

UIC WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2028



INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

UIC
WORK
PROGRAMME
2026-2028



INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

FOREWORD BY
YUJI FUKASAWA,
CHAIR OF UIC AND JR EAST



As the Chair of UIC, I am honoured to introduce the UIC Work Programme 2026-2028. This programme builds upon the strong foundations laid by my predecessors and represents a comprehensive response to the global demand for sustainable and efficient transport systems.

This new phase arrives at a crucial time, with rail's capabilities more vital than ever in addressing pressing global challenges. This critical Work Programme has been prepared with our members, our partners, and dedicated UIC staff, whose vision for the future of rail has enabled us to build this ambitious third edition. I pledge my full support toward its implementation.

UIC exists to serve long-term objectives and thus requires a forward-looking agenda. These objectives include repositioning rail as an essential mode of transport in transforming cities and connecting communities, embracing innovation in energy and technology to deliver a seamless, high-quality customer experience.

Furthermore, UIC will advocate for a transport paradigm shift and promote the environmental performance of rail to access climate-related funding.

Together, on a global scale, we will strive to build a future for railways that is more sustainable, safer, efficient, and innovative.

“UIC WILL ADVOCATE
FOR A TRANSPORT
PARADIGM SHIFT
AND PROMOTE THE
ENVIRONMENTAL
PERFORMANCE OF RAIL
TO ACCESS CLIMATE-
RELATED FUNDING.”

INTRODUCTION BY ALAN BEROUD, UIC CHAIR 2024-2025



As we embark on the 2026-2028 strategic cycle, the International Union of Railways is entering a decisive new chapter. This new phase is arriving at a time when rail's unique capabilities have never been more essential to addressing humanity's most pressing challenges.

Our world faces a convergence of unprecedented mobility imperatives: climate change demands a rapid and comprehensive level of transport decarbonisation, accelerating urbanisation requires efficient mass transit solutions, and economic realities require infrastructure investment that maximises societal return while also ensuring long-term resilience.

The recent transformative years have conclusively demonstrated two critical truths. First, rail transport's fundamental role in creating sustainable, resilient mobility ecosystems has moved from aspirational to essential. Second, UIC's capacity to deliver actionable solutions, technical expertise, and visionary leadership has positioned our organisation as an indispensable catalyst for transformation across rail worldwide.

The rail sector stands at the intersection of environmental necessity and economic opportunity. Rail represents our most powerful method for reducing emissions, enhancing connectivity, improving logistics efficiency, and ensuring equitable access to transport.

Yet seizing this opportunity requires a coordinated international approach, strong technical foundations, and a shared strategic vision. UIC is uniquely positioned to provide these pillars.

“UIC WILL CONTINUE
TO UNITE THE WORLD'S
RAILWAYS IN CREATING
MOBILITY SOLUTIONS
WORTHY OF THE FUTURE
WE WISH TO BUILD.”

Throughout the previous three-year cycle, UIC has consolidated its role as an influential and future-driven organisation. Project activity has grown significantly, our global impact has expanded, and our contribution to standardisation and operational guidance has strengthened.

The increasing engagement of our regions, across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and North America, has demonstrated the vitality and diversity of our membership. We must now build on this momentum to deepen our impact and ensure that UIC continues to serve as the global reference for railway cooperation, innovation, and expertise.

This new work programme builds upon our proven foundations while boldly advancing our collective drive. It represents not merely an organisational roadmap but a comprehensive response to society's urgent demand for transport systems that harmonise human needs with the planet's natural limits. Through strategic focus, collaborative innovation, and unwavering commitment to excellence, UIC will continue to unite the world's

railways in creating mobility solutions worthy of the future we wish to build.

Starting 2026, UIC will commit to deliver more operational value and to provide transformative support to our members: we will ensure that UIC continues to be a global leader in shaping the future of rail.

Most importantly, it is our commitment to doing more without increasing our members' financial burden, through efficiency gains, strategic focus, and the expansion of value-creating activities.

I wish to warmly thank our members, our strategic partners, and the UIC staff whose dedication and visionary thinking have built this ambitious programme. The challenges ahead are significant, but our collective capacity is even greater.

By implementing this work programme with consistency and passion, we will not only strengthen the global rail sector but ensure that rail continues to play its essential role in building a world that is more sustainable, seamlessly connected, and resilient for generations to come. ■

INTRODUCTION BY FRANÇOIS DAVENNE, UIC DIRECTOR GENERAL



Since 2020, UIC has been structuring its activities around three-year work programmes, facilitating the launch of more coordinated and ambitious activities across its regional networks. For the next time period, UIC will build on its current success by developing a more operationally focused roadmap that increases activity – both technical and advocacy-related – thereby strengthening its capacity and resources without requiring fee increases.

As a result, it will be necessary to continuously boost productivity to support the expansion of UIC's activity.

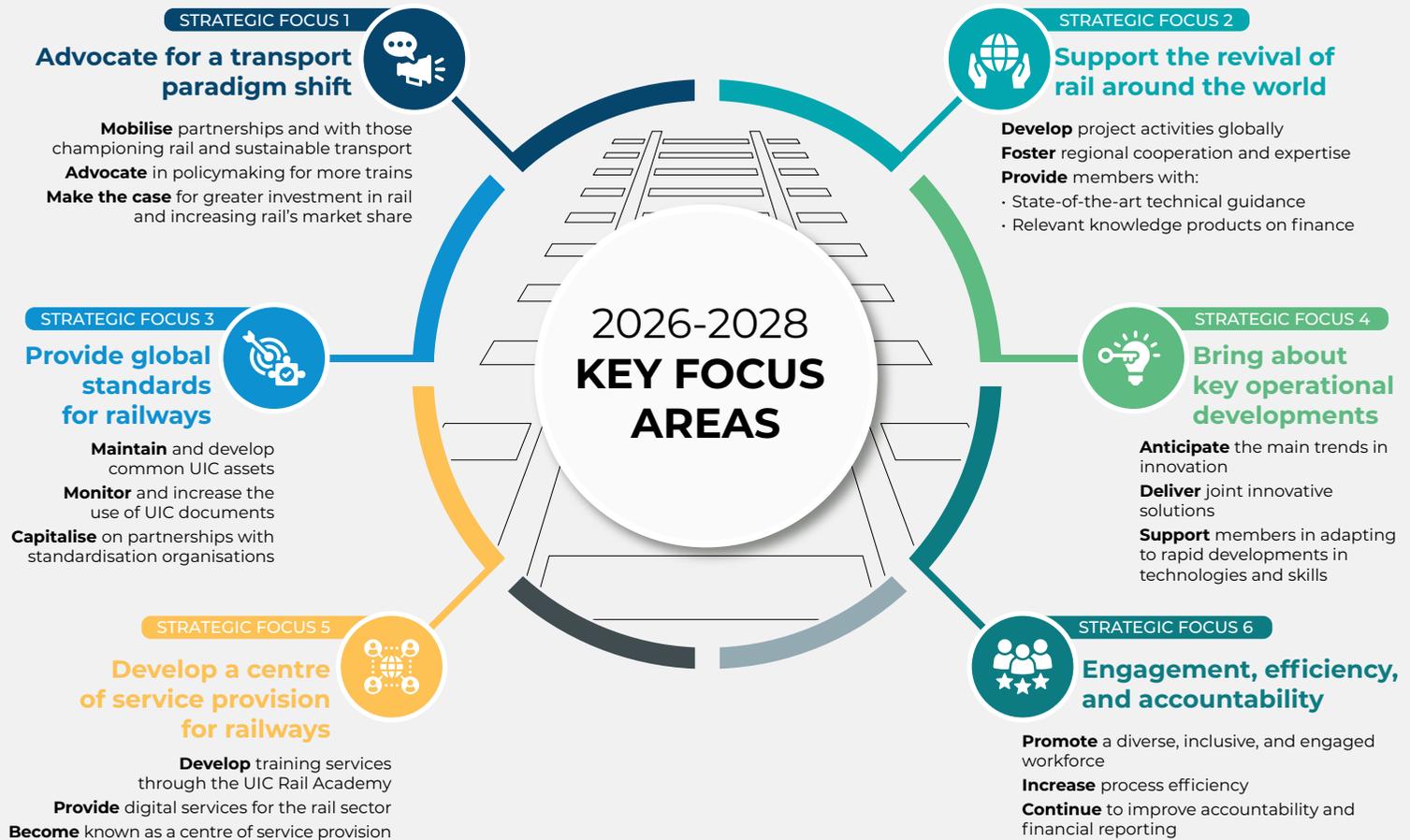
Additionally, UIC will continue to support its diverse and inclusive workforce, increasing efficiency in processes, and improving financial reporting. Internal communication and feedback loops will be strengthened to ensure that these strategic goals are embraced by all UIC staff.

Over the 2021-2025 period, project activity increased by 51%, from €9.5 million to €14.2 million. Although similar growth is not anticipated for the 2026-2028 period, UIC's efforts will remain steady, to ensure gradual stabilisation.

Our strategic objectives are therefore in line with our permanent development strategy – to serve our members – with clear operational goals:

► **Advocate for more trains and a transport paradigm shift:** UIC will position rail as central to achieving global sustainability goals by fostering strategic partnerships and engaging with policymakers to promote the modal shift to rail as a climate solution. To achieve this, UIC will demonstrate that rail is a worthwhile investment, especially when supported by climate finance mechanisms to enable the expansion and modernisation of railway infrastructure.

- **Support the global revival of rail** through the expansion of UIC's international project activities by:
- Enhancing regional cooperation by providing the relevant tools and expertise to support rail development worldwide.
 - Strengthening participation in EU-funded projects, enabling the redirection of funding to UIC members, as demonstrated by the more than €20 million from the Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS), which were reinvested into industry projects within the sector.
 - Building strategic partnerships with international financing institutions (IFIs) and other key organisations to support rail infrastructure and innovation.
- **Develop global standards for railways:** Standardisation is essential to ensuring safety and interoperability across different regional networks.



It also plays a key role in reducing costs, streamlining maintenance operations, and accelerating the implementation of innovations that are compatible with existing systems. UIC aims to increase and monitor the adoption and use of its products while leveraging partnerships with other standardisation organisations to maximise impact.

- ▶ **Anticipate and support operational developments:** UIC will continue to anticipate emerging trends and innovations, providing members with harmonised solutions.

As a global hub of railway and mobility expertise, UIC will foster operational efficiency and help members adapt to rapidly evolving technologies and skills requirements. It is also essential to build a global R&I network, including with academics specialized in mobility trends, in order to offer the best solutions to UIC members.

- ▶ **Expand and enhance service provision for railways:** Building on its recognised value, UIC will strengthen its role as a centre of service provision.

This includes enhancing the UIC Rail Academy and positioning the organisation as a leading global platform for railway knowledge and expertise, while generating new resources to support its mission. As UIC is providing customised solutions developed by rail-based mobility stakeholders for rail-based mobility stakeholders, including digital solutions provision, these UIC standards and solutions could be extended to the general transport ecosystem, offering a new field of operation and reinforcing the foundations. ■



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UIC MEMBERS AROUND THE WORLD

217

Members

84

countries

3,600

billion passenger-kilometres

10,000

billion tonne-kilometres

1

million kilometres of line

6

million rail personnel

And ...

131

UIC working groups

100

UIC partnerships

50

UIC events per year

**NORTH
AMERICA**

9
MEMBERS

Canada
Mexico
United States
of America

**LATIN
AMERICA**

7
MEMBERS

Argentina
Brazil
Chile
Colombia

116^{**}
MEMBERS

EUROPE

Austria	France	Montenegro	Serbia
Belarus	Germany	Netherlands	Slovakia
Belgium	Greece	North Macedonia	Slovenia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Hungary	Norway	Spain
Bulgaria	Ireland	Poland	Sweden
Croatia	Israel*	Portugal	Switzerland
Czechia	Italy	Romania	Türkiye*
Denmark	Latvia	Russian Federation*	Ukraine
Finland	Luxembourg		United Kingdom

AFRICA

24
MEMBERS

Algeria	Libya
Burkina Faso	Mauritania
Cameroon	Morocco
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Niger
Egypt	Senegal
Ethiopia	South Africa
Gabon	Sudan
Ivory Coast	Tunisia
Kenya	United Republic of Tanzania

17
MEMBERS

MIDDLE-EAST

Afghanistan	Saudi Arabia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Syrian Arab Republic
Iraq	Türkiye*
Israel*	United Arab Emirates
Jordan	
Oman	

53
MEMBERS

ASIA PACIFIC

Armenia	Malaysia
Australia	Mongolia
Azerbaijan	Philippines
China	Republic of Korea
Chinese Taipei	Russian Federation*
Georgia	Thailand
India	Vietnam
Japan	
Kazakhstan	

*Members with dual regional membership.

**Considering these dual regional memberships, the total number of UIC Members is not equal to the number of members from each region.



COMMITMENT TO
REGIONAL STRATEGY



REGIONAL ROADMAP FOR AFRICA

The Africa Regional Assembly (ARA) region represents **9.3% of the UIC member base and 4% of the fees**. The region holds significant untapped potential, with major investment needs in both freight and passenger rail transport. The Africa region is actively working to unlock this potential by aligning UIC's technical expertise with the continent's priorities and development goals.

The ARA is continuing to drive and define strategic priorities

The Africa Roadmap, developed and implemented by the members under the leadership of Mohamed Rabie Khlie, Director General of the Moroccan National Railways (ONCF) and Chair of the region, illustrates how UIC's added value can be mobilised to support the region's goals. This collaborative approach ensures that UIC's technical expertise is deployed in a way that benefits all members and supports broader continental integration.

Key priority areas include safety, security, rolling stock, research and innovation (R&I), and capacity building through targeted training initiatives.

Building on the momentum of the 2024-2025 period, the Africa Region remains steadfast in enhancing its progress throughout 2026-2028. Strategic priorities include Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs) for Africa in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the mobilisation of sustainable financing for railway development. At the same time, efforts will continue to enhance UIC's visibility and engagement across the African railway community.

Main areas of interest include:

- ▶ Africa Safety Taskforce, including conducting a Safety Peer Review
- ▶ Africa Security Taskforce including a potential regional working group
- ▶ Rolling Stock Taskforce covering standard gauge and narrow-gauge networks
- ▶ African digital congress, held every two years
- ▶ Women in Rail in Africa Taskforce
- ▶ Training programmes, in collaboration with ONCF and the Africa Regional Office, covering safety and security topics, track and rolling stock maintenance, and project management
- ▶ Webinars on topics of interest to the African railway community
- ▶ Implementation of a Regional Competence Hub in Rabat, Morocco
- ▶ In-person event on Railway Project Financing, held every two years, with a focus on railway corridors and technical governance
- ▶ Collaboration with the African continent and regional institutions



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UIC is continuing to strengthen its role as a trusted partner, providing added value and technical expertise to support continental integration. This includes close cooperation with:

- ▶ The African Union Commission (AUC) on the African Integrated Railway Network (AIRN)
- ▶ Regional Economic Communities such as the Southern African Railways Association (SARA) and East African Community (EAC) through technical assistance initiatives.

Mobilising sustainable financing remains a key priority. The region is actively strengthening partnerships with development banks and financial institutions to secure funding for railway projects with the Regional Economic Communities and railway networks. Additionally, there are ongoing discussions on Memorandums of Understanding with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).



REGIONAL ROADMAP FOR ASIA-PACIFIC

The Asia-Pacific region is of substantial strategic importance, **representing 22% of UIC membership and 26% of fees**. This dynamic and varied region holds significant potential, driven by rapid urbanisation, increasing demand for sustainable and efficient transport solutions, and the pressing need for continued investment in both passenger and freight rail infrastructure.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly (APRA) is continuing to define and drive strategic priorities

The APRA vision to “Connect rail to life for a better future” and the mission of the Asia-Pacific railways “to serve as a key to enter an era of sustainable railways” have been developed and implemented by members under the leadership of Han Moon Hee, former CEO of KORAIL and Chair of the region.

This roadmap is structured around four core values:

- ▶ Railways must establish the best safety systems
- ▶ Railways must embrace sustainability
- ▶ Railways must foster momentum for future growth
- ▶ Railways must make an effort to enhance achievements and expand their impact

In practical terms, members have defined and approved the Regional Opt-in Procedure (ROP), which allocates more than €250,000 annually to implement these four core values through projects proposed by the Asia-Pacific region and selected by vote during the autumn APRA.

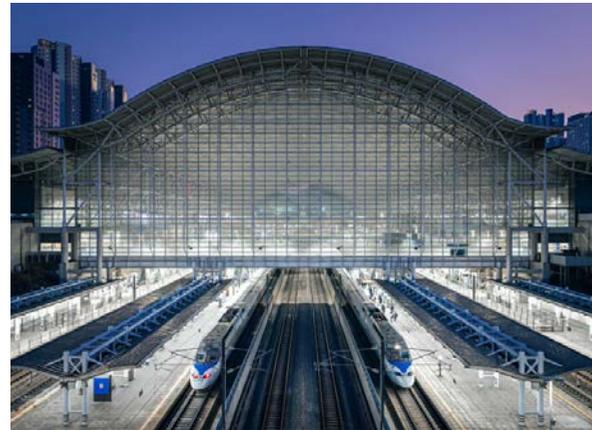
As a result, five to six projects are undertaken each year, primarily consisting of research studies, research seminars, and training sessions. This regional roadmap demonstrates how UIC's technical expertise can be effectively aligned with regional development goals.

This collaborative approach delivers tangible value to members operating across a wide range of national and operational contexts. The region is also deeply engaged in UIC's technical work, with numerous experts actively contributing to standardisation and security activities and participating in working groups at the UIC headquarters.

Key priorities include the development of projects and training tailored to the specific needs of the Asia-Pacific region, as well as greater involvement in global UIC initiatives. While participation in international projects is steadily increasing, it currently remains relatively limited. To address this, members at the 38th APRA Meeting, held in India, agreed to establish a dedicated taskforce. Its mission is to better align regional contributions with UIC's general programme, enhance coordination, and raise the visibility and impact of Asia-Pacific members within the international rail community.



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Looking ahead to the 2026–2028 milestone and beyond, the Asia-Pacific Region is committed to expanding its regional activities and is actively considering the establishment of a **dedicated regional office** in the geographic area. It will serve as a strategic platform to strengthen UIC’s presence, responsiveness, and alignment with members across the region. It will support the implementation of the APRA strategy, foster stronger stakeholder engagement, promote the development of region-specific projects, and enable more agile participation in local events and initiatives. Importantly, this initiative is designed to operate without placing an additional financial burden on the UIC headquarters.

Main areas of focus also include the mobilisation of sustainable financing, by continuing to engage with financial institutions and their partners at both local and regional (e.g. Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), etc.) The objective is to further increase UIC’s visibility and strengthen advocacy efforts.



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REGIONAL ROADMAP FOR EUROPE

The Europe region represents **54% of the UIC member base and 60% of the fees.**

The European Management Committee (EMC) frames the strategic agenda

The Strategic Regional Roadmap, implemented and driven by the EMC throughout 2024 and 2025, has now successfully delivered the added value expected via the EMC College. It has demonstrated how UIC's technical expertise can be effectively leveraged regarding the European agenda for the benefit of all of its members.

The core objective of the roadmap was to identify and address focus topics essential to the success of the rail sector, ensuring these were managed collectively through a coordinated European approach. The 6 priority topics are ticketing, FRMCS, resilience, standardisation, digital twins and quality and robustness of the network.

Building on the achievements of 2024-2025, the EMC is committed to consolidating this progress in the 2026-2027 period. The focus will be on integration, innovation, and further alignment with European objectives whilst also continuing to foster cross-regional initiatives where relevant.

The Key Strategic Directions can be described as follows:

1. Extending regional reach:

- Strengthen regional cooperation and cross-conception with other UIC regions, using Europe's experience to inform and learn from other regional initiatives.
- Continue addressing resilience and climate adaptation in collaboration with technical departments.
- Create links with advocacy activities on climate finance to support and secure long-term investment flows into rail infrastructure.
- The geopolitical landscape of South-East Europe has undergone profound change since 2022, fundamentally reshaping transport connectivity and strategic priorities for the European Union (EU) and its partners. These developments have reinforced the strategic importance of rail transport as a secure, resilient, and sustainable mode supporting both civilian and defence mobility. It is intended to capitalise on existing partnerships such as South East Europe Strategic Alliance for Rail Innovation (SEESARI) to support the regional implementation of the EMC focus topics and the long-term goal of a single interoperable rail area in South-East Europe.



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2. Enhancing standardisation and data integration:

- Advance the Digital Twin programme to improve asset management, operational efficiency, and innovation readiness.
- Explore partnerships, for example, from the aerospace industry, to accelerate standardisation and structured data exchange between railway manufacturers and operators.
- Drive the operational implementation of the standardisation strategy for the region and position relevant UIC assets in operational support to members for implementing EU policy.

3. Foster research in Europe:

- Research and innovation remain vital pillars of the European rail sector's growth. Here, the partnership with the EU Rail Joint Undertaking (EU-Rail) stands out as a cornerstone of the European region's research framework, contributing to building interoperable and sustainable rail systems. The UIC Europe Region remains committed to maintaining and strengthening this partnership.
- The EMC's coordinated approach throughout 2024-2025 has reinforced the European Region's strategic role within UIC and the broader rail ecosystem. With clear priorities for 2026-2027, a more inclusive and result-oriented Plenary Assembly, and continuing to leverage key partnerships, the Region is well-positioned to deliver measurable impact for its members.



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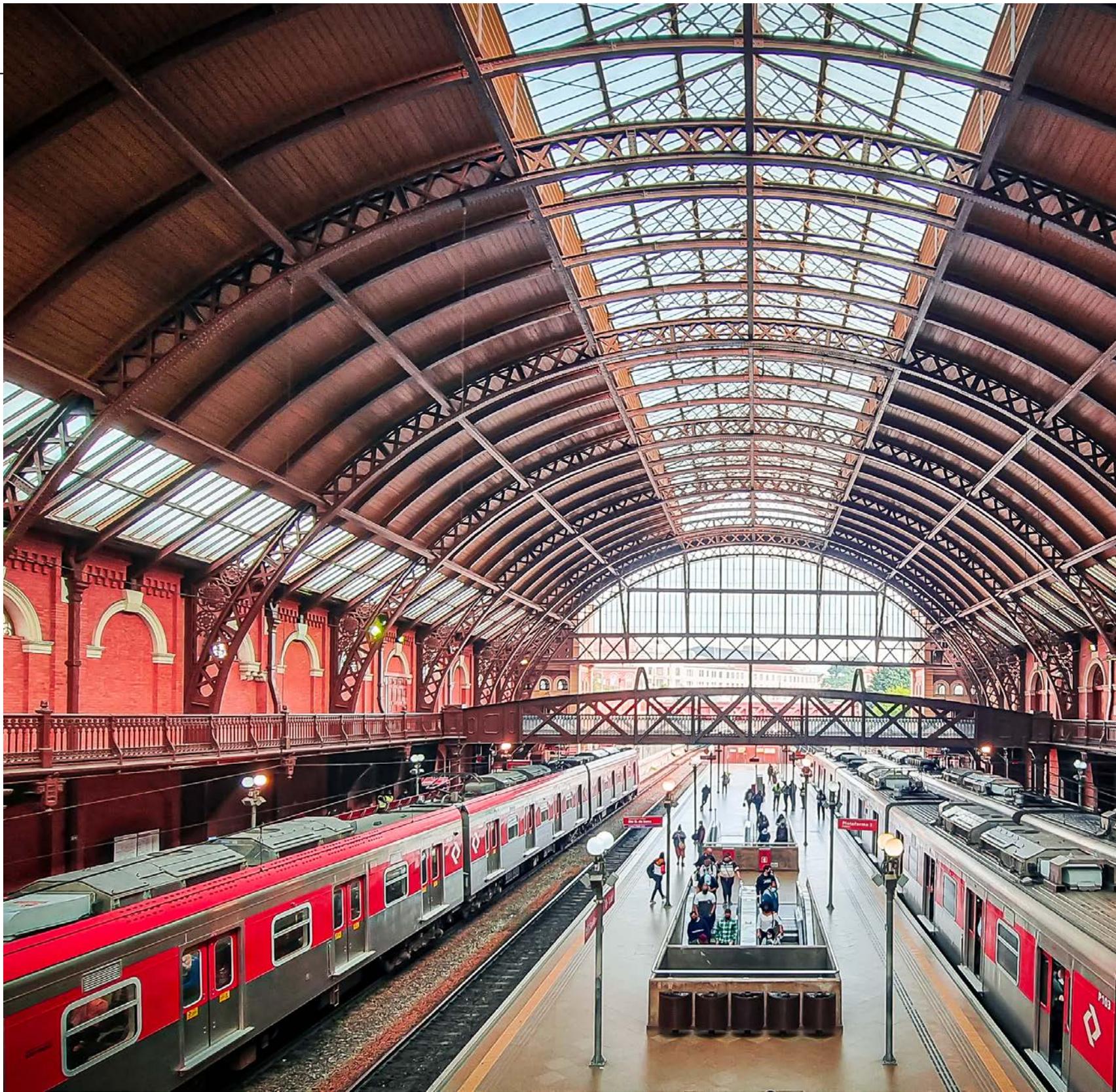
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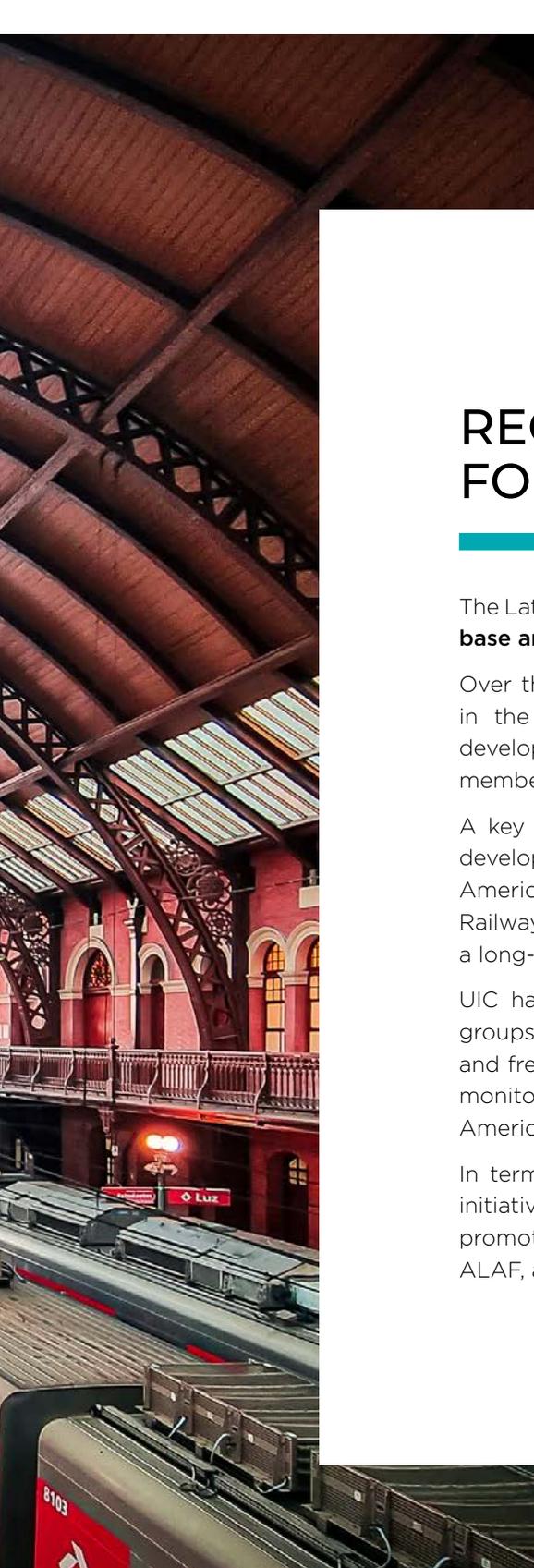
The Plenary Assembly: A platform for all members

In the third quarter of 2025, the Plenary Assembly was reshaped to enhance its role as a platform for meaningful engagement, with a particular focus on ensuring that associate and affiliate members, who are usually less involved in day-to-day project activities, can derive additional value from their participation. The European Region Work Programme now reflects contributions from the UIC Business Units, each offering strategic initiatives that support both sector-specific priorities and overarching regional objectives.



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REGIONAL ROADMAP FOR LATIN AMERICA

The Latin America Regional Assembly (LARA) represents **4% of the UIC member base and 1% of the fees.**

Over the 2023-2025 period, UIC has reinforced its presence and engagement in the region through high-level missions, technical cooperation, and the development of strategic documents. Today, the UIC LARA Region includes members from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Columbia.

A key milestone was the “Vision 2050 for Railways in Latin America” being developed, coordinated by UIC and its members, with the support of Latin American Railway Association (ALAF) and the Argentinian National Centre for Railway Development and Innovation (CENADIF). The document aims to provide a long-term roadmap for sustainable rail development in the region.

UIC has also supported the creation and consolidation of regional working groups, notably with a taskforce dedicated to safety, security, infrastructure and freight, which has addressed topics such as safety culture, resilience, track monitoring, and human factors. The group includes members from both Latin America and Europe.

In terms of project development, UIC has furthered a regional approach for initiatives from countries including Argentina, Chile, and Brazil. This includes promoting jointly financed projects with the participation of UIC members, ALAF, and national institutions such as CENADIF.

The region continues to face challenges such as low interconnectivity between national networks and a lack of harmonised standards. UIC has responded by offering technical and strategic support, and by encouraging the participation of new members.

For the 2026-2028 period, UIC will focus on:

- ▶ Supporting the implementation of the Vision 2050 through operational planning and policy alignment
- ▶ Strengthening regional cooperation via dedicated platforms and jointly financed projects
- ▶ Expanding the network of experts and working groups, particularly in areas such as infrastructure maintenance, asset management, and freight
- ▶ Promoting training and knowledge sharing through the UIC Rail Academy and regional events
- ▶ Encouraging the integration of sustainability, innovation, and digitalisation in railway development strategies

These efforts will be aligned with the six strategic focus areas of the UIC 2026-2028 Work Programme, particularly those related to climate action, regional project consolidation, and service provision for members.



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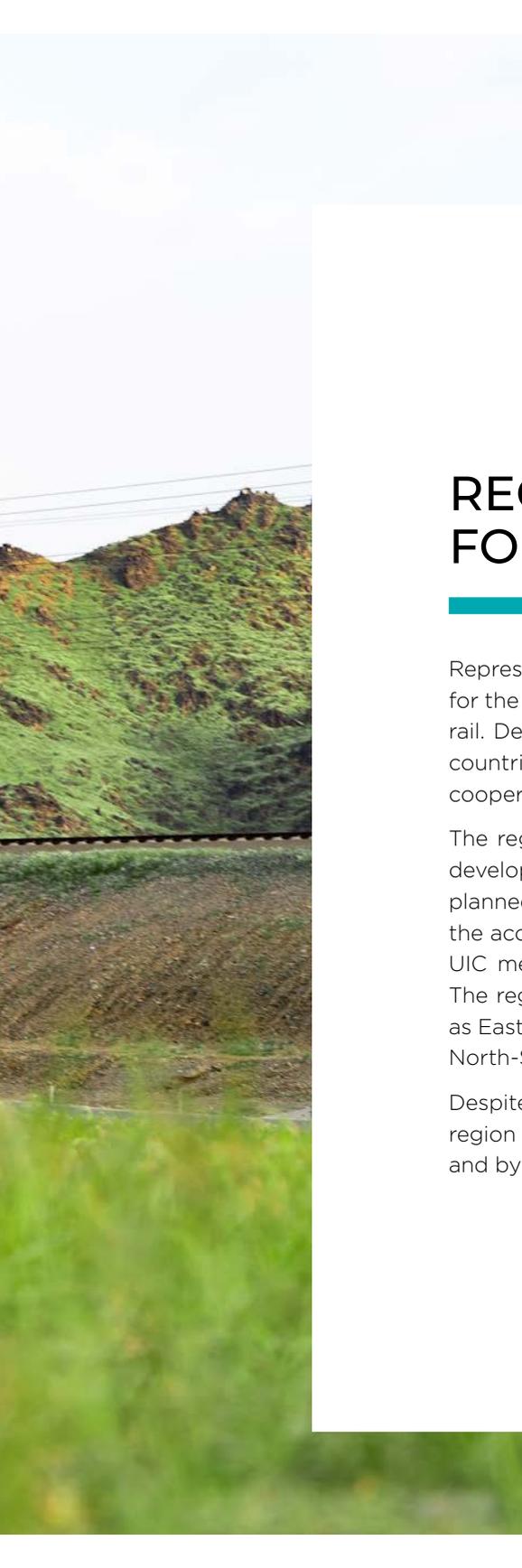


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REGIONAL ROADMAP FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Representing 7.3% of UIC membership and 8% of fees, the Regional Assembly for the Middle East (RAME) is considered one of the fastest-growing markets for rail. Development is focused on strategic infrastructure projects across several countries, with growing engagement from new members and increased regional cooperation.

The region continues to be one of the most dynamic in the world for railway development, with major infrastructure projects under construction or being planned in the majority of countries. In 2025, a key milestone was reached with the accession of the Gulf Cooperation Council Rail Authority (GCC RA) as a full UIC member, reinforcing the region's strategic role in global rail connectivity. The region is also increasingly central to transport corridor development, such as East-West between Asia and Europe through the Middle East via Türkiye, and North-South through the Caucasus region.

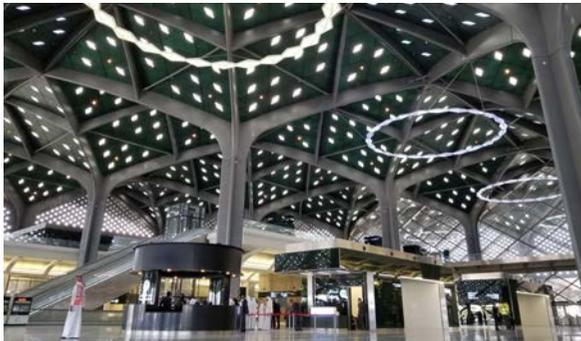
Despite differing levels of development and investment across countries, the region has renewed momentum, driven by the leadership of the RAME Chairs, and by the active participation of members in UIC activities.

The 2026-2028 strategy builds on the roadmap adopted in 2024 and focuses on four key pillars:

- ▶ **Enhancing regional connectivity**, with support for infrastructure projects and corridor development (e.g. Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad, North-South, Gulf-Levant, etc.).
- ▶ **Fostering innovation and pioneering technologies**, with pilot projects on FRMCS, hydrogen rail, heating ventilating air conditioning systems, and the creation of regional testing and excellence centres.
- ▶ **Strengthening cross-border cooperation**, by harmonising procedures, digitalising, and ensuring regulatory alignment.
- ▶ **Investing in people**, through targeted training programmes and the development of a regional competence hub.



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The following initiatives will be prioritised in the 2026-2028 period:

- ▶ **Operationalising the FRMCS pilot project** in the region, for example, in Saudi Arabia with Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) and other partners.
- ▶ **Launching the UIC Innovation Hub for the Middle East**, a regional platform dedicated to supporting innovation, research, training, and coordination on emerging technologies such as FRMCS, hydrogen, artificial intelligence, and digital operations, with implementation steps starting in 2026.
- ▶ **Expanding the RAME Freight Working Group**, with a focus on implementing the recommendations of the 2024-2025 “As-Is” study on border crossings and customs.
- ▶ **Deploying the 2026-2028 training plan**, based on the regional needs survey launched in November 2025. Topics will include turnout maintenance, safety, and climate resilience. It will be supported by the Middle East Railway Training Centre (MERTCe) facilities and other new partners in the region.
- ▶ **Supporting corridor integration**, mainly the GCC Railway and the corridors passing through Türkiye.



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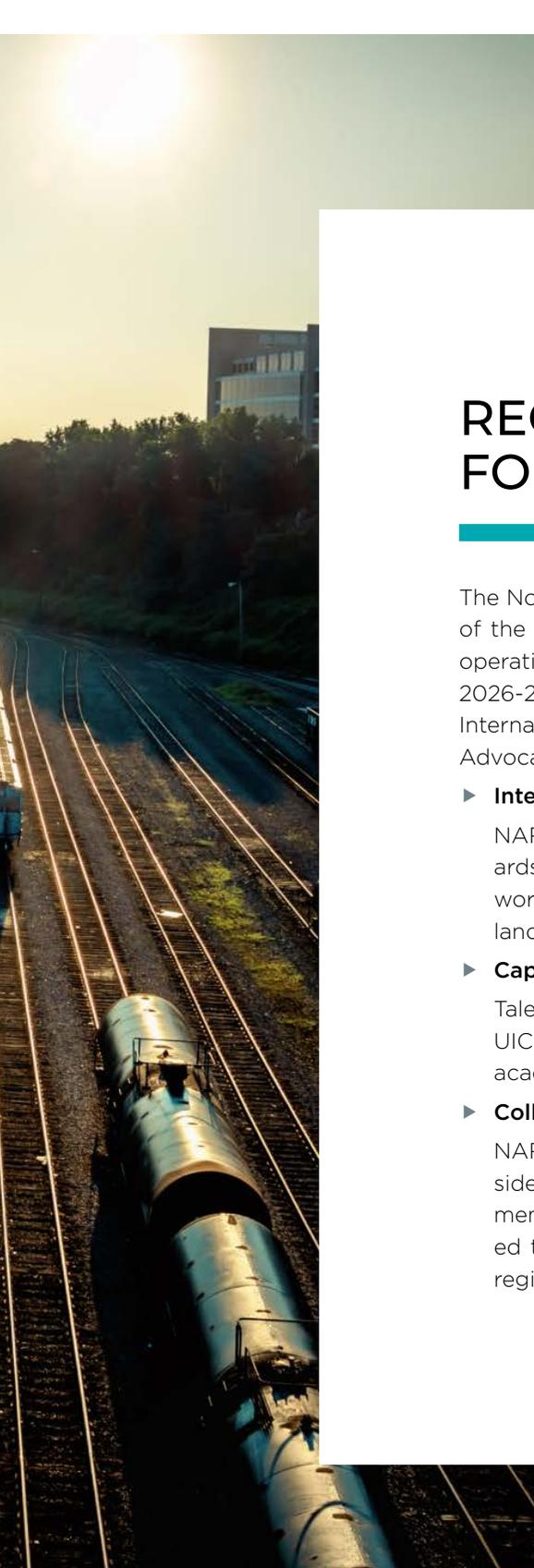


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To support these goals, the region will continue to explore new funding mechanisms and partnerships, including with international financial institutions and national regulators. The updated Terms of Reference adopted in 2025 also allow for greater continuity in leadership and project follow-up.

Therefore, the 2026-2028 period will be marked by a shift from planning to implementation, with a focus on delivering tangible results for members and reinforcing the cohesion of the region through shared objectives and concrete cooperation.





REGIONAL ROADMAP FOR NORTH AMERICA

The North America Region (NARA) represents 3.4% of UIC membership and 1% of the fees, yet it holds significant strategic value due to its advanced freight operations, technological expertise, and growing interest in high-speed rail. The 2026-2028 strategy builds on the current momentum focusing on four pillars: International standards, Collaborative knowledge sharing, Capacity building, and Advocacy.

▶ **International standards**

NARA will continue to lead efforts to bridge UIC and North American standards. Following the successful 2025 roundtable on the topic, a cross-regional working group will be formalised. This group will map the standardisation landscape and identify opportunities for alignment and joint projects.

▶ **Capacity building**

Talent development remains a priority in the region. NARA will work with the UIC Rail Academy and Talent Platform to assess regional training needs and academic partnerships.

▶ **Collaborative knowledge sharing**

NARA will continue to host themed roundtables and technical visits alongside regional statutory meetings on priority topics as agreed upon by the members. This includes strategies for modal shift, accessibility, and integrated ticketing. The newly launched NARA Safety Taskforce will also advance regional and inter-regional collaboration on safety culture and data.

► **Advocacy**

NARA's advocacy will focus on sharing success stories and supporting global efforts in promoting rail. The inclusion of Alto, Canada's new high-speed rail delivery agency, and progress on the California High-Speed Rail project reflects growing momentum in the region.



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Strategic partnerships

NARA will strengthen collaboration with key regional partners including the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and US High Speed Rail Association (USHSR). These partnerships will support joint events, policy alignment, and shared messaging on the value of rail in sustainable mobility. UIC will continue to engage with these organisations to amplify the voice of rail in North America and globally.

Strategic value to UIC

North America's freight expertise and flexible market model offer global insights, while UIC standards are increasingly relevant for emerging high-speed projects. Therefore, NARA will remain a vital platform for engagement, innovation, and mutual learning.



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ADVOCATE
FOR A TRANSPORT
PARADIGM SHIFT

ADVOCATE FOR A TRANSPORT PARADIGM SHIFT

MOBILISE PARTNERSHIPS

The upcoming work programme will be supported by a targeted partnership strategy, aiming to strengthen UIC's role in steering cooperation among organisations who seek to advance railway operations globally. Furthermore, in line with its advocacy efforts, UIC is seeking to engender broader engagement across the sustainable finance landscape to help its members access climate-related funding mechanisms that recognise and reward the environmental performance of rail.

UIC's partnership efforts will be guided by the strategic objective of identifying and connecting with key stakeholders who can contribute to advancing the priorities set out in this work programme. The goal is to foster coordinated, high-impact collaboration that supports the development of sustainable, efficient, and innovative rail systems, which will strengthen the UIC brand as a centre of excellence for railways and promote the use of rail transport. Additionally, in response to the increasingly international nature of railway operations, UIC will further consolidate its engagement with both international and regional organisations, both at the technical and executive levels.

ADVOCATE IN POLICYMAKING FOR MORE TRAINS

Over the next three years, UIC will continue to develop the "More Trains" campaign to focus on producing and sharing knowledge that can **influence policies which support a shift to low-carbon modes of transport like rail, public transport, and active mobility**. The campaign will form a collective voice calling for a paradigm shift in transport planning that prioritises "avoid and shift" measures, alongside technological improvements.

In parallel, global advocacy messages will focus upon creating a policy environment that supports railways around the world in growing and thriving. Rather than seeking to intervene in all areas of policymaking, UIC will concentrate on developing evidence-based messaging and releasing publications that demonstrate how essential rail's contribution is to achieving decarbonisation, alleviating transport poverty, and building more resilient transport networks.

By working in partnership with members and partner organisations that advocate for active and public modes of transport, UIC will support the development of shared messages and joint recommendations that promote integrated, multimodal solutions and encourage people and freight to become less dependent on using private cars and trucks.

UIC will position sustainability at the core of its advocacy messaging. We will promote rail as a low-carbon, inclusive, and nature-positive mode, integrating climate adaptation, biodiversity safeguards, circular economy principles, and system-wide optimisation for both passenger and freight activities. As part of this, UIC will focus on collecting and making full use of the statistics at our disposal in our advocacy work, reflecting its global membership

Moreover, through research, joint publications, participation in international working groups, and the dissemination of practical case studies, **UIC will provide current, accessible, and policy-relevant information that can feed into key international discussions.** This will include efforts to better position rail and public transport within climate strategies, sustainable finance frameworks, and long-term mobility and logistics planning.

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DEVELOP TOOLS FOR RAIL FINANCING BASED ON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

UIC will continue to build upon an expanding library of research, including technical reports, and guidance on climate finance, green investment mechanisms, carbon credits, and rail's alignment with international climate and development goals (such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and the UN Decade of Action for Sustainable Transport 2026-2035) by:

- ▶ Developing a rail investment toolbox aligned with climate finance mechanisms, creating a practical set of tools and guidance to help stakeholders structure and present rail infrastructure in accordance with climate finance criteria. This work will also explore opportunities for rail within carbon markets. The objective is to position rail as a credible and investable low-carbon solution within the evolving climate finance landscape.
- ▶ Assessing and proposing innovative financing models for infrastructure and high-speed rail, by comparing

a return of experience with the existing financing models to suggest key factors which will ensure optimised investment both for private and public bodies.

- ▶ Building strategic partnerships across the transport financing ecosystem to support railway development, engaging with a wide range of financial stakeholders - including Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), national development banks, private sector, and IFIs - to jointly develop investment strategies for the rail sector. These efforts will prioritise projects with strong potential for local and regional integration, sustainable development, and having a positive impact on the climate, while also exploring innovative financing mechanisms to attract varied sources of capital.

This issue of funding echoes the concerns of UIC staff, which were highlighted during a staff seminar in September 2025.

MAKE THE CASE FOR GREATER INVESTMENT IN RAIL AND INCREASING RAIL'S MARKET SHARE

UIC will strengthen its role as a global knowledge leader by producing evidence-based knowledge products that clearly demonstrate the value of greater investment in rail.

The economic benefits of a high modal share of rail and public transport are well documented; the value of avoided externalities far outweighs the cost of investment. For example, doubling rail's share from 8% to 16% would reduce general emissions by around 7%, while greatly improving congestion, air quality, and road safety, as well as providing jobs, and better connected communities and businesses (this is the case for both passenger and freight).

Through its China case study, the recent World Energy Outlook (International Energy Agency (IEA), 2025) demonstrated how effective rail can be in decarbonising transport and reducing the demand for energy. Additionally, the expansion of non-urban rail transport in China was shown to reduce the demand for oil, avoiding nearly 1.5 mb/d in 2024 - more than the oil saved by all of the electrical vehicles (EVs) worldwide combined.

Nevertheless, this transformation is only possible if investment in infrastructure becomes financially viable and attractive for project sponsors. Unfortunately, at present, the economic benefits of reducing externalities are not captured by public or private investors. One potential avenue to monetise these benefits is through carbon-financing instruments, whether regulatory (such as the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS)) or market-based mechanisms (such as Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs)).

In principle, these instruments could provide a meaningful contribution to project financing. Additional, experience with large-scale transport projects suggests that closing viability gaps often requires support in the range of 20–30% of total investment costs; however, current carbon-market mechanisms are still far from delivering funding at this scale.

Besides, carbon credits can only be claimed for new investments and not for activities using existing infrastructure, as the fundamental concept of carbon credit additionality is based on the assumption that investments would not have been made in the absence of climate funding. One of the main conditions for success is therefore to revisit the concept of additionality in the context of the negotiations on Article 6.4 of the Paris Agreement. It is a prerequisite for translating Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments into profitable and financially viable projects for public and private project developers.

UIC's aim will be to operationalise emerging United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) standards under Article 6. We will engage in the development of the UNFCCC's Article 6.4 Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism (PACM) so that the specificities of rail projects are adequately reflected, enabling them to generate tradable carbon credits under this mechanism.

With the support of its members, UIC envisions the creation of a coalition to define a common vision and promote solutions for their rapid adoption at national and international level. This coalition will bring together members, states, and other international association such as the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) as well as public and private stakeholders.

The urgency of climate change requires us to fast-track the volume of investment in rail, which represents the only possibility of moving the global transport paradigm towards carbon neutrality. Acting on the emissions avoided by a modal shift to public transport requires a broad coalition to propose effective solutions based on knowledge of local needs.



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REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE RAIL INVESTMENT

- ▶ **Build region-specific knowledge and capacity:** Work with interested members in developing guidance and case studies that help them to understand and navigate climate finance and carbon market opportunities within their regional contexts. This includes awareness-raising and capacity-building activities to strengthen members' ability to structure and advocate for rail investments.
- ▶ **Engage with regional finance institutions and partners:** Carry out outreach initiatives to regional development banks, climate funds, and other potential financing partners to expand UIC's ability to support in-depth regional work and unlock new funding streams for rail projects.
- ▶ **Support members in national-level advocacy:** Work with members to develop strategies and messaging to engage national policymakers – particularly beyond the transport sector – on the economic, environmental, and social benefits of rail. This includes producing streamlined guidance on processes, enabling members to effectively engage relevant ministries and align rail projects with national development and climate goals.



SUPPORT
THE REVIVAL OF RAIL
AROUND THE WORLD

SUPPORT THE REVIVAL OF RAIL AROUND THE WORLD

FURTHER DEVELOP GLOBAL PROJECT ACTIVITIES

An essential aspect of UIC's strategy is to **develop relevant projects tailored to its members**. This is and will continue to be achieved through two primary methods: **the opt-in project process**, where members contribute on a voluntary basis, and **external projects jointly financed by institutions like the EU**. Over the 2021-2025 period, substantial growth was seen in this area, **with resources increasing by over 51%**. This surge can be primarily attributed to the growth of opt-in participation, as well as various other factors, including:

- ▶ Improved interaction with members on all levels with the introduction of the Opt-In Online Tool
- ▶ A continuous effort from UIC's teams to define opt-in projects, sticking to the needs expressed by members, with the various forums being more strongly involved.
- ▶ Increased professionalisation of the approach for securing external projects, producing improved reactivity and thereby an enhanced capacity to lead or contribute to several major jointly financed projects, including at industry level

UIC's improved ability to lead or contribute to technical railway projects has been recognised following the implementation of the previous work programme. Therefore, for the next three-year period, it is anticipated that the opt-in projects will continue to grow, but at a steadier rate. The first quantitative approach at this stage of the three-year programme is to aim for a 7.5% resource increase over the 2026-2028 period, based on the following assumptions:

- ▶ The foreseen growth potential for projects in the 2026-2028 period is within a possible range of 6-9%, leading to an objective of 7.5% (middle of this range). The fees will need to remain stable, nevertheless with a slight increase to partially cover inflation, with the remaining amount being covered by productivity improvements. The opt-in project contributions will increase slightly with new projects, going from €1.75M in 2025 to €1.9M in 2028. External projects should also grow, from €3.4M in 2026 to €4.0M in 2028.

PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

As part of its mission, **UIC must play a key role in helping railways adopt new technologies**, as well as anticipating new uses, services, systems, or products which are not present in the railway domain today.

As part of this, the Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS) and rail and multimodal ticketing solutions like the Open Multi Modal Toolkit (OMMT), which contain solutions like the Open Sales and Distribution Model (OSDM), will naturally be strengthened. Additionally, new fields such as Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC), digital modelling, cybersecurity, and AI usage will be further developed according to the railway sector's needs.

Technical innovation sharing between members will also be reinforced through two major approaches:

- ▶ Taking standardisation innovation from more established regions and adapting them to the specificities and priorities of other regions
- ▶ Setting up regional hubs for research and innovation to accelerate the dissemination of innovation in railway standardisation

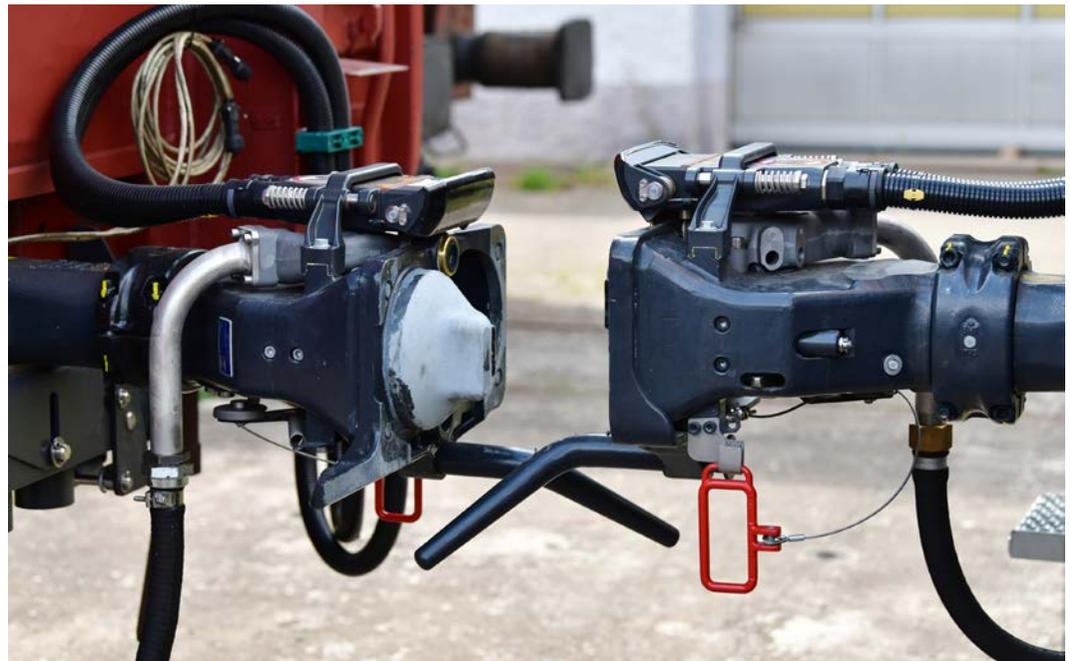
UIC will also boost support for its members by providing practical and accessible tools to mobilise carbon finance and green investment, leveraging instruments such as the Rail Sustainability Index (RSI), the Ecosystem Valuation Framework, and harmonised sustainability reporting guidelines aligned with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). Guidance will be systematically expanded to cover climate adaptation and biodiversity integration, ensuring that sustainability is embedded across all rail projects.

Moreover, to enhance biodiversity protection and climate resilience, UIC will provide tailored advice for integrating safeguards and adaptation measures into infrastructure planning, especially in terms of international corridor development. It will facilitate the sharing of best practices on mitigating environmental impacts, including noise, vibration, and energy, while improving air quality and circularity, drawing on EU-funded initiatives and ongoing UIC permanent programmes. A core strategic priority will be to harmonise data measurement and collection, in order to produce comparable sustainability indicators and values across regions. This will strengthen transparency, support benchmarking, and generate a robust evidence base for climate finance, investment prioritisation, and policy alignment advocacy.

APPROACHES TO INNOVATION

Aside from the ongoing initiatives, guidance will particularly focus on the following domains:

- ▶ Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC), with a focus on defining harmonised operational rules for this new game changing technology for freight, working alongside Europe's Rail FA5
- ▶ Develop sales, distribution and ticketing solutions for multimodal, seamless, and inclusive journeys for passengers, in closer collaboration with Europe's Rail MOTIONAL projects
- ▶ Digital modelling, through an initiative requested by the European Management Committee (EMC), with the objective of facilitating the creation of an interconnected and multidimensional railway system model, capitalising on all of the technical work carried out, not only by UIC, but also by other stakeholders within the railway sector
- ▶ Artificial intelligence usage, as this will certainly revolutionise all the industries within the next decade. Within rail, this will be through the development of several initiatives at various levels: usage of AI to support future technical developments (documents, software, etc.) and application of AI in concrete railway projects

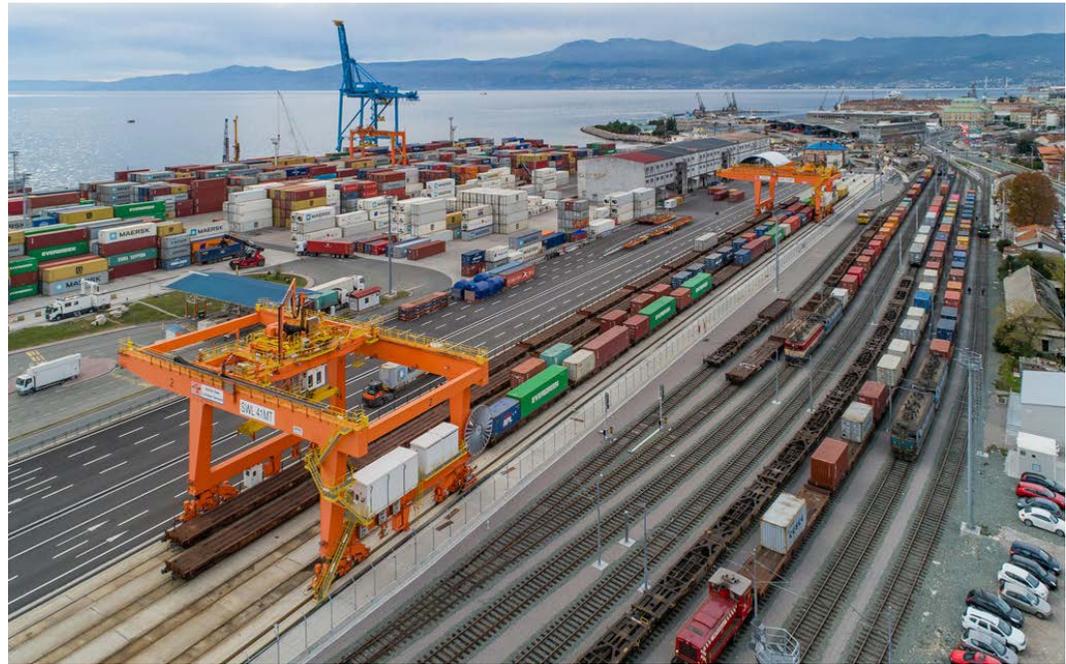


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PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL STRATEGY

UIC will continue to support international corridor and transcontinental infrastructure projects, helping to create related frameworks (legal, safety, operations, digitalisation/IT, customs, etc.), especially in the Europe-Balkans-Middle East-Asia area, by:

- ▶ Testing and implementing solutions in pioneering countries within the UIC regions
- ▶ Presenting regular updates of solutions tailored to regional needs
- ▶ Launching a UIC Innovation Hub for the Middle East in 2026 to coordinate innovation, research, and capacity building across the region
- ▶ Bringing expertise and skills to support railway construction and development, particularly in countries with projects under design or in the building phase. The existing training centres, like MERTCe in Türkiye or, in Africa could become part of this structure



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PROVIDE
GLOBAL STANDARDS
FOR RAILWAYS

PROVIDE GLOBAL STANDARDS FOR RAILWAYS

UIC has established and will continue to maintain **technical and operational global standards** to facilitate interoperability, sustainability and international cooperation.

Key achievements include creating technical leaflets, specifications, and guidelines which are used by UIC's members. Moreover, a recent survey has shown that they are instrumental, among others, for our Chinese, Korean, Indian, Japanese and Turkish experts. As part of this work, UIC, with the support of its members, intends to achieve the complete migration and modernisation of its standardisation system by 2029, relying on the systematic use of surveys and the involvement of members worldwide.

MAINTAIN AND DEVELOP COMMON UIC ASSETS

The migration programme is a central element of UIC's legitimacy, with our ability to develop projects depending on how well disseminated and lasting our IRSs are. For our members, investing in UIC teams and products is only worthwhile if it results in shared operational specifications/standards that UIC continues to update.

The programme will be adjusted based on the actual usage of UIC leaflets/IRSs by members, to focus efforts on the most relevant documents. The success of this approach will therefore depend on member involvement and will require the deployment of specialised resources to meet

the deadlines set. To this end, surveys concerning the migration have already been carried out to improve our understanding of how UIC documents are used, with the final objective of adapting the work programme to ensure that it is aligned with members' needs.

Additionally, the Standardisation Guide is being revised to incorporate key elements of the Standardisation Strategy 2030. The overall process will also be reviewed with the aim of simplifying and streamlining it to enhance efficiency.

To be both recognised and able to have an impact at global level, UIC will improve its mapping of joint working groups of interest with other standardisation bodies such as the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) or ISO. In particular, the partnership with CEN will be strengthened in order to establish UIC representation and preserve our role as an active solution provider, directly with CEN or through the National Standardisation Bodies.

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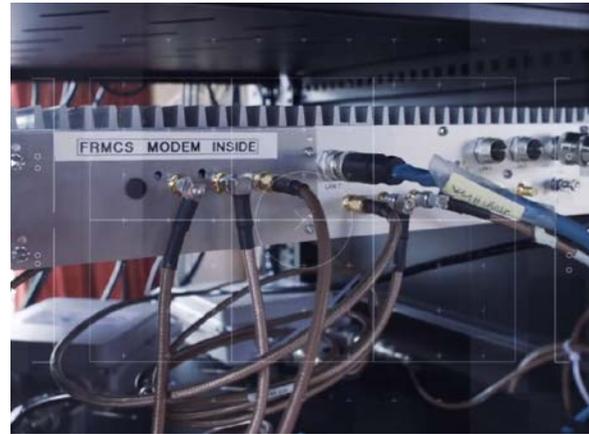
MONITOR AND INCREASE THE USE OF UIC DOCUMENTS

To strengthen the impact and relevance of UIC documents, several actions will be undertaken to monitor and promote their usage.

A regular survey process will be implemented to assess how IRSs are used by members and other stakeholders. This will help identify priorities for updates, issues with adoption, and opportunities for improvement.

Efforts will be made **to promote UIC documents and data being used and referenced at international level**, in particular by engaging with regulatory authorities and national safety agencies to encourage their recognition and integration into national and regional frameworks.

UIC will also work **to develop cross-references with other standard setting organisations (SSOs)**, including those in North America. This will involve collaboration with key stakeholders such as the American Association of Railroads (AAR), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and Transport Canada, with the aim of improving the recognition of mutual technical documents.



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CAPITALISE ON PARTNERSHIPS WITH STANDARDISATION ORGANISATIONS

UIC's documents are global in scope, yet often European in origin. Therefore, they guarantee that:

- ▶ Developments for key network elements are compatible cross-border
- ▶ A common platform for export projects exists
- ▶ Specifications are tailored to the needs of railway companies

UIC will continue to build on its existing partnerships with core standardisation bodies, including the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CEN-CENELEC), European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO).

CEN-CENELEC

Through their respective documents, CEN-CENELEC and UIC are contributing to the harmonisation, quality, and safety of the European railways.

Many UIC members are actively involved in the work of both organisations, with the link between UIC and CEN-CENELEC having recently been revived. However, this needs further strengthening for the benefit of the railway sector.

Therefore, UIC will establish a structured dialogue with CEN-CENELEC to address existing and emerging challenges in the standardisation landscape, ensuring that the railway sector's voice remains strong, and that UIC technical documents (IRs, guidelines, etc.) are leveraged according to a jointly agreed process which ensures clear referencing to UIC, where relevant, with the following targets:

- ▶ **Defining a fair approach to the intellectual property rights (IPRs)** associated with UIC technical documents, ensuring that they are appropriately referenced within the CEN-CENELEC framework. This would also protect railway undertakings against the potential misuse of UIC documents (which can lead to serious operational consequences) and would preserve a certain agility regarding the updates to these documents.
- ▶ **Avoiding work duplication and fostering complementarity**, by clarifying the areas of relevance for UIC and CEN-CENELEC. Where UIC's focus is rather on operational matters, actions pertaining to product design would more naturally fall within CEN-CENELEC's scope. Thus, it will be necessary to define conditions for transferring UIC documents to CEN-CENELEC and defining a consolidated "operator's input" for European standards.
- ▶ **Promoting sectorial UIC solutions to convert them into international norms**, requesting a coordinated strategy around National Standardisation Bodies already integrated in the CEN CENELEC governance.



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- ▶ **Standardising metrics**, by developing harmonised indicators for biodiversity, noise, and vibration, enabling comparability across regions and alignment with regulatory requirements and support the development of technical policies.

ETSI (Europe) and 3GPP (World)

UIC will continue to chair the Technical Committee for Railway Telecom within the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) and ensure continued collaboration within European telecommunication standardisation regarding the Global System for Mobile Communications-Railway (GSM-R) and FRMCS, as well as assure that technical specifications developed by UIC constitute the right low-level technical building blocks to be defined within ETSI.

Additionally, UIC will continue to lead the railway sector's contribution in the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), the international standardisation body in charge of mobile communications.

ISO

UIC has an agreement with ISO that allows for regular information sharing and preserves the role of UIC documents for operational issues at global level, avoiding duplication from ISO.

In particular UIC will strengthen its work with the ISO Technical Committee 331 group, aiming to contribute railway-specific expertise on biodiversity in areas such as terminology, measurement, conservation, and strategy. Through the liaison agreement, UIC seeks to promote best practices on habitat management from the rail sector and ensure its alignment with global standards.

APPROACHES TO INNOVATION

To accelerate innovation, UIC will concentrate its efforts in three complementary approaches:

- ▶ Enhance cooperation with leading global railway manufacturers, fostering greater speed, quality, and alignment in the development of high-performance technical solutions by further integrating industry players into UIC's technical activities and processes.
- ▶ Drive the effective digital transformation of the rail sector for passenger, freight, infrastructure management and maintenance, drawing on lessons learned from other industries and establishing strong partnerships with proven digital leaders.
- ▶ Ensuring the visibility and adoption of UIC's innovative initiatives and standards, by systematically promoting them across all UIC communication and dissemination channels .

PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL STRATEGY

- ▶ Coordinating an international network of safety and regulatory agencies
- ▶ Promoting and implementing UIC standards in regions outside Europe
- ▶ Monitoring regional needs to define new IRSs
- ▶ Building adapted standards for implementation according to the local specificities, if needed



BRING ABOUT
KEY OPERATIONAL
DEVELOPMENTS

BRING ABOUT KEY OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

ANTICIPATE THE MAIN TRENDS IN INNOVATION

UIC's strong technical base enables developments in the sector to be pioneered. Since 2019, UIC has brought about key developments for and with its members, such as:

- ▶ **FRMCS:** A next-generation communication system designed to replace GSM-R and meet the operational and safety-relevant needs of the modern railway sector. FRMCS is critical for enabling digital transformation, automation, and enhanced connectivity within the railway sector.
- ▶ **Open Multi-Modal Toolkit (OMMT)**, which will prolong the success of OSDM, by creating:
 - A suite of open tools supporting multimodal ticketing and distribution, developed by a community of experts and aligned with standards like Transmodel, Public Transport Information Exchange (NeTEx), and Service Interface for Real Time Information (SIRI).
 - Specific IRSs and solutions designed to be flexible, interoperable, and aligned with EU regulatory frameworks, supporting the goal of seamless, customer-friendly, and cost-effective international rail and multimodal travel.
- ▶ **Data modelling:** UIC has developed railway-specific ontologies to standardise data exchange and support advanced analytics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning applications. This initiative reflects UIC's commitment to fostering data-driven decision-making and improving operational efficiency.

- ▶ **Digital tools for freight**, such as the master database ATLAS for location codes, Agreement on freight Train Transfer Inspection (ATTI), the General Contract of Use for wagon (GCU) Broker for fleet management, and to be improved with maintenance, and so on.



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In parallel, UIC has established innovation hubs in various domains:

- ▶ **Security Hub:** The UIC Security Hub is a one-stop solution for railway security professionals around the world. It is a secure and interactive platform which fosters a collaborative and forward-looking approach to rail security. Thanks to its in-built threat taxonomy, the hub guides the user towards optimal solutions for specific security problems. Since its creation in 2018, the hub has grown to include over 100 security solutions presented in a standard and user-friendly way. In the next years, UIC will continue to update the existing content and add new information and operational examples in line with ever-evolving threats. This way, UIC members will permanently have up-to-date information on how to protect people and rail assets from a range of different attacks and to quickly recover after malicious incidents.
- ▶ **Safety Hub:** The UIC Safety Hub is a comprehensive online platform designed to support railway safety professionals worldwide. It brings together tools, dashboards, documentation, and project outcomes in one place, making it easier to access and share knowledge. The Hub features three toolboxes (including RESTRAIL and SAFER-LC) offering best practices and practical solutions. Additionally, it collects resources from the International Level

Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) and Trespass Awareness Day (TRESPAD) campaigns in a central location to strengthen level crossing safety awareness and help prevent railway trespassing and suicides. The hub also provides training and services on key topics, including those with growing importance, such as safety culture and safety leadership. Finally, users can use the UIC Safety Report's dynamic dashboard, contribute to safety data collection, and benefit from ad hoc studies.

- ▶ **Sustainability Hub:** The UIC Sustainability Hub is an online repository designed to support the railway community around the world in advancing sustainable practices. It provides access to best practices, case studies, technical solutions, and guidance across key sustainability domains, including energy efficiency, noise and vibration management, circular economy, biodiversity, air quality, and climate adaptation. The platform is intended to help infrastructure managers and railway undertakings implement practical solutions, benchmark performance, and share knowledge to accelerate the transition towards a future-ready, low-impact railway system. Scheduled for launch in 2026, SustHUB represents a central tool for fostering collaboration, standardisation, and evidence-based decision-making in railway sustainability.

In 2026, a new cycle of innovation will be launched, consolidating the successes achieved and projects launched within the previous work programme. This includes:

Telecommunications will see the delivering of the FRMCS 1st Edition Specifications, with the first implementable version of the FRMCS being secured for 2027. UIC will ensure the successful execution of Morane 2, an industry-wide project partially financed by Europe's Rail (EU-Rail), where the FRMCS Specifications will be fully tested in three laboratories and on five tracks, including one high-speed track in Spain, paving the way for the first FRMCS national deployments in various countries around the globe.

Digitalisation of rail business: the digitalisation of ticketing will be drastically improved with the full development of OMMT building on OSDM specifications and APIs, with a focus on multimodality management. UIC will facilitate the digitalisation of transport documents and operational procedures for improving rail's competitiveness through close cooperation with its network of partners (including the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), among others) to propose efficient solutions. Finally, freight IT digitalisation will be made more efficient and customer centric with data sharing, based on the Technical Specification for Interoperability (TSI) Telematics requirements and onboarding multimodal and customs requirements.

Driving operational innovation to further promote rail as a leading mode of transport in sustainability. Key initiatives include Driver Advisory Systems (Smart communications for efficient rail activities (SFERA)), circular economy solutions, air quality, noise and vibration mitigation, and nature-based solutions as green infrastructure. UIC will also support the implementation of alternative traction systems and decarbonisation technologies.

Furthermore, it will continue to develop and promote KPIs and indicators to monitor adoption, effectiveness, and environmental or operational impact of innovation.

Creating a centre of expertise on resilience with the Resilient Railways (RERA) Hub, in order to support a network of experts to coordinate railway's voice in global climate adaptation discourse, develop harmonised frameworks, and conduct research. This is to ultimately build resilience and adaptive capacity in railway systems and organisations facing the consequences of climate change and other disruptions.

UIC is supporting the railway sector through research and innovation (R&I) on critical security topics such as vandalism, sabotage, violent crime, terrorism, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) materials, cybersecurity, and border management. Based on experience from 20 implemented EU-funded security research projects, the UIC Security Department will continue to be involved in new R&I initiatives and contribute to developing innovative solutions against fast-emerging threats (for example through AI and Video Analytics, data fusion platforms, smart sensors, etc.). The goal will be to ensure that novel solutions are adapted to the railway sector's needs and are tested in railway environments in cooperation with national authorities and security technology providers.

Digital innovation, will continue to develop into a fully productive and innovative initiative for the entire railway sector through the OpenRail association for open-source projects. UIC will facilitate the emergence of railway governance for the digital modelling/digital twin domain, that will drastically improve productivity while supporting members in adopting advanced solutions that improve the detection, prevention of, and/or response to security incidents across railway networks

SET UP A RAILWAY RESEARCH STRATEGY THROUGH REGIONAL COMPETENCE HUBS

The **International Railway Research Board (IRRB)**, founded in 2006, serves as the global research and innovation group within UIC. Currently, the IRRB is reworking its approach to better serve its members, with the central pillar of the IRRB's new strategy being a radical shift away from centralisation. Instead of concentrating research and innovation efforts, the board is creating six independent Regional Competence Hubs (RCHs). This deliberate decentralisation is designed to empower local experts to solve local problems. The RCH model is built on a dual structure that balances regional independence with global coordination, ensuring solutions are both **regionally relevant and globally synergistic**:

- ▶ First, each of the six **RCHs** will be designed to be independent. This allows it to develop its own work programmes and budgets that are specifically tailored to the unique needs, challenges, and priorities of its members.
- ▶ Second, these independent hubs will be coordinated globally. The Chairs of each RCH are members of a central **IRRB Steering Committee**. This central body ensures that all regional activities are aligned with UIC's global strategy and that knowledge and best practices are shared across the entire network.
- ▶ In Europe, the RCH is the Research and Innovation Coordination Group (RICG) which is preparing a new cycle of innovation for railways for supporting the orientations of the next EU-Rail framework programme.

The IRRB's revitalisation by decentralising power, building a continuous ecosystem and empowering regional experts, is creating a blueprint for how a global institution can drive meaningful, grassroots innovation.

The Regional Competence Hubs strategy is set to facilitate faster innovation by UIC members, strengthen regional voices within the global railway discussion, and build the skilled workforce needed to operate the railways of the future.

REINFORCING UIC ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATING IN EUROPEAN SECURITY SENSITIVE PROJECTS

- ▶ A significant part of technological innovations may be directly influenced by national or multinational protection regulations and/or strategies on strategic subject matters. For instance, an increasing trend among European funding institutions has been observed, whereby they apply restrictive conditions and eligibility criteria, reflecting protective behaviours in Europe. This is especially the case for cybersecurity and defence schemes, due to the political sensitivity of their usage, particularly in terms of information, data, and overall security. UIC will consequently reinforce its existing ringfencing mechanisms to ensure its missions are not hindered – simply because of its international outreach – by criteria of ineligibility in certain environments or tendering situations.
- ▶ Finally, as digitalisation and the innovation are clearly at the heart of UIC's strategy for the coming period, a dedicated department, **Digital Systems and Innovation**, will serve as the focal point for these new initiatives and developments, working in close collaboration with all the other technical departments within UIC.



DEVELOP
A CENTRE OF
SERVICE PROVISION
FOR RAILWAYS

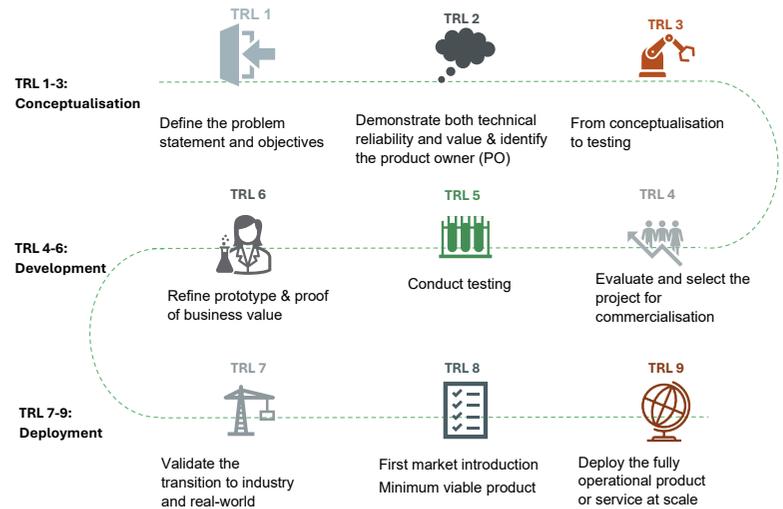
DEVELOP A CENTRE OF SERVICE PROVISION FOR RAILWAYS

Between 2020 and 2025, UIC has strengthened the technical content of its endeavours. As a result, **service activities for our members and beyond have expanded**. They are valued at around €1M in 2025, which while still modest, has a strong potential for growth, particularly in the following domains:

- ▶ Sales of UIC publications, such as IRSs and key technical documents
- ▶ Labelling and certification for systems, components, or subcomponents (e.g. braking)
- ▶ Access to digital applications (e.g. Electronic Ticket Control Database (eTCD)) and databases (e.g. Multiple East-West Railways Integrated Timetable Storage (MERITS), OMMT solutions suite, Ecopassenger,)
- ▶ Training courses through the Rail Academy
- ▶ Organisation of international events
- ▶ Expert services, including for accompanying FRMCS projects outside Europe
- ▶ UIC statistics, providing comparable data and a common terminology to the global rail community and stakeholders

To meet the growing demand for cost efficiency, innovation, and customer satisfaction in the railway sector, UIC is launching a strategic transformation by developing services as a pillar of its core activities, with implementation by 2026. This initiative aims to position UIC as a global centre of excellence for railway services and digital innovation.

To accelerate progress, UIC will **leverage existing assets** and prioritise **the most promising initiatives**, ensuring their rapid development and deployment. In parallel, the feasibility of other projects will be carefully assessed to determine their potential for future implementation.



Digital services will be prioritised using the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale, with quick wins (TRL >6) targeted for deployment from 2026 onwards. This initiative will also support UIC's broader network, including the Rail Academy, IRS sales, and events, reinforcing UIC's role as a trusted, future-oriented partner for the global rail sector.

To accommodate these new developments, the set-up of the ETF subsidiary will need to evolve smoothly according to the following principles:

- ▶ Tighter management of its sales and administration.
- ▶ Resale contracts will be formally arranged for each activity between UIC and its subsidiary, including the definition of appropriate royalties to UIC. These royalties will contribute to the financial support of HQ activities and sector-specific initiatives.
- ▶ To streamline the subsidiary's general and administrative support, additional ad-hoc support mandates will be organised.

DEVELOP TRAINING COURSE OFFERINGS THROUGH THE UIC RAIL ACADEMY

The **UIC Rail Academy**'s goal is to establish specific activities dedicated to education, training, and skills development in the railway sector, supporting the continuous learning and development of the rail workforce.

Through a wide range of high-quality training programmes and strategic partnerships, the UIC Rail Academy therefore aims to prepare current and future generations of railway professionals to meet the challenges of a fast-evolving, sustainable, and connected rail system.

The UIC Rail Academy was launched in 2024 with the Telecom Section, including comprehensive programmes around general telecommunications, 5G, GSM-R and of course FRMCS.

Training in the Telecom Section is available in a variety of professional and highly flexible formats: fully online (as self-paced modules or live, online sessions), in-person, or through blended e-learning. This flexible delivery ensures accessibility and adaptation to a range of learning requirements and geographic contexts.

This initial section will be supplemented with additional content, in the domains of safety culture, security, and accessibility, which are three priorities expressed by UIC's members.

Following the successful initial phase, which received highly positive feedback from the railway community, **the 2026-2028 period will mark a phase of controlled growth in the development of the UIC Rail Academy.** The next stage will focus on substantially broadening the academy's training provision, aiming to cover a wide range of railway sector topics, while also taking the specific requirements from different regions into account.

PROVIDE DIGITAL SERVICES FOR THE RAIL SECTOR

As part of the roadmap for 2026-2028, **UIC will focus on key milestones to drive progress.** This began with the development of a new business plan in 2025, which will be scaled up in 2026. The goal is to ensure agility, cooperation, and drive innovation across UIC's services.

To accelerate progress, UIC will **leverage existing assets** and concentrate on **the initiatives with the greatest potential**, ensuring they are developed and deployed quickly. At the same time, other projects will be carefully reviewed to assess their feasibility and future relevance.

UIC's unique position and flexibility make it an ideal partner for digital innovation:

- ▶ **Agility:** The ability to adapt and deliver tailored solutions quickly and efficiently. This includes using agile project management tools to streamline processes and ensure responsiveness to member needs, while promoting cost-sharing to boost collaboration and optimise resources.
- ▶ **Funding:** UIC has a proven ability to identify and secure funding from multiple sources, including direct contributions from the rail sector, EU funding, self-financing, and hybrid models.
- ▶ **Expertise:** As the world's largest railway organisation, UIC builds international partnerships (via MoUs) and stays ahead of trends in innovation and mobility. This expertise directly supports improved service quality and thereby increased customer satisfaction, while aligning with safety, security, and sustainability standards.
- ▶ **Cooperation:** Strong ties with members and stakeholders to create a culture of joint development and shared success. This includes cost-sharing models among UIC members to encourage collective investment and shared benefits, helping reduce operational costs.

- **Foresight:** UIC anticipates emerging trends in the railway sector and develops services to meet future needs. This proactive approach ensures members are ready for tomorrow's challenges with innovative and relevant solutions that prioritise customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and compliance with safety and security standards.

The aim of this new service activity is to identify, develop, and bring to market innovative digital applications and services.

UIC digital activity categorisation

Categories	Digital applications/services	Digitalisation of the rail system	New technologies and digital progress (future game changers)
Definition	Digital tools and services designed to improve the experience of customers, passenger and freight undertakings, and stakeholders	The core digital systems and physical assets of the railway system	Cutting-edge advancements and future oriented initiatives
UIC project examples	MERITS, ETCD, ECOPASSENGER API, ECOTRANSIT, RAILISA, UIC Safety Database, ATLAS, T4R, ATTI, GCU, etc.	Digital twin, FRMCS, BIM/Railway digital modelling, autonomous trains, DAC, smart grids, etc.	Edge computing, AI, robotics, drones

To support this evolution and the introduction of a services dimension, UIC will develop a marketing strategy, and therefore provide targeted sales training for some of the staff involved in this new initiative.

BECOME RECOGNISED AS A CENTRE OF SERVICE PROVISION

UIC aims to adopt a service-based and innovative approach that addresses the members' operational and business needs, supported by robust business models and market analysis.

To achieve quick wins, UIC will start with mature applications and solutions that have already been developed or are in progress, building on promising results from certain opt-in projects. Looking ahead, new methodologies such as the Value Framework and Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale will be introduced.

Under the Value Framework, UIC will ensure that any new service provision begins with a clear check: does it align with UIC's core values and is it acceptable to members? Only once this is confirmed will aspects such as profitability and feasibility be assessed.

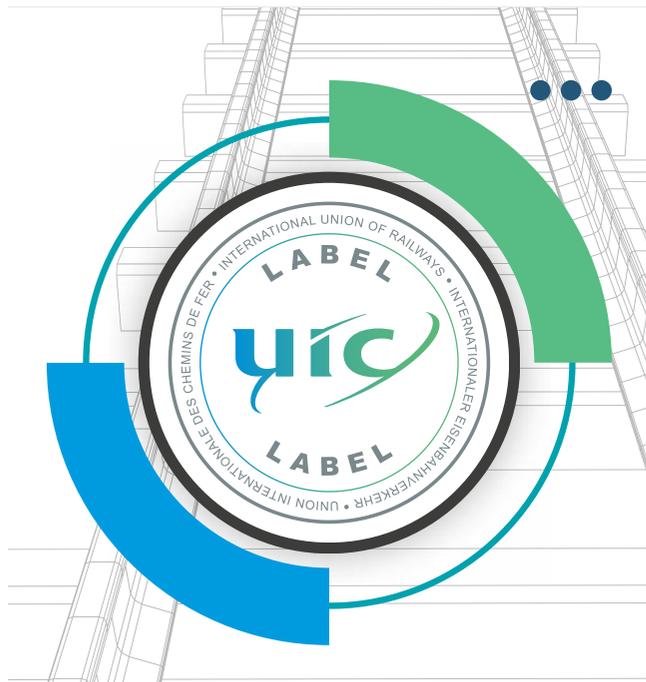
Moreover, key success factor will be the introduction of the Product Owner (PO) role. This position will ensure services remain aligned with stakeholder needs and project objectives, acting as a bridge between the stakeholders and implementation teams. The value creation framework will prioritise the member interests over purely financial considerations, while still maintaining a strong focus on the profitability and viability.

As part of this new strategic focus for 2026-2028, **UIC will strengthen its brand identity** to support its development as a centre of service provision in the rail sector. This will involve defining clear brand values, a visual identity, and messaging that reflects technical excellence, reliability, and innovation across all services – publications, certification labels, digital tools, training, and project support.

Implementation will include standardising branding across all services and communication channels, producing guidelines for service presentation, and integrating brand performance metrics into regular reporting. Key indicators of success will include greater visibility of UIC services, stronger member recognition and engagement, measurable growth in service revenue, and improved member satisfaction scores related to service quality and trust in UIC.

By establishing a clear, cohesive, and measurable brand, UIC aims to reinforce its credibility, drive growth in service-based activities, and strengthen its position as the leading technical and institutional partner in the global rail sector.

During an internal consultation, UIC staff also emphasised that further promoting the UIC brand is essential for showcasing UIC services and standards and ensuring visibility and recognition worldwide.



APPROACHES TO INNOVATION

The innovation that UIC wishes to develop lies in the concept itself:

- ▶ Establishing a dedicated centre of services within UIC is a brand-new initiative, reinforcing the relevance of UIC's global business model.
- ▶ This new direction, capitalising on UIC's existing assets and capabilities, will accelerate the release of UIC products (whether documents or projects) on the railway market.
- ▶ it will make it easier to adopt new opportunities or new technical trends regarding railway modernisation and development.
- ▶ Through the UIC Rail Academy, knowledge transfer for new standards, technologies, applications, and operational processes will be facilitated across different levels of the railway ecosystem.
- ▶ Recognising the importance of developing human capital for this new initiative, regular interproject meetings will be organised.

PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL STRATEGY

- ▶ Develop tailored solutions for specific contexts in collaboration with key partners (e.g. IT solutions for customs in cross-border freight)
- ▶ Adapt digital solutions based on already existing assets (e.g. ticketing, freight, etc.)
- ▶ Provide targeted consultancy and expertise to support rail development in different regions
- ▶ Create monitoring and labelling activities to support the implementation of UIC standards



ENGAGEMENT,
EFFICIENCY, AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

ENGAGEMENT, EFFICIENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

PROMOTE A DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE, AND ENGAGED WORKFORCE

In line with its values, UIC is committed to promoting a working environment that encourages participation, reflects the diversity of its global membership, and supports individual and collective development. The following strategic priorities aim to strengthen employee engagement, promote inclusion, and ensure that the organisation is equipped with the skills it needs to meet the challenges of tomorrow's rail sector. To implement this general strategy, the Human Resources department will:

- ▶ **Establish regular and accessible consultation mechanisms**, including workshops, surveys, annual post-GA staff meetings, a yearly seminar, and quarterly “HR Cafés”, to actively involve employees in UIC's strategic decisions. These forums aim to foster dialogue, promote the joint construction of projects, collect feedback, and recognise individual contributions, in order to strengthen engagement and a feeling of belonging.
- ▶ **Reflect the diversity of UIC's global membership** by adopting an inclusive recruitment policy that mirrors the geographical, cultural, and professional diversity of UIC's members. UIC has a commitment to equal opportunities for all through social agreements and supports varied career paths within the organisation. UIC will also further promote and reflect this among speakers and panellists at UIC-organised events.
- ▶ **Invest in lifelong learning and skills development** by designing and implementing a strategic skills development plan aligned with both the organisation's priorities and an employee's need for individual growth. UIC recognises the importance of building internal skills and sharing expertise in relation to new technological areas and will encourage skills development on relevant topics, from technical expertise to mentoring and occupational health, to support career progression, anticipate the evolving needs of the rail sector, and contribute to UIC's long-term resilience.
- ▶ **Promote gender equality across all levels of the organisation** by creating strategies for more gender-balanced teams within departments and establishing clear internal guidelines for gender inclusion. UIC will ensure fair representation in events, panels, and decision-making bodies (such as avoiding male-only panels and declining invitations where diversity is lacking) and foster a culture that supports equal opportunities, mentorship, and leadership development for all genders.

DIRECT UIC STAFF INVOLVEMENT

The reflections gathered during a staff seminar organised in September 2025 added a valuable human dimension to the preparation of the 2026-2028 Work Programme.

Beyond operational considerations, discussions revealed a shared aspiration of UIC to assert its role more visibly as a driving force in the global rail community. Staff expressed a strong desire for an organisation that speaks with clarity and ambition, one that engages confidently with the wider world while remaining close to the different realities of its members and regions.

The seminar also highlighted a collective awareness of UIC's responsibility in shaping the future of rail: guiding the evolution of standards, anticipating technological shifts, and cultivating the conditions for innovation.

Participants underlined the importance of strengthening UIC's internal coherence so that its external influence can grow from a solid and united foundation.

Above all, what emerged was a renewed sense of purpose. The insights shared during the seminar go beyond mere suggestions; they express the conviction that UIC's strength lies in combining technical excellence with a cohesive, engaged, and forward-looking community.

These contributions now accompany and inspire the work programme, reinforcing its objective and its long-term vision.



EVOLVING COMMUNICATION FOR A GREATER STRATEGIC IMPACT

As part of the goals defined in the 2026-2028 Work Programme, UIC communication is set to evolve into a more strategic, integrated and impact-oriented pillar of the organisation. Beyond its traditional role of sharing information, communication will increasingly drive internal cohesion, external advocacy, and value creation for members. In line with the orientations of the 2026 Communication Plan, this evolution aims to strengthen organisational alignment through clearer internal messaging, more structured editorial planning, enhanced visibility of results, and improved circulation of information across departments and teams.

A central dimension of this new phase is the systematic alignment between communication and the expanding advocacy agenda, working together to ensure the coherence and consistency of messages across different audiences, as well as having a stronger impact in supporting UIC's ambition to shape a global transport paradigm shift. This alignment will translate into shared narrative frameworks, coordinated campaigns around major international events (United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP), International Transport Forum (ITF), regional forums), and the joint development of science and evidence-based information to reinforce the credibility of UIC's position.

Here also, the internal staff seminar organised at the end of 2025 provided essential insights for shaping the next steps within this context. Staff members highlighted the need for more inspiring, motivational, and emotionally resonant communication around rail, particularly to strengthen engagement with younger generations



and to renew public interest in sustainable mobility. They also emphasised the importance of connecting UIC messages to existing national and international public campaigns, in order to amplify outreach, avoid duplication, and position UIC as championing climate protection and sustainable mobility.

Another key aim for 2026-2028 is to deploy differentiated communication approaches across regions. This includes adapting messages, formats, and channels to regional contexts, strengthening ties with UIC Regional Assemblies, and increasing the organisation's physical presence on the ground through events, field visits, local partnerships and testimonies from regional members. This will help reflect the variety of rail systems, highlight success stories, and reinforce UIC's role as a global link.

Together, these aims reflect a renewed vision of communication as a strategic catalyst for reinforcing engagement, promoting coherence, increasing visibility, and supporting UIC and its members impact worldwide. This integrated approach will ensure that communication contributes fully to the organisation's transformation, its advocacy goals, and its mission to promote sustainable, efficient and interconnected mobility worldwide.

INCREASE PROCESS EFFICIENCY

To become an effective and efficient service provider, UIC is comprehensively reworking its quality management system, **aiming for ISO 9001 certification**. This initiative is designed to deliver value to members and better meet their expectations.

Internal processes have been mapped and are currently being formalised and documented. Once certification has been achieved, these processes will be continuously assessed and improved as needed, to ensure that UIC functions in a secure, clear, smooth and efficient manner.

Four core operational processes have been designed, aligned with UIC's strategic priorities for 2026-2028. Two of these reinforce UIC's traditional role through advocacy, communication, and project management, while the other two are entirely new. These have been developed to promote and expand the use of UIC standards and products, with the aim of gaining broader recognition of their added value for the railway sector.

The guiding principle of this new direction is **simplicity**. Rules and documents are being reviewed and simplified, with unnecessary materials being eliminated and only relevant, useful information retained and shared.

Another key principle is **transparency**, to ensure clear communication to members and active staff involvement, aiming to foster a cultural shift in how work and responsibilities are approached.

The ultimate goal of this approach is **to enhance process efficiency to improve member satisfaction**. Based on annual feedback, UIC has raised its expected level of satisfaction, and will continue to improve via dedicated communication loops and a better anticipation of sector developments.

Finally, UIC staff suggested encouraging innovation and anticipating future needs by creating a collaborative platform.



CONTINUE TO IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

To strengthen governance, transparency, and long-term financial sustainability, several key measures have been proposed to further enhance accountability and the quality of financial reporting within UIC. These improvements also aim to ensure greater stability in membership fees, establish clearly defined key performance indicators (KPIs), and foster more effective communication with members.

Stability of fees

Predictability in fee structures is essential for maintaining member trust and ensuring long-term engagement. To achieve this objective, UIC has implemented a transparent and inclusive fee-setting process in active consultation with its members. By engaging members in discussions around potential changes, the organisation fosters transparency and shared understanding.

Additionally, the introduction of a three-year financial planning framework allows for better anticipation of medium-term financial needs, thereby reducing the risk of abrupt or unpredictable fee adjustments. These measures collectively contribute to financial stability, accountability, and a stronger alignment with member expectations - principles that will guide the next strategic period.

Definition of KPIs

To ensure measurable progress and operational effectiveness, UIC will refine and improve a set of clear, relevant, and measurable KPIs. These indicators will cover critical areas such as:

- ▶ Financial health
- ▶ Member satisfaction and engagement

These KPIs will be monitored regularly through semi-annual reviews to ensure alignment with the UIC strategic objectives and evolving priorities.

PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL STRATEGY

The new reporting framework introduced in 2026 will also cover UIC's regional activities, giving members a clearer view of the organisation's global structure.

From an operational perspective, regional activities will increasingly align with UIC's strategic priorities while reflecting the specific needs of each region. They will also be closely linked to the UIC service provision strategy, enabling faster achievement of critical mass for improved performance, quality, and relevance. This integrated approach will make it easier for members to understand and follow UIC's worldwide actions going forward.

APPROACHES TO INNOVATION

While UIC's significant progress in financial reporting and internal control during the previous period has been widely acknowledged and appreciated by members, the organisation now aims to take another step forward. The goal is to achieve maximum accountability and transparency across all activities, while providing general management with tools to better steer UIC's growing operations.

To this end, a dedicated reporting framework will be introduced in 2026 as a complement to existing financial reporting. This framework will monitor UIC activities by category, such as advocacy, projects and sectors, standardisation, services, and internal support, ensuring a clear and comprehensive view of organisational performance.

In addition, for the 2026-2028 period, innovation will be embedded as a key catalyst of organisational performance and development. UIC aims to create an environment where staff are both equipped and encouraged to actively contribute to the organisation's continuous improvement.

Targeted professional development and mentoring activities will strengthen project management, communication, and creative problem-solving. By promoting autonomy and initiative, UIC seeks to foster a sense of shared responsibility in and commitment to its transformation process.

In parallel, UIC will encourage new ideas to be shared within teams through practical and collaborative initiatives such as thematic workshops or experience-sharing sessions. This will help to identify concrete ways to enhance efficiency, cooperation, and member engagement. Together, these initiatives will strengthen UIC's ability to anticipate change, stimulate creativity, and reinforce its position as a transparent, accountable, and forward-looking organisation serving the global rail community.

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Published by: UIC Communication Department
Director of publication: Marie Plaud-Lombard
Design and layout: Coralie Filippini
Photo credit: AAR, ADIF, AdobeStock, ADY, ALAF, ANPTrihos / Guilherme Soledade / Ulisses Dumas, Camrail, CHSRA / Justin Chechourka, CP, CR, Deutsche Bahn AG / Oliver Lang, DSB, EDR, EFE, FASE, FRA, FS, HŽ Infrastruktura, IR, JR East, KORAIL, KTMB, KTZ, ONCF, PNR, PrésidenceSénégal, RAI, SAR, S.J, SNCB, SNCF / Olivier Foulon, SNCFT, TCDD, UBTZ, UIC / Philippe Fraysseix, VIA Rail
Printing: UIC - 16 rue Jean Rey - 75015 Paris

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ISBN: 978-2-7461-3569-7
Copyright Deposit: 2026, Paris



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