

# INCLUSION GUIDE FOR CYCLE LOGISTICS IN EUROPE

COMPREHENSIVE & INCLUSIVE  
CYCLE LOGISTICS EDUCATION  
PROGRAM (CICLE)



Image : Carton Plein



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## ***INCLUSION GUIDE FOR CYCLE LOGISTICS IN EUROPE (2025)***

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# INCLUSION GUIDE FOR CYCLE LOGISTICS IN EUROPE

The cycle logistics sector is at a pivotal moment. To address growing labour shortages, it must open up to a wider range of profiles, including women, people distant from the labour market, and newcomers from other countries. However, this **transition does not happen automatically** : it requires deliberate engagement and concrete actions to transform internal practices and become more welcoming to those beyond the sector's traditionally overrepresented group of young, privileged men.

Promoting inclusion benefits everyone. Improving working conditions, providing training for all, ensuring fair recruitment and promotion processes, and involving workers in governance enhances well-being, reduces turnover, and professionalises the sector. Equally important is challenging and deconstructing the prevailing image of the job – currently seen as highly athletic and male – to attract a broader, more diverse workforce. Diversity and gender balance are powerful drivers of creativity, innovation, and overall performance.

Embedding equality and inclusion as strategic priorities brings wider **societal and economic benefits** : fostering social justice, promoting cycling practices, and encouraging innovation in industry products. This guide focuses on actionable steps to create a more representative, equitable, and sustainable sector, targeting those at risk of social exclusion, including women, unskilled youth (especially NEETs), older workers, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, and others distanced from cycle logistics opportunities.

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## Content

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Introduction                      | 3  |
| One day as a bike courier         | 4  |
| Assessing your level of inclusion | 5  |
| Taking concrete actions           | 11 |

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Image : Urbike

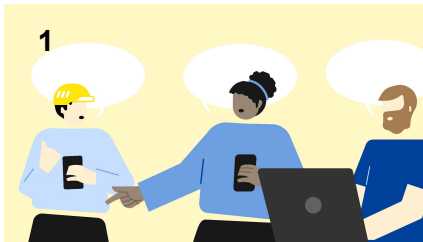


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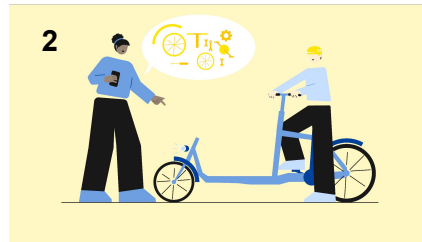
# ONE DAY AS A BIKE COURIER

## Overview

The aim of this section is to present the work of a cycle courier as it truly is, while **challenging common stereotypes** – such as the perception that it is an exclusively male profession or that most of the working day is spent only on the bike. In practice, the role of a cycle courier is far more diverse. It involves a **wide range of activities**, from preparing delivery rounds to tidying up equipment at the end of the shift, with the delivery process itself forming only one part of the working day.



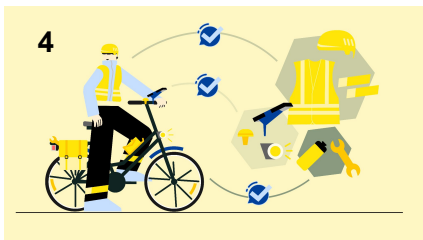
**Briefing and digital preparation**



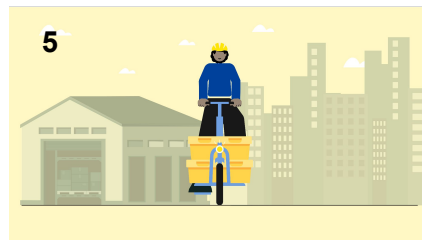
**Vehicle preparation**



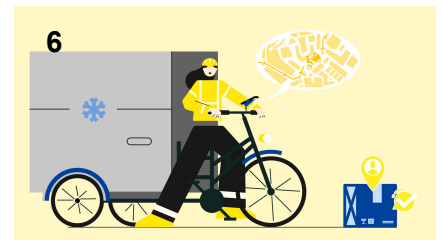
**Loading the vehicle**



**Physical preparation**



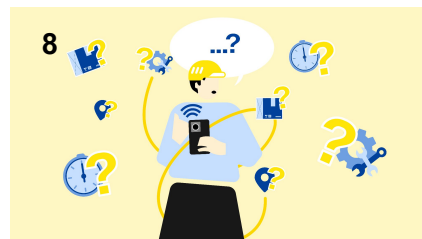
**Leaving the hub**



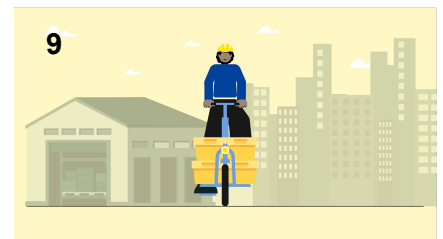
**Pick-ups and deliveries**



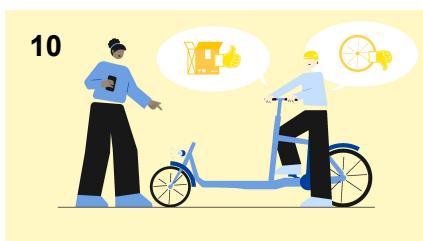
**Expecting the unexpected**



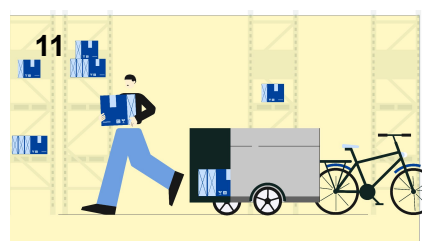
**Asking for help**



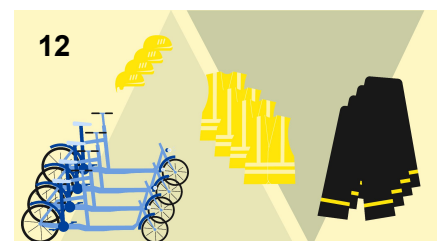
**Returning to the hub**



**Reporting and giving feedback**



**Returning goods**



**Storing the equipments**

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Introduction

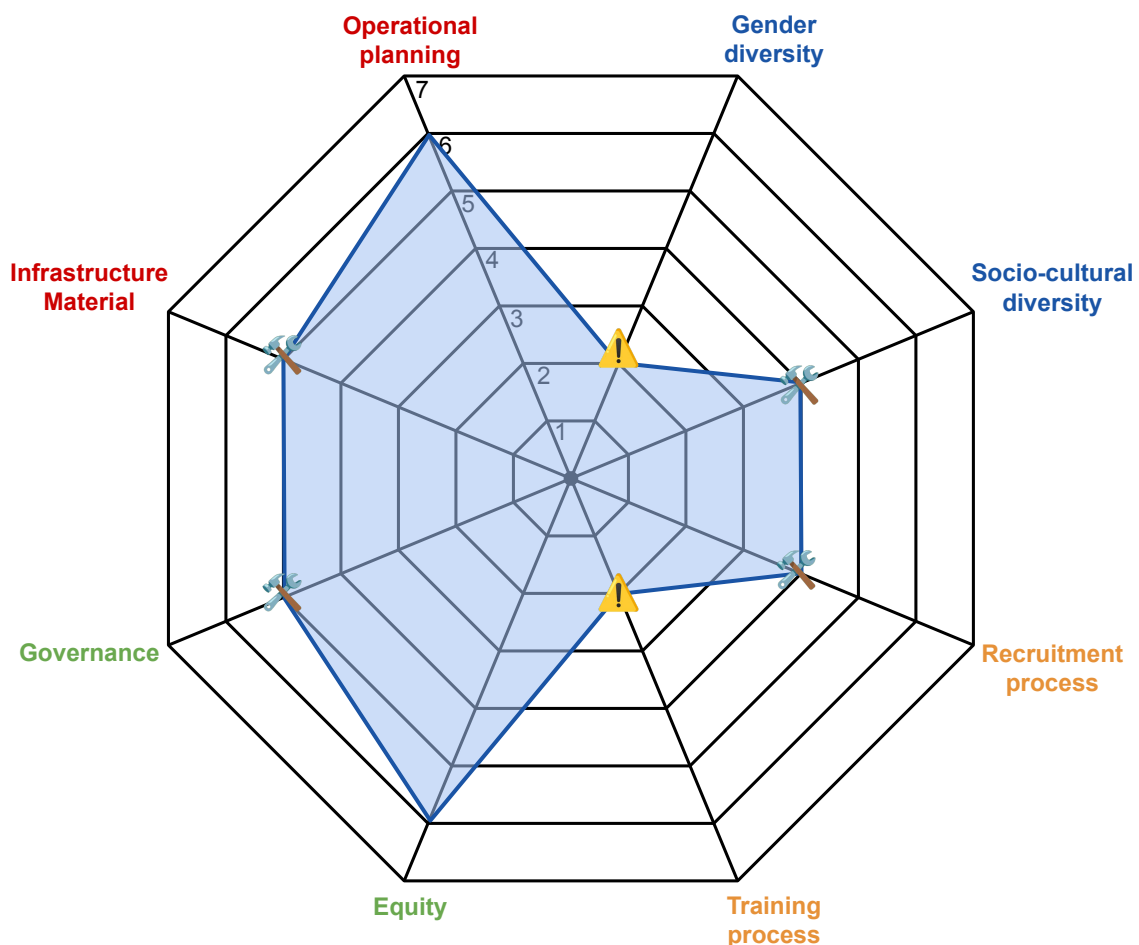
[This tool](#) does not pretend to provide a full diagnostic of the level of inclusion within an organisation. Yet, it is designed to provide first insights and **understand their current level of inclusion**. By assessing where you stand today, it will highlight the areas that need the most attention.

[The tool](#) is structured around **eight categories** : gender diversity, socio-cultural diversity, recruitment, training, equity, governance, infrastructure and material, and operational planning. For each category, a **score from 1 to 7** is calculated, where 1 represents the lowest level of inclusion and diversity and 7 represents the highest.

By connecting the scores across the eight categories in the matrix, you can generate your organisation's **internal profile**. This profile highlights the areas that require the most attention and allows you to prioritise corrective actions. As a general guideline :

- **Scores 1 to 3** : significant gaps and a need for corrective measures ⚠
- **Scores 4 to 5** : moderate performance, where improvements can strengthen inclusion 🔧
- **Scores 6 to 7** : strong performance, can serve as good practices for other organisations OK

Take the test and assess your level of inclusion by following [this link](#).



# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Diversity

### Gender diversity

Men are overrepresented in the logistics and transport sector, cycle-logistics is not an exemption. This result was highlighted in our first report and is also shown in various sector reports : women make up 22% of transport workers in Europe (EC, 2022), 13% of professional in the cycling industry are women in France (France Vélo, 2023 ; FUB, 2023) 12,7% of bike couriers do not identified as men (BCLF, 2023).

To assess this indicator, divide the total number of workers identifying as men (hereafter referred to as people from category 1) by the total number of workers.

### Socio-cultural diversity

In our analysis of the sector, we observed varying patterns in socio-cultural diversity across organisations. In some companies, a recurring profile emerges – i.e., an overqualified, able-bodied person in their thirties and in good physical form – while others display a broader range of backgrounds and experiences.

To assess this indicator, divide the total number of European workers characterised by a certain level of overqualification, able-bodied, in their 30s and in good physical form (hereafter referred to a category 1) by the total number of workers.

$$\% = \frac{\text{Number of workers from Category 1}}{\text{Number of workers}}$$

The **grading system** goes as follows :

| %           | Interpretation        | Score |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------|
| 100%        | Homogeneity           | 1     |
| [90%-100%[  | Very strong imbalance | 2     |
| [80%-90%[   | Strong imbalance      | 3     |
| [70%-80%[   | Clear imbalance       | 4     |
| [60%-70%[   | Noticeable imbalance  | 5     |
| [50%-60%[   | Approaching balance   | 6     |
| 50% or less | Balance               | 7     |

The **grading system** goes as follows :



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# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Recruitment and training processes

### Recruitment process

Recruitment, along with the selection process, can sometimes create barriers to entry in a sector. It refers to the actions of finding, attracting, screening, interviewing, selecting, and hiring new candidates. To make your organisation more inclusive, it is important to review and adjust these processes.

Use the following questions to evaluate the inclusivity of your courier recruitment process. Each “Yes” answer scores **one point** on a 7-point scale.

| Questions                                                                                                                                                                                   | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>Defined process</b> : does your organisation have a clearly defined recruitment and selection process?                                                                                   |     |    |
| <b>Transparency</b> : is this process communicated clearly to all candidates?                                                                                                               |     |    |
| <b>Targeting underrepresented groups</b> : do you make efforts to reach underrepresented or minority groups?                                                                                |     |    |
| <b>Skills-based assessment</b> : does the process prioritise transferable skills and potential rather than expecting perfect prior experience?                                              |     |    |
| <b>Bias mitigation</b> : are steps taken to reduce unconscious bias during screening, interviews, or evaluations?                                                                           |     |    |
| <b>Inclusive job descriptions</b> : are job postings written in a way that encourages a diverse range of candidates to apply (e.g., inclusive language, avoiding unnecessary requirements)? |     |    |
| <b>Feedback and improvement</b> : does your organisation collect candidate feedback and review recruitment outcomes to continuously improve inclusivity?                                    |     |    |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                                |     |    |

 **A score between 0 and 3** suggests that the inclusion in the recruitment process is low to nonexistent and corrective measures should be taken.

 **A score between 4 and 5** suggests that inclusion in the recruitment process is moderate and corrective measures should be considered.

 **A score between 6 and 7** suggests that inclusion in the recruitment process is high and should be maintained.



# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Recruitment and training processes

### Training process

Training is a series of learning activities designed to help a person acquire the skills and knowledge needed for a new job, activity, or process. It plays a central role in making a profession more inclusive. It enables the development of both technical and soft skills for all types of profiles, helping to remove barriers to entry and career progression.

Use the following questions to evaluate the inclusivity of your organisation's training process for couriers. Each "Yes" answer scores **one point** on a 7-point scale.

| Questions                                                                                                                             | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>Initial training</b> : are new candidates provided with initial training when they join?                                           |     |    |
| <b>Continuous Training</b> : is there a form of ongoing or continuous training available?                                             |     |    |
| <b>Formalised Training</b> : is the training structured and formalised (e.g., with a curriculum or training plan)?                    |     |    |
| <b>Assessment moments</b> : are there moments of evaluation or feedback to monitor progress and learning outcomes?                    |     |    |
| <b>Diversity of needs</b> : does the training accommodate the different needs and learning styles of participants?                    |     |    |
| <b>Accessibility</b> : is the training accessible to people with varying levels of prior experience or educational background?        |     |    |
| <b>Supportive Environment</b> : are mentoring, coaching, or additional support mechanisms available to help all participants succeed? |     |    |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                          |     |    |

 **A score between 0 and 3** suggests that the inclusion in the training process is low to nonexistent and corrective measures should be taken.

 **A score between 4 and 5** suggests that inclusion in the training process is moderate and corrective measures should be considered.

 **A score between 6 and 7** suggests that inclusion in the training process is high and should be maintained.



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# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Equity and governance

### Equity

Equity refers to the level of fairness within an organisation, both in terms of working conditions and opportunities for professional development. Ensuring equity helps all employees, regardless of background, to have equal access to rewards, recognition, and career progression.

Use the following questions to evaluate the inclusivity of your organisation's equity practices for couriers. Each "Yes" answer scores **one point** on a 7-point scale.

| Questions                                                                                                                                                                 | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>Pay equity</b> : is there pay parity for equivalent roles within your organisation?                                                                                    |     |    |
| <b>Transparency of compensation</b> : are compensation structures and criteria for pay increases clearly communicated and transparent?                                    |     |    |
| <b>Access to benefits</b> : do all employees have equal access to benefits, allowances, or other forms of support?                                                        |     |    |
| <b>Opportunities for development</b> : are promotion and career development opportunities available fairly to all employees?                                              |     |    |
| <b>Decision-making fairness</b> : are decisions regarding work assignments, promotions, or responsibilities made based on objective criteria rather than subjective bias? |     |    |
| <b>Supportive policies</b> : are there policies or practices in place to address inequities or provide additional support to underrepresented or disadvantaged employees? |     |    |
| <b>Intersectional equity</b> : does your organisation consider intersectional factors (e.g., gender, origin, disability) when assessing pay equity?                       |     |    |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                              |     |    |

 **A score between 0 and 3** suggests that the level of equity is low to nonexistent and corrective measures should be taken.

 **A score between 4 and 5** suggests that the level of equity is moderate and corrective measures should be considered.

 **A score between 6 and 7** suggests that the level of equity is high and should be maintained.



# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Equity and governance

### Governance

Gouvernance refers to the mechanisms that structure an organisation while providing spaces for dialogue, participation, and decision-making that support inclusion and diversity. Inclusive governance ensures that all voices are heard and considered in shaping policies, processes, and workplace culture.

Use the following questions to evaluate the inclusivity of your organisation's governance. Each "Yes" answer scores **one point** on a 7-point scale.

| Questions                                                                                                                                                                                  | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>Trusted representatives</b> : are trusted individuals designated to support employees and ensure their concerns are heard?                                                              |     |    |
| <b>Diverse leadership</b> : does the leadership or decision-making body reflect a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives?                                                 |     |    |
| <b>Participation opportunities</b> : Are there formal opportunities for employees at all levels to contribute to decisions affecting the organisation?                                     |     |    |
| <b>Transparency</b> : are decision-making processes and criteria clearly communicated to staff?                                                                                            |     |    |
| <b>Inclusive policies</b> : are policies in place to ensure that all employees can participate meaningfully in organisational discussions (e.g., meetings, committees, feedback channels)? |     |    |
| <b>Accountability mechanisms</b> : are there systems in place to hold individuals accountable for all forms of discrimination and violence?                                                |     |    |
| <b>Strategic alignment</b> : are diversity and inclusion objectives integrated into the organisation's strategy and regularly reviewed by leadership?                                      |     |    |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                               |     |    |

 **A score between 0 and 3** suggests that inclusion in the governance is low to nonexistent and corrective measures should be taken.

 **A score between 4 and 5** suggests that inclusion in the governance is moderate and corrective measures should be considered.

 **A score between 6 and 7** suggests that inclusion in the governance is high and should be maintained.



# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Infrastructure, material and operational planning

### Infrastructure and material

It refers to the adaptability of the physical work environment and equipment to accommodate different profiles of couriers. This includes facilities such as changing rooms, restrooms, and rest areas, as well as the adjustability of equipment to different body sizes and morphologies (e.g., bicycle saddle and handlebars, protective clothing, and gear).

Use the following questions to evaluate the inclusivity of your organisation's inclusion level in terms of infrastructure and material. Each "Yes" answer scores **one point** on a 7-point scale.

| Questions                                                                                                                                                                                  | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>Changing facilities</b> : are changing rooms designed so that all employees can find a suitable and comfortable space?                                                                  |     |    |
| <b>Restrooms accessibility</b> : are restrooms separated, inclusive, and equipped to ensure everyone can use them with dignity (e.g., sanitary bins for menstrual products)?               |     |    |
| <b>Rest and break areas</b> : are rest areas accessible, comfortable, and adequate for employees of all profiles?                                                                          |     |    |
| <b>Safety and accessibility</b> : are all facilities (e.g., entrances, storage areas, repair stations) physically accessible and safe for people with different mobility or sensory needs? |     |    |
| <b>Bicycle adjustability</b> : are bicycles adjustable to accommodate different body sizes and morphologies?                                                                               |     |    |
| <b>Protective clothing and equipment</b> : are uniforms, protective clothing, and personal protective equipment adaptable to different body types?                                         |     |    |
| <b>Feedback and improvement</b> : is there a process for employees to report infrastructure or equipment issues and suggest improvements related to accessibility or comfort?              |     |    |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                               |     |    |

 **A score between 0 and 3** suggests that the infrastructure and the material are not inclusive and corrective measures should be taken.

 **A score between 4 and 5** suggests that the infrastructure and the material are moderately inclusive and corrective measures should be considered.

 **A score between 6 and 7** suggests that the infrastructure and the material are relatively inclusive and should be maintained. .



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# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Infrastructure, material and operational planning

### Operational planning

Operational planning refers to the internal organisation of work (such as working hours and shift durations) and the design of delivery rounds (including distance to cover and weight to carry). Inclusive operational planning ensures that work schedules, routes, and physical demands are manageable and fair for all employees.

Use the following questions to evaluate the inclusivity of your organisation's inclusion level in terms of operational planning. Each "Yes" answer scores **one point** on a 7-point scale.

| Questions                                                                                                                                                       | Yes | No |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>Flexible working hours</b> : can work schedules be adapted to accommodate employees with family responsibilities, such as parents?                           |     |    |
| <b>Maximum route distance</b> : is there a maximum distance set for delivery rounds (e.g., 40 km per shift)?                                                    |     |    |
| <b>Maximum load</b> : is there a maximum total weight limit for delivery rounds (e.g., 120 kg per round)?                                                       |     |    |
| <b>Maximum parcel weight</b> : is there a maximum weight per parcel or item to be delivered (e.g., 10 kg per unit)?                                             |     |    |
| <b>Handling equipment</b> : does the organisation provide handling equipment (e.g., trolleys, pallet trucks) to assist with heavy loads?                        |     |    |
| <b>Shift duration</b> : are shift durations designed to be manageable and equitable for all employees?                                                          |     |    |
| <b>Participatory planning</b> : are employees involved in the design or adaptation of operational planning to ensure it reflects diverse needs and constraints? |     |    |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                    |     |    |

 **A score between 0 and 3** suggests that inclusion in the governance is low to nonexistent and corrective measures should be taken.

 **A score between 4 and 5** suggests that inclusion in the governance is moderate and corrective measures should be considered.

 **A score between 6 and 7** suggests that inclusion in the governance is high and should be maintained.



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# TAKING CONCRETE ACTIONS

## Recruitment and training processes

### Recruitment process

⚙️ **Communication channels** : to increase the diversity of applicants, it is preferable to advertise job openings through multiple channels—such as direct contact with employment and training agencies, social media, company websites, or specialised job platforms

⚙️ **Job description** : focus on the truly essential skills and qualities required and avoid gendered wording. When describing the *ideal candidate*, there is a risk of listing an excessive number of skills, some of which may not actually be relevant to the position, and thereby discouraging otherwise qualified applicants.

⚙️ **Evaluation** : use a recruitment evaluation grid as it helps to assess candidates as objectively as possible at every stage and allows for fairer comparisons.

⚙️ **Mixed gender-balanced recruitment pair** to reduce cognitive bias in evaluations.

⚙️ **Training on inclusive recruitment** to raises awareness of biases and prevents common pitfalls.

⚙️ **Consider temporary quotas** to help addressing underrepresentation.

⚙️ **Non-mixed test sessions** to allow participants to perform at their best without self-censorship or stress.

⚙️ **Skills-based selection processes** to focus on practical skills rather than formal experience, assessing only truly necessary technical and soft skills.

### Training process

⚙️ **Technical training modules** : provide instruction on the profession and digital tools to support those less familiar due to educational or generational factors.

⚙️ **Violence and discrimination prevention training** : collaborate with expert partners to address all forms of violence and discrimination, targeting both managers and couriers/trainees.

⚙️ **Mentoring in the first month** : assign an experienced mentor to guide new couriers, offering feedback and support to build confidence and ease the learning process.

⚙️ **Accessible training materials** : supply resources in multiple formats, such as written supports, short videos, simulations.

⚙️ **Partnerships with vocational training centres, NGOs and local entities** : to offer specialised courses and provide soft and technical skills training in communication, conflict resolution, time management, languages, digital tools through organisations experienced in social inclusion.



Image : Urbike



# TAKING CONCRETE ACTIONS

## Infrastructure, material and operational planning

### Inclusive and safe workspaces

⚙️ **Inclusive design** : remove any sexist or stereotypical visuals and provide varied spaces (shared and private) that cater to different needs and personalities.

⚙️ **Rest areas** : balance leisure and relaxation areas to appeal to everyone, not just to a single demographic.

⚙️ **Accessible facilities** : provide gender-neutral or separate dressing rooms, sanitary protection, and safe, well-lit rest areas.

⚙️ **Support couriers during their period** : map safe city locations where couriers can access restrooms during their rounds (e.g., via formal agreements with regular customers) and formalise menstrual leave.

### Realistic workload and delivery times

⚙️ **Hourly pay** : avoid task-based remuneration as it only increases the pressure on speed and efficiency.

⚙️ **Achievable delivery times** : design schedules that allow for safe riding, customer interaction, and rest breaks.

⚙️ **Route optimisation** : use software that distributes deliveries fairly based on distance, load, and difficulty.

⚙️ **Workload limits** : define maximum loads and number of stops per route to prevent physical strain.

⚙️ **Adjust staffing during peak periods** : reinforce teams or adapt shifts to manage seasonal or event-related workload increases.

⚙️ **Respect recovery periods** : ensure couriers have adequate rest between shifts to avoid burnout and injury.

### Ergonomics and equipments

⚙️ **Bike and equipment adaptability** : provide different bike options, as well as adjustable saddles, handlebars, seats, handles, footrests, and clothing options to prevent strain and ensure everyone feels comfortable.

⚙️ **Maintenance** : ensure regular servicing and equip bikes with safety features such as disc brakes and puncture-resistant tyres.

⚙️ **Protective gear** : supply helmets, gloves, and reflective clothing to minimise risks on the road.

⚙️ **Promote ergonomic practices** : train employees on proper posture, lifting techniques, and bike handling to avoid musculoskeletal injuries.

### Weather conditions

⚙️ **Appropriate clothing** : offer rainproof and thermal gear to reduce discomfort and health risks in harsh conditions.

⚙️ **Implement safety protocols** : define clear rules for suspending or modifying routes during storms, extreme heat, or icy weather.

⚙️ **Create rest and warming areas** : provide indoor or sheltered spaces where couriers can take breaks during severe conditions.

⚙️ **Educate on weather preparedness** : Include seasonal safety training and advice on hydration, rest, and self-care.

⚙️ **Changing room** : provide space for changing clothes, as well as personal storage such that bike couriers can be prepared for different weather conditions.



# TAKING CONCRETE ACTIONS

## Infrastructure, material and operational planning

### Work-life balance

⚙️ **Schedule inclusively** : avoid organising meetings, training, or important events late in the afternoon to allow full participation, especially for employees managing domestic responsibilities.

⚙️ **Encourage parental leave for second parents** : promote the uptake of full second-parent and parental leave, particularly among fathers, to foster equality in caregiving.

⚙️ **Offer flexible working hours** : adapt working shifts to personal constraints, and emphasise the right to disconnect.

⚙️ **Monitor gendered impact** : track and assess how planning and working conditions affect workers participation, pay, and long-term benefits, aiming to reduce inequalities linked to caregiving responsibilities.

### Support

⚙️ **Foster community links** : organise regular opportunities to meet, share experiences, and build solidarity, including dedicated groups or networks for women and gender minorities.

⚙️ **Provide confidential reporting channels** : implement anonymous systems for reporting abuse, harassment, overload, or safety concerns, ensuring protection from retaliation.

⚙️ **Offer access to mental health support** : provide counselling services or partnerships with mental-health professionals, giving couriers tools to manage work-related and personal stress.

⚙️ **Encourage peer mentoring** : pair new couriers with experienced riders to strengthen social ties, facilitate knowledge sharing, and promote mutual support.



Image : Urbike



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# TAKING CONCRETE ACTIONS

## Equity and governance

### Fair remuneration and transparency

⚙️ **Ensure pay transparency** : make salary grids, pay scales, and criteria for raises accessible to all employees.

⚙️ **Include salary information in job postings** : to demonstrate fairness from the outset and helps avoid negotiations that may disadvantage underrepresented groups.

⚙️ **Review bonus allocation processes** : assess the criteria used to award bonuses to ensure they are objective and free of bias.

⚙️ **Guarantee legal pay increases** after parental leave : to ensure that their career progression is not penalised by parenthood.

### Fight against all form of discrimination and violence

⚙️ **Include clauses in contracts** : integrate explicit clauses that prohibit all forms of violence or harassment.

⚙️ **Appoint and train a contact person** : nominate a trained point of contact for prevention of violence. This person should receive resources and authority to act.

⚙️ **Formal protocol** : define unacceptable behaviour and the steps for detecting, reporting, investigating, and sanctioning cases.

⚙️ **Confidential reporting mechanism** : create a *listening cell* where victims and witnesses can safely raise concerns.

⚙️ **Accessible information** : display clear information about rights and procedures in common spaces.

⚙️ **Accountability** : once a report is made, a clear treatment process should be in place to ensure timely investigation and appropriate action.

### Leadership commitment

⚙️ **Lead by example** : management must set the tone by modelling inclusive behaviour.

⚙️ **Create working group** to work on inclusion and diversity : form a dedicated group that represents different roles and profiles within the organisation. Renew its membership annually to give everyone an opportunity to contribute and to share responsibilities fairly.

⚙️ **HR policies and resources** : formalise the organisation's commitment – such as a Code of Conduct, an Equality Charter, and a Prevention Guide.

⚙️ **Transparent communication** : report and communicate the action undertaken – for example during team meetings.

### Inclusion in governance

⚙️ **Shared leadership structures** : introduce co-management arrangements to ensure gender balance and diversity of perspectives at the decision levels.

⚙️ **Parity quotas** : apply parity quotas in decision-making bodies.

⚙️ **Bike courier committee** : even in small enterprises, set up a group of couriers who meet regularly with management to discuss operational issues, share feedback, and relay concerns.

⚙️ **Regular anonymous surveys** : gather staff feedback on workload, well-being, and training needs through anonymous digital or paper surveys. Provide an open suggestion mechanism where workers can submit ideas for improvement.



# TAKING CONCRETE ACTIONS

## General recommendations for inclusion and diversity

### Highlight team diversity in communication

⚙️ **Representative visuals** of different ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds.

⚙️ **Sharing couriers' stories** highlighting the diverse experiences on the job, but also fostering representation among underrepresented minorities.

### Community engagement

⚙️ **Collaborate with local employment centres and NGOs.**

⚙️ **Partner with migrant and refugee support organisations.**

⚙️ **Participate in events** to raise awareness of the sector.

### Advocacy and public action

⚙️ **Participate in public debates** (panels, forums, meetings) with city officials.

⚙️ **Use your communication platform** to showcase working conditions.

⚙️ **Launch press releases and campaigns highlighting the benefits of cycle logistics** and the risks of harmful policies.

⚙️ **Report** to local or national cyclists' associations and federations.



Image : Bike Logic



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# INCLUSION GUIDE FOR CYCLE LOGISTICS IN EUROPE

As introduced earlier, fostering inclusion and diversity in cycle logistics requires concrete actions and committed from sector organisations. This short guide aims at engaging its actors to take actions and improve, step by step.

This guide is a condensed version of a more detailed deliverable, which is available [here](#). It provides more detailed information on :

- **inclusion and diversity** (context of the sector, profiles of people at risk, benefits, European context, gender stereotypes and violence, inclusive training approaches)
- **concrete actions** to be deployed for more inclusive and diverse cycle logistics organisations
- **use cases and inspirations** from the cycling, cycle logistics and socio-professional integration sectors.

## INCLUSION GUIDE FOR CYCLE LOGISTICS IN EUROPE

COMPREHENSIVE & INCLUSIVE CYCLE LOGISTICS EDUCATION PROGRAM (CICLE)



Image: Carton Plein, Paris

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## INTRODUCTION

### Profiles of people at risk

Before using this guide and its tools, it is essential to **identify the profiles of people at risk of exclusion and discrimination**. It is also crucial to understand the specific challenges faced by each of these target audiences in order to address them effectively.

This work is particularly important, as our report on the state of training in Europe highlighted a **significant overrepresentation of young, relatively privileged men** in the majority of the organisations we surveyed.

| Groups at risk           | Primary obstacles                                                                                | Consequences on employment                                                                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unskilled youth          | Lack of academic and professional training                                                       | Precarious jobs, low wages, temporary contracts, no career progression                           |
| People with disabilities | Social stigma, lack of workplace adaptations                                                     | Low hiring rates, unsuitable job offers                                                          |
| Vulnerable women         | Double discrimination (gender and social), single motherhood, gender-based violence              | Gender pay gap, precarious contracts, difficulty accessing senior positions, informal employment |
| Seniors (over 50)        | Prejudices (high cost, lack of adaptability to new technologies)                                 | Long-term unemployment, loss of career and self-esteem                                           |
| Homeless people          | Lack of a fixed address, health issues, disconnection from the labour market, stigmatisation     | Administrative barriers, professional isolation, employer rejection                              |
| Former inmates           | Criminal record, disconnection from the labour market, unsuitable qualifications                 | Immediate dismissal upon background checks, difficulty explaining gaps in CVs                    |
| Immigrants/Refugees      | Non-recognition of qualifications, cultural and social barriers, irregular administrative status | Very limited access to formal employment, work in the informal economy, under-skilling           |

Note that a **person may belong to several groups** at the same time, thereby increasing the risk of exclusion.

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## SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

### Use cases

**CARTON PLEIN**

**Diversity** : 25% of women in the staff (steadily increasing share), diverse ages, backgrounds, education levels, and nationalities.

**Recruitment & training process** : focus on motivation and learning potential rather than experience. Job offers aim for inclusivity, but there is still room for improvement. Training is consistent, specific, and personalised.

**Equity & Governance** : transparent, fair pay and promotion based on objective criteria, with a fixed pay ratio. Cooperative governance ensures collective decision-making.

**Operations** : hub comfort/accessibility could be improved, limited by space and budget. Schedules are flexible and adapted to personal needs, with monitored loads and distances.

**Recruitment process** : Gender diversity, infrastructure and material  
**Socio-cultural diversity, equity, governance, operational planning**

**CARTON PLEIN**

**Diversity** : social and professional integration by recruiting people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. Commitment to improving gender balance (objective 10 women in the team by 2025).

**Recruitment & training process** : focus on motivation rather than prior skills (developed through training). Efforts to attract candidates, especially women, who may be discouraged by the nature or perception of the job.

**Equity & Governance** : transparent and equitable pay, with all employees having equal access to benefits, allowances, and support.

**Operations** : separate changing rooms, adjustable bicycles, and equipment for all body types. Work schedules are flexible, and delivery routes are designed with manageable distances and loads to allow timely breaks.

**Gender diversity, equity  
Governance  
Socio-cultural diversity, recruitment and training processes, infrastructure and material, operational planning**

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## TAKING CONCRETE ACTIONS

### Infrastructure, material and operational planning

**Inclusive and safe workspaces**

Creating inclusive, safe, and welcoming spaces is essential to ensure that every employee feels comfortable and valued. A workspace that reflects **diverse needs** – from privacy and accessibility to gender safety and representation – helps challenge stereotypes and promotes a stronger sense of belonging among all couriers.

- **Inclusive design** : remove any sexist or stereotypical visuals and provide varied spaces (shared and private) that cater to different needs and personalities.
- **Rest areas** : balance leisure and relaxation areas to appeal to everyone, not just to a single demographic.
- **Accessible facilities** : provide gender-neutral or separate dressing rooms, sanitary protection, and safe, well-lit rest areas.
- **Support couriers during their period** : map safe city locations where couriers can access restrooms during their rounds (e.g. via formal agreements with regular customers) and formalise menstrual leave.

**Ergonomics and equipment**

Proper equipment and ergonomics directly affect couriers' health, safety, and comfort. Providing well-adjusted, well-maintained, and diverse gear helps prevent injuries, reduce fatigue, and make the job accessible to people of different body types and abilities. It is particularly important for bikes, but other equipments such as helmets, clothes or bags should also be considered in the reflections.

- **Bike and equipment adaptability** : provide different bike options, as well as adjustable saddles, handlebars, seats, handles, footrests, and clothing options to prevent strain and ensure everyone feels comfortable.
- **Maintenance** : ensure regular servicing and equip bikes with safety features such as disc brakes and puncture-resistant tyres.
- **Protective gear** : supply helmets, gloves, and reflective clothing to minimise risks on the road.
- **Promote ergonomic practices** : train employees in proper posture, lifting techniques, and bike handling to avoid musculoskeletal injuries.



Image: Urbex

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## GAINING KNOWLEDGE ON INCLUSION

### Social and ethnic diversity in cycle logistics

**Current state of the sector**

The cycle logistics sector remains **largely homogeneous**, both socially and ethnically. Our analyses of the courier training programs already highlighted an overrepresented profile : young, able-bodied and overqualified men. The same observation emerges in France where the typical worker in the sector is a white man, around 33 years old, often holding higher education degrees (Bac+2 to Bac+5), even though such qualifications are not required for the job (Les Boîtes à Vélo, 2023).



This profile highlights a lack of social and cultural representativeness in the sector. Opportunities in cycle logistics are often visible only within activist or environmental networks, attracting people already engaged in ecological transitions. In contrast, individuals without formal qualifications or with migrant backgrounds frequently turn to delivery platforms, which are perceived as more accessible but often less secure and more precarious.

International studies also show a broader lack of diversity in the bicycle and cargo bike ecosystem, visible not only in the underrepresentation of women but also in the absence of attention to social or migratory origins among employees.

**Structural barriers**

Several systemic barriers contribute to the sector's homogeneity :

1. **Linguistic and cultural barriers** : cycle logistics jobs often require mastery of local language (e.g., safety rules, maintenance, communication). This can effectively exclude people with migrant backgrounds or those who are not fluent.
2. **Network-based recruitment** : hiring often occurs informally, through word-of-mouth or within local cycling communities. While efficient, this reproduces social homogeneity and limits access for people outside these networks.
3. **Stereotypes about the job** : the collective image of a 'bike courier' is typically a sporty, independent, urban man. This stereotype discourages others – especially women, older workers, or people from different socioeconomic backgrounds – from pursuing the profession.
4. **Lack of inclusive policies** : few companies in the sector have implemented proactive strategies to promote diversity, leaving underrepresented groups with limited access to opportunities.

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## INSPIRATIONS

LES MERCEDES

Mercedes Barcelona SCCL is a non-profit cooperative established in July 2020 by a group of professionals in educational tourism. The COVID-19 crisis provided an opportunity to rethink urban mobility and logistics, leading to a model centered on sustainable, socially responsible transport. The cooperative offers transportation and logistics solutions for companies and individuals, promoting bicycles and electric vehicles as viable alternatives to platform-based mobility. As part of Somocicologica, a network of cycle logistics cooperatives in Catalonia, Mercedes Barcelona SCCL actively contributes to transforming the city's transport system toward more inclusive, environmentally conscious, and solidarity-based practices. Its diverse team includes women, LGTBIQA+ people, migrants, racialised individuals, and vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion, ensuring a **strong social and gender perspective in a sector traditionally dominated by men**.

**Key actions :**

- Developed an **inclusive, diverse workforce** integrating women, LGTBIQA+ people, migrants, and racialised or vulnerable individuals.
- **Promoted gender perspective** and actively challenged the male-dominated culture in urban logistics.
- Maintained a diverse fleet : mechanical and electric bicycles, tricycles, light motorcycles, and isothermal motorcycles for food transport, **adapted to different operational areas**.
- Offered specialised, professional customer service combining delivery and route logistics.
- **Collaborated with local entities** specialising in labor reintegration, providing opportunities for individuals at risk of social exclusion.
- **Engaged in intercooperation with other urban distribution cooperatives**, building economic frameworks outside of traditional capitalist modes and fostering responsible consumption.
- **Made visible and supported marginalised groups** to combat structural inequalities including patriarchy, racism, and ableism.



Image: Les Mercedes

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