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## **UIC Passenger Week 2026: Shaping the future of global passenger mobility through innovation, multimodality and cooperation**

*(15 April 2026)* From 13 – 16 April 2026, the UIC Passenger Department is holding its first ever Passenger Week at the UIC Headquarters in Paris with around 150 participants attending in person and online, representing more than 20 passenger transport organisations from 18 countries across several UIC regions.

More than a first edition, this event marks a strategic milestone in positioning UIC as a global platform driving the transformation of passenger mobility systems.

Over the course of four days, this brand-new international event brings together UIC technical group meetings and includes a flagship “open” day, welcoming a broad range of stakeholders from across the passenger rail sector: CEOs and senior executives of passenger business units from railway companies, mobility leaders, industry experts, associations, IT providers, institutional representatives, and academics.

The aim of Passenger Week is to create structured opportunities to connect, exchange expertise, and explore innovative solutions that will shape the future of passenger mobility services. At a time of accelerating climate urgency, rapid urbanisation and evolving passenger expectations, these exchanges contribute to positioning rail as the backbone of sustainable mobility systems.

Moreover, a key dimension of this week is the collaboration across the wider public ecosystem in the shape of UIC’s joint engagement with UITP in the World Public Transport Day on 17 April. This initiative reflects a coherent vision of the future of mobility and a common vision to promote public transport as a cornerstone of sustainable mobility worldwide.

This shared ambition was strongly echoed by Gautier Brodeo, President of UITP, who highlighted the need to deliver “seamless, multimodal, passenger-centric mobility” and to ensure that public transport remains “the backbone of sustainable cities and regions.”

### **Opening remarks and keynote speeches**

The event was officially opened by UIC Director General François Davenne, who emphasised:

*“We are meeting at a pivotal moment. Across the world, mobility systems are undergoing profound transformation. The urgency of climate action is increasing. Cities are growing and becoming more complex. Passengers are more demanding, more connected, and more attentive to the quality, reliability and simplicity of the services they use. At the same time, digital technologies and innovation are opening new possibilities for how mobility is designed, operated and experienced. In this context, the question is not only how we adapt, but how we lead.”*

In his keynote address, Gautier Brodeo, President of UITP, reinforced this perspective by underlining that “passengers are at the heart of public transport” and calling for stronger cooperation across the mobility ecosystem to deliver integrated and accessible services.

Federica Santini, Chair of the UIC Global Passenger Forum, delivered an inspiring speech, in which she said:

*“We are confronted with a set of profound and interconnected challenges – and, as is often the case, with the opportunity to turn them into drivers of progress. We need to accelerate the digital transformation of our services, actively support the decarbonisation of transport, respond to increasing competition from other modes and new market players, and adapt to evolving regulatory frameworks, while at the same time strengthening the resilience of our sector in the face of major global disruptions. Above all, we must never lose sight of our primary objective: serving our passengers. Their expectations continue to rise, particularly in terms of simplicity, reliability, transparency and quality of service throughout the entire journey.”*

## **A dynamic programme**

The week’s programme covers a mix of technical sessions, open discussions and high-level meetings, all designed to foster innovation in rail transport.

While the 13 April was dedicated to UIC working group experts – providing a space for in-depth technical discussions and project development – the Open Day on 14 April was a flagship day dedicated to the theme of Multimodality, welcoming experts, partners and the general public. The sessions will continue on 15 and 16 April, hosting in particular the Global Passenger Forum (GPF), which brings together all UIC members involved in passenger transport and which represents a key platform for dialogue and sharing expertise.

Throughout the week, a common objective has emerged: translating dialogue into concrete solutions that improve the passenger journey across modes and borders.

The sessions have addressed the theme of Customer Experience, highlighting the efforts of the PASSAGE group, which is working to improve accessibility, staff skills and more inclusive rail services in a multimodal environment, as well as its International Railway Solution on assistance services for passengers with reduced mobility.

This focus reflects a shared priority across UIC and UITP to ensure that public transport systems are inclusive, accessible and designed around passenger needs.

In parallel, the Commuter and Regional Train Services (CRTS) initiative promotes high-valued knowledge exchange through workshops and trainings. After the success of the previous edition in Paris in 2025, the 9th CRTS Training will take place in Barcelona in October 2026, and the first regional edition will be held in Johannesburg (UIC Africa region) in May 2026.

Rail Tourism was highlighted through the TopRail initiative and the Tourism-Friendly Awards – which recognise innovative projects shaping the future of rail tourism across categories including rolling stock and onboard services, scenic railway lines, stations and rail tourism initiatives, highlighting sustainability and high-quality passenger experiences.

Railway Stations are becoming key interfaces for sustainable urban mobility, and this topic was highlighted through the work of the Stations Managers Global Group (SMGG) and European projects such as Rail4Cities. UIC also presented the results of the prestigious Brunel Awards 2025, which recognise outstanding achievements in railway architecture, engineering, and design.

High-speed development remained a central focus during the event, showcasing major developments, research initiatives, technical standards and global cooperation, including the UIC World Congress on High-Speed Rail. Current developments are about exploring new markets, financial models in a societal vision and development of training to support the High-Speed expansion.

These developments reflect a broader ambition to scale rail solutions globally, explore new markets and develop sustainable financing models in support of the mobility transition.

Work is ongoing within the Passenger Services Group (PSG) to improve multimodal solutions, accessibility and the passenger experience. Major UIC European solutions to further simplify international ticketing, gathered in the Open Multi Modal Toolkit (OMMT), are now available for all transport modes, open to any public transport operations and public transport authorities.

In this context, cooperation with UITP, notably through initiatives such as Door2Door, plays a key role in advancing seamless and integrated ticketing between local and long-distance transport systems.

UIC will also continue to expand its Rail Academy, offering new training programmes focused on passenger transport, accessibility, station design and high-speed systems, ensuring that its members are equipped with the skills needed for the future.

## **Exhibition**

The Passenger Week features a special exhibition showcasing the key UIC projects and achievements for passenger mobility delivered in 2025 and 2026.

The panels show how passenger rail is being shaped across several core themes including Customer Experience, Accessibility, Railway Stations, Railway Tourism, Commuter and Regional Train Services (CRTS), Intercity and High-Speed Rail, Ticketing and Passenger Services such as OSDM, OMMT and MERITS.

Together, these highlights celebrated innovation, design excellence, and international cooperation in passenger rail. Moreover, the UIC Passenger Department would like to thank the 300 experts from its 28 active workings groups for the outstanding cooperative job.

More broadly, they illustrate the collective capacity of the rail and public transport community to address global mobility challenges through collaboration and shared expertise.

UIC also extends a huge thank you to its sponsors EY, Hit Rail, Wiremind and Distribution – as well as to its media partners IRJ, Railway Pro, Ferpress and Via Libre.

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