Cities are the powerhouses of the world economy. They generate more than 80% of the global economic output. The economic health of cities is thus central to global economic growth.

High quality public transport improves connectivity in metropolitan areas and reduces constraints on growth, by moving more people within the space available. This leads to economies of scale, as the increased connectivity and decreased constraints on growth allow for a higher concentration of businesses and more clustering of activities. This agglomeration improves communication, lowers infrastructure costs, and increases interaction with similar businesses, resulting in enhanced overall productivity and efficiency of the business community.

This is why, in London, one of the major advocates for the soon-to-be completed Crossrail project was the local business community: it realised that investment in public transport is key to matching employers with appropriately skilled employees, and retailers with customers.

Public transport also gives access to a larger variety of job and learning opportunities, which enables to build up skills and knowledge more quickly. Doing so, it also helps address significant imbalances between different parts of the city, contributing to improve equality within the area. Public transport itself is also a major contributor to both national and local city economies through the diverse range of skilled, high-tech jobs that it offers directly. In many cities, public transport operators are in fact among the largest employers.

Public transport can also act as a catalyst for wider urban development, helping to attract businesses and private investment to cities. The opening of a new metro line in the French
city of Lyon, for example, quadrupled the rate of urban regeneration in the corridor it served.

Traffic congestion can seriously harm the competitiveness of cities, affecting travel time reliability and business productivity. About 50 per cent of the cost of traffic congestion is borne by business. By transporting large numbers of people more efficiently, public transport has a major role to play in alleviating congestion and smoothing traffic flows.

Public transport also contributes to the global appeal of a city. It plays an essential role in city tourism development, as it is often the prime means for visitors – whether on business or for leisure – to get about the city, to access heritage and cultural sites, and to access local businesses. Research from the American Public Transportation Association has shown that cities with rail transport from nearby airports to the city centre are more attractive for both business travellers and international conferences and meetings, thus benefitting local economies.

Public transport generates a wide range of economic benefits for cities, well beyond just the mobility sphere. By directly contributing to the competitiveness of cities, public transport enables savings and creates value for individuals, businesses and public authorities, notably through higher tax revenues. Public transport also helps leverage private investment in the city. Overall, investment in public transport generates value that exceeds the initial investment – up to 3 to 4 times.

When public transport schemes are integrated into economic development strategies – urban development and housing policies, education and employment strategies, as well as the tourism sector – cities are able to truly flourish.

Local governments should be empowered so as to be able to carry out successfully such integrated urban strategies. For its creates value at the local level, which can be captured by local governments for the funding of infrastructures and services, public transport should be an integral part of any future urban agenda.

This topic will be addressed during the UITP-World Bank Side Event on Tuesday 27 May at 11:00 (Hall 5, level +1)

Women in transport

12 June 2015
Magdalena Olczak-Rancitelli, International Transport Forum
The role of women in the transport sector is something that needs to be addressed. Women account for only 17.5% of the workforce in EU urban public transport for example, and hold less than 10% of technical and operational jobs. In the United States, women comprise only 15% of transport and related... Read more
Transport, trade and tourism

27 May 2015
Pravin Krishna, Chung Ju Yung Distinguished Professor of International Economics and Business at Johns Hopkins University
To mark the opening of the International Transport Forum’s Annual Summit, today’s post is by the Summit’s keynote speaker Pravin Krishna, Chung Ju Yung Distinguished Professor of International Economics and Business at Johns Hopkins University We live in exciting times.... Read more

Why should cities foster coach tourism?

26 May 2015
Nick Greenfield, ETOA - the European Tourism Association
Polis and EMTA are hosting a side event at the ITF Summit about cities and coach transport. Several European cities, such as Budapest and Amsterdam have developed strategies for coach tourism, access and routing in answer to the increasing challenges that coach tourism and travel brings. The IRU... Read more

How public transport supports business and tourism in cities

25 May 2015
Alain Flausch, Secretary General, International Association of Public Transport (UITP)
Cities are the powerhouses of the world economy. They generate more than 80% of the global economic output. The economic health of cities is thus central to global economic growth. High quality public transport improves connectivity in metropolitan areas and reduces constraints on growth, by... Read more

Sharing economy and collective transport: a level playing field is key

21 May 2015
Oleg Kamberski, IRU Head of Passenger Transport
The desire for innovative businesses to make the most of new technology is driving the economy. Current technology allows for companies to work more efficiently, offer new products to customers and create new or meet unsatisfied consumer demand. Today, people have access and the opportunity to... Read more

How to Be a Smart Freight Leader

13 May 2015
Sophie Punte (Executive Director, Smart Freight Centre) and Angie Farrag-Thibault (Associate Director, BSR)
Imagine you are the CEO of a multinational company trying to get millions of shoes, laptops, and candy bars to consumers around the globe. Your global freight supply chain is
vast and complex, involving thousands of contractors who use a combination of trucks, trains, ships, and planes to reach... Read more

**Long-distance freight transport - innovation for climate mitigation**

6 May 2015
Francois Davenne, Secretary General, International Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF)
Innovation can facilitate the modal shift to rail, a key component for climate change mitigation. However, rail’s network structure and insufficient legal and technical interoperability need to be tackled in order to achieve such innovation. In terms of interoperability... Read more

**Transforming urban mobility for a better future**

23 April 2015
Andrey Berdichevskiy, Senior Community Manager, Automotive Industry, World Economic Forum
Urbanisation, coupled with strong population growth in certain regions, will add an additional 2.5 billion people to cities by 2050, by which point two-thirds of the world’s population will be based in urban areas. As such, cities around the world will face increasing demand for urban... Read more

**Keeping the world’s top transport policy event on track**

17 April 2015
Lesley Brown, EURAILmag, The Magazine for European Rail Decision Makers
The ITF’s Annual Summit has become the must-attend event for high-level exchange on global transport strategies for the 21st century. With only weeks to go to the 2015 Summit, EURAILmag caught up with José Viegas, ITF Secretary-General, and Mary Crass, ITF Head of Policy and Summit... Read more

**Make logistics a pillar of a global sustainable development strategy!**

10 April 2015
Marco L. Sorgetti, Director General, FIATA (International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations)
In the year 2000, the 189 member states of the United Nations set themselves eight priority objectives to be achieved by 2015. Known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), they ranged from eradicating extreme poverty and achieving universal primary education to ensuring environmental stability... Read more

**Aviation’s climate action takes flight**
3 April 2015
Michael Gill, Executive Director, Air Transport Action Group
I would like you to think for a moment about the coordination it takes to get one flight into the air. From the engineers who build and maintain the aircraft, to the airline flight crews and the airport baggage handlers and ground teams, the catering staff and the air traffic management personnel... Read more

**Getting more from city tourism growth**

12 March 2015
Ruud van der Ploeg, Secretary-General, European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA)
City tourism is a thriving income source for local economies. Innovative local authorities will make the most of recent “shared economy” opportunities, from increased employment as rentals and goods’ hire boom, to technology jobs for app-makers to design better city mapping,... Read more

**Boost global growth through better logistics connectivity!**

26 February 2015
Nicolette van der Jagt is Director General of CLECAT
Ensuring convenient access to global trade by providing logistics connectivity is the best political investment policy makers can make. The Global Connectedness Index 2014 compiled by logistics DHL shows that emerging economies are about as globally connected as advanced economies in terms of trade... Read more