

NSAR undertook diversity research for Transport UK to help the organisation understand its current demographics and identify EDI development opportunities.

Client

Transport UK is the private-sector transport operator of Greater Anglia, West Midlands Trains, East Midlands Railway and Merseyrail, as well as 9% of London's bus routes.

Brief

Transport UK asked NSAR to investigate the diversity of its workforce and make recommendations for improvement.

Our process

NSAR undertook discussions with current employees to understand individual and collective barriers to improving diversity. We also collated quantitative data from the Transport UK TOCs to understand how they compared and carried out desktop research on Transport UK and EDI best practices and common barriers across the rail industry. A number of case studies from different industries were investigated to gain insights.

Outcome

The research found that the industry is male-dominated and has a low proportion of people from ethnic backgrounds.

A number of barriers to entry into the sector were identified. It was not attractive to under-25s, women, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, or people who have parental and care commitments. Most companies treated EDI as 'tick-box' exercises. There was also a lack of clear progression opportunities. In addition, the research showed that external influences – such as advice from parents and teachers – were pushing young people towards the 'safe' university route.

Recommendations were made to improve EDI and its perception and tackle barriers to entry for diverse individuals.

