool	Analytical Depth	Data Requirements	Best Use Cases	Advantages	Limitations & Caveats
Lorenz Curve, Gini Index	Macro-level equity measurement	Moderate	System-wide audits, benchmarking	Simple, supports time/regional comparison	Lacks granularity, may miss user-specifics

GIS Spatial Analysis	High-resolution spatial mapping	High	Identifying “transit deserts”	Actionable visuals, supports targeted planning	Data- and skill-intensive
Accessibility Indices	Functional connectivity	High	Service optimization, investment focus	Relates to real-world opportunity	Can miss cost/reliability
Optimization Models	Multi-objective scenario testing	Very high	Strategic redesign, policy simulation	Supports trade-off analysis, robust forecasting	Complex, resource-intensive
Composite Indices	Multi-dimensional aggregation	High	Annual reporting, dashboarding	Holistic, aligns with policy targets	Sensitive to weighting, subjective choices
Participatory/Qualitative	Lived experience, context depth	Moderate	Inclusive planning, barrier mapping	Captures barriers unseen in data	Resource- and time-intensive

Notably, state-of-the-art research and practice advocate for **mixed-method approaches**. For example, combining participatory GIS with accessibility indices has been shown to yield actionable insights for both technical analysts and policymakers [34].

### B. From Assessment to Implementation: The Integrated Equity Planning Cycle

Translating powerful analytics into actionable policy and practice represents the next frontier in promoting social justice in urban transportation. Our most successful cities apply adaptive, cyclical processes that flow smoothly from analysis to engagement, policy production, and iterative monitoring. Empirical research shows that systems that follow this entire cycle also result in higher user satisfaction, more robust networks and material reduction in access gaps [35], [36].

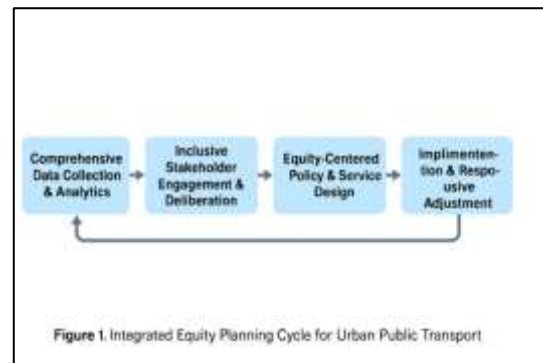


Figure 2 Integrated Equity Planning Cycle for Urban Public Transport

### C. Persistent Gaps and Strategic Priorities for Future Research

There are, however, large holes and hurdles remaining despite the above advances. Procedural fairness is commonly insufficient; many projects have limited meaningful input from stakeholders and transparent pathways [37]. The transfer of advanced methods to data-scarce or low-capacity settings continues to be a challenge [38]. In addition, there is limited research that systematically assesses the long-



term effects of equity interventions, particularly in the Global South or in rapidly urbanized areas [39].

Table 3: Key Gaps and Forward-Looking Priorities in Urban Transport Equity Research

Gap / Barrier	Explanation & Impact	Strategic Priority
Marginalization of Procedural Equity	Limited legitimacy, weak user buy-in	Institutionalize participatory decision-making
Poor Adaptability to Local Contexts	Tools/models not tailored for diverse realities	Develop scalable, flexible frameworks
Lack of Longitudinal Evaluation	Unclear sustainability, missed lessons	Foster international, long-term impact studies
Weak Community Integration	Decisions miss local priorities, reinforce exclusion	Mainstream co-design and qualitative evaluation
Siloed Data and Fragmented Governance	Disconnected planning, reduced effectiveness	Promote data integration and interagency platforms

Overcoming these gaps demands not only technical and methodological breakthroughs, but also bold leadership, cross-sector collaboration and sustained investment in data, capacity, skills and inclusive processes. Building on the study findings, future research and policy should turn to more flexible, contextually grounded frameworks which link programmatic and reform strategies by developing standards for procedural equity, addressing the voices of marginalized groups, and validly monitoring long-term effects across the wide variety of urban configurations.

## Conclusion

This synthesis reviewed the changing context for social equity in urban public transport planning in detail. The results show that modern models have clearly gone beyond simple division models to include the importance of procedural justice, vertical and horizontal fairness, and the possibility to empower the weakest actors. Payes places emphasis on powerful analytical tooling – from spatial analytics and composite indexes to participatory methods – that have significantly increased the ability to detect, measure and address disparities in access and service provision.

Nevertheless, several issues remain to be addressed. Procedural fairness in both theory and practice is underdeveloped – many planning projects are yet to engage stakeholders in earnest and promote transparency. Furthermore, there is limited transferability of the advanced tools and approaches applied to varied contexts and especially in resource poor and fast urbanizing cities. There is a lack of long-term impact assessments, and it is difficult to know with certainty the effectiveness (efficacy) and sustainability of equity-driven interventions. In addition, disjointed governance and insufficient synchronization of data systems and agencies remain a barrier to advancement.

Lessons learned include the idea that sustainable progress in transportation equity is seldom realized in academic vacuum and where it occurs, the usual supporting conditions include institutional buy-in, inter-sectoral collaboration and a culture of adaptive governance. Situating equity as a centrality throughout the planning process is not only a technical requirement but also a moral and social imperative, that has a direct effect on urban resilience, social inclusion and the achievement of the right to movement. As cities are increasingly characterised by complexity and inequality, the sustained quest for equal, inclusive and adaptable mass-transit systems

presents itself as the defining issue for both researchers and policy-makers

### Recommendations

In order to further social equity in urban public transport it is crucial to ensure that the principles of equity are explicitly and consistently integrated in the planning process, as well as in the decisions regarding transport systems. This requires more than a technology pledge, but social convergence that consideration for marginalized and vulnerable population is adequately reflected in decision-making of policies and delivery of services.

Another challenge is the development of flexible, context-sensitive tools for analysis or assessment, which can be customized and adjusted to match the specific situations in a variety of urban settings. This flexibility permits policies and interventions to be relevant and actionable across diverse urban contexts. At the same time, it will be essential to ensure sustained investment in strong data infrastructure and to build capacity over time, so that agencies are equipped to track progress toward equity goals and make data-informed decisions.

Long-term effectiveness and sustainability of equity-driven interventions must also have greater focus on longitudinal and comparison research. Tracking results over time, and in different contexts can help inform policymakers about what works, for whom, and under what conditions. Lastly, the encouragement of inter-sectoral cooperation is crucial for holistic, people-centered mobility as such is reliant on working relationships between transport authorities, urban planners, social services providers, and civil society. These approaches, in combination, build the foundation for fairer, more resilient and more inclusive urban mobility systems

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## Appendix A. Overview of Reviewed Studies

N o.	Author(s) & Year	Title & Reference	Country/City	Main Focus	Methodology	Key Findings
1	Bonner & Miller-Hooks (2023)	Achieving equitable outcomes through optimal design... [47]	USA (Washington DC)	Microtransit equity optimization	Quantitative (Optimization)	Microtransit optimization enhances access for vulnerable users.
2	Linovski et al. (2018)	Equity in practice? Evaluations of equity in planning... [48]	Canada (Toronto)	Bus rapid transit, planning equity	Qualitative (Case Study)	Procedural equity remains underdeveloped in practice.
3	Park et al. (2022)	Multiobjective approach to the transit	South Korea	Network design, equity-efficiency	Quantitative (Multiobjective)	Models can balance efficiency



		network... [50]				and equity in network design.
4	Faghihinejad et al. (2022)	Evaluating Social and Spatial Equity in Public Transport [53]	Iran (Tehran)	Spatial/social equity, accessibility	Mixed Methods	System expansion doesn't guarantee equity for all groups.
5	Tanvir et al. (2023)	Equitable access to transit: Case study of TNC users... [38]	USA (Chicago)	On-demand transit, equity, TNC users	Survey & GIS	Data-driven targeting increases accessibility for low-income.
6	Frias-Martinez et al. (2023)	The BALTO Toolkit – A New Approach to Ethical... [52]	Multiple	Data collection, ethical equity	Toolkit Development	Ethical data practices critical for sustainable equity research.
7	Braga et al. (2023)	Impact of public transport travel time inaccuracy... [31]	Portugal (Lisbon)	Accessibility, socio-spatial equity	GIS-based Analysis	Inaccurate travel times amplify spatial inequities.
8	Rubensson et al. (2020)	Fair accessibility – Operationalizing distributional effects...	Sweden (Stockholm)	Accessibility policy assessment	Quantitative/Policy Analysis	Distributional analysis supports fairer policy design.
9	Blair et al. (2013)	Analysing the impact of network change on transport disadvantage	UK (Belfast)	Network change, transport disadvantage	GIS & Qualitative	Network redesign can exacerbate or reduce disadvantage.
10	Kolkowski et al. (2023)	Measuring activity-based social segregation... [34]	Poland (Warsaw)	Social segregation, smart card data	Data Analytics	Smart card data reveals subtle segregation patterns.
11	Wang & Chen (2021)	Balancing economic efficiency and equity in accessibility..	Taiwan (Taipei)	Multi-use path equity, efficiency	Multi-objective Optimization	Trade-offs are necessary between economic and equity goals.



12	Ermagun et al. (2023)	Inequity analysis of spatial mismatch for low-income...	USA (Nationwide)	Spatial mismatch, vulnerable groups	National Dataset Analysis	Spatial mismatch persists for low-income populations.
13	Bonner & Miller-Hooks (2023)	Optimal design in microtransit zones... [37]	USA (Baltimore)	Microtransit, zone equity	Optimization Modeling	Zone design affects equitable outcomes for microtransit.
14	Li & Fan (2020)	Evaluating Public Transit Equity and Accessibility. ...	USA (Charlotte)	Transit equity & GTFS data integration	Data Integration & Modeling	GTFS data enables fine-grained equity assessments.
15	Pramanik et al. (2023)	Equity Promotion in Public Transportation [36]	USA (Multiple)	Public transport, equity promotion	Policy Review	Policy interventions yield varied equity outcomes.
16	Braga et al. (2023)	Socio-spatial inequalities in accessibility.. [31]	Portugal (Lisbon)	Travel time, socio-spatial equity	GIS Spatial Analysis	Time variability worsens access inequities.
17	Asgharpour et al. (2023)	Equity of public transit accessibility: Disadvantaged groups...	USA (Chicago Area)	Accessibility, disadvantaged populations	Accessibility Comparison	Notable differences in access among groups.
18	Faghihinejad et al. (2022)	Spatial Equity in Public Transport...	Iran (Tehran)	Spatial distribution, service coverage	GIS-based Analysis	Peripheral areas remain underserved.
19	Bruzzzone et al. (2023)	The definition of equity in transport [49]	Italy (Genoa)	Theoretical frameworks, equity concept	Literature Review	Equity in transport is context-dependent.
20	Linovski et al. (2018)	Equity in BRT planning... [48]	Canada (Toronto)	Bus rapid transit, planning justice	Qualitative Case Study	Justice requires more than distributive focus.
21	Park et al. (2022)	Multiobjective transit network design... [50]	South Korea	Network design, demand, equity	Multiobjective Modeling	Variable demand needs nuanced equity modeling.
22	Frias-Martinez	The BALTO Toolkit... [52]	International	Data toolkit for equity evaluation	Toolkit/Software	Open data critical for transparent



	et al. (2023)					equity evaluation.
23	Bonner & Miller- Hooks (2023)	Microtransit equity outcomes...	USA (Washingt on DC)	Design/optimiza tion, microtransit	Optimization Modeling	Improved microtransit design benefits vulnerable users.
24	Braga et al. (2023)	Socio-spatial inequalities, accessibility.. [31]	Portugal (Lisbon)	Socio-spatial equity, GIS mapping	Spatial Analysis	Accessibility mapping highlights urban gaps.
25	Asgharpo ur et al. (2023)	Comparison of accessibility among disadvantage d groups... [55]	USA (Cook County, IL)	Accessibility, group comparison	Comparative Quantitative	Not all policies benefit every disadvantag ed group equally.

Appendix B. Key Equity Measurement Tools and Practical Applications

Tool/Indic ator	Definition & Scope	Example Study (Country/C ity)	Data Required	Typical Applicatio n	Notable Strengths	Main Limitations
Gini Index	Measures overall inequality in access or resources	Faghihineja d et al. (Tehran, Iran)	Service data, demograp hics	Assessing system- wide equity in service coverage	Simple, cross- sectional	Lacks detail on group-specific gaps
Lorenz Curve	Visualizes cumulativ e distributio n of access	Bonner & Miller- Hooks (Washingto n DC, USA)	Ridership, access data	Benchmark ing distributio n of access or subsidies	Easy visual interpretat ion	Can be subjective
Accessibilit y Index	Quantifies ability to reach key destinatio ns	Braga et al. (Lisbon, Portugal)	Network, population , land use	Service planning, targeting investment s	Policy relevant, flexible	Ignores affordability/qu ality
Composite Equity Index	Aggregate s multiple dimension s (cost, time, etc.)	Park et al. (Seoul, South Korea)	Multiple data sources	Equity monitoring , strategic reporting	Holistic, customiza ble	Subjective weighting
GIS Spatial Analysis	Maps service, demograp hic, spatial disparities	Ermagun et al. (USA); Faghihineja d et al. (Tehran, Iran)	GIS layers, census, ridership	Identifying "transit deserts", underserve d areas	Granular, spatially explicit	Requires GIS skills, rich data



Participatory Mapping	Involves stakeholders in mapping barriers	Tanvir et al. (Chicago, USA)	Community engagement, GIS	Inclusive planning, needs identification	Contextual, user-driven	Time/resource intensive
Optimization Modeling	Tests policy or service scenarios for equity	Bonner & Miller-Hooks (Baltimore, USA)	High-resolution operational data	Simulating service or policy changes	Scenario-based, strategic	High technical barrier

#### APPENDIX C. SELECTED INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY EXPERIENCES IN URBAN TRANSPORT EQUITY

Country / City	Policy / Initiative	Main Approach	Outcomes / Impacts	Lessons Learned / Notes
London (UK)	Fare capping and Oyster card	Economic accessibility	Reduced fare burden for low-income commuters	Smart technology supports equity in payments
Stockholm (Sweden)	Participatory transit planning forums	Procedural justice, inclusion	Increased legitimacy and satisfaction among users	Ongoing dialogue sustains procedural fairness
Chicago (USA)	Microtransit pilots with real-time targeting	Data-driven resource allocation	Improved access for low-income, peripheral neighborhoods	Data analytics enable precise targeting
Guangzhou (China)	Accessibility mapping for service allocation	Spatial equity, GIS	Reallocation of services to under-served peripheries	GIS mapping reveals hidden service gaps
Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)	Women-only public transport initiatives	Gender equity, targeted services	Increased access and safety for female riders	Targeted programs can accelerate inclusion
Cairo (Egypt)	Public bus network expansion to informal settlements	Distributive justice	Extended affordable access to marginalized communities	System expansion reduces "transit deserts"
Tehran (Iran)	Metro subsidies for low-income groups	Vertical equity	Improved affordability for the most disadvantaged	Targeted subsidies are impactful if sustained
Dubai (UAE)	Smart card integration and route redesign	Tech-driven accessibility	More seamless travel, improved monitoring of user needs	Smart ticketing supports data-driven equity
São Paulo (Brazil)	Social fare integration	Economic and spatial equity	Greater access for low-income populations city-wide	Integrated policy maximizes equity effects
Sydney (Australia)	Accessibility action plans for persons with disabilities	Capabilities, universal design	Upgraded infrastructure and rolling stock	Universal design benefits all, not just target group