Security of Women in the Rail Environment

Marie-Hélène Bonneau

UIC Security Department

11 March 2025

UIC Sustainability Week

Rail Security:
What is at stake?

- **Main Security Challenges in the Railways**

  - Open, vast network
  - High density & anonymity
  - Digitalisation

  Difficult to "harden"

  - Shared responsibility with authorities

- **Expectation of Rail Clients:
Be and Feel Safe/Secure**

  - But Gender-based violence / sexist and sexual harassment occurs in public spaces everywhere, with no real identifiable patterns

  - This means that the railways are a place where women feel vulnerable, especially in situations where there may be crowding or, conversely, a shortage of people

UIC Security Platform at global level

Chair:
Mr Xavier ROCHE
Security Director SNCF

Vice Chair:
Mr Sarvapriya MAYANK
Inspector General, RPF

Secretary:
UIC Security
Department

Sharing experience among members

Elaborating recommendations

Ensuring coherence between different security policies

Addressing new threats and developing innovative solutions

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Chair & Vice-Chair of the Platform
- Working Group Chairs
- UIC Regions
- Representatives of partner organisations
- Guests according to the agenda

WORKING GROUPS

- New Technologies
- Human Factors
- Strategy
- Sabotage, Intrusion & Attacks
- Crisis Management

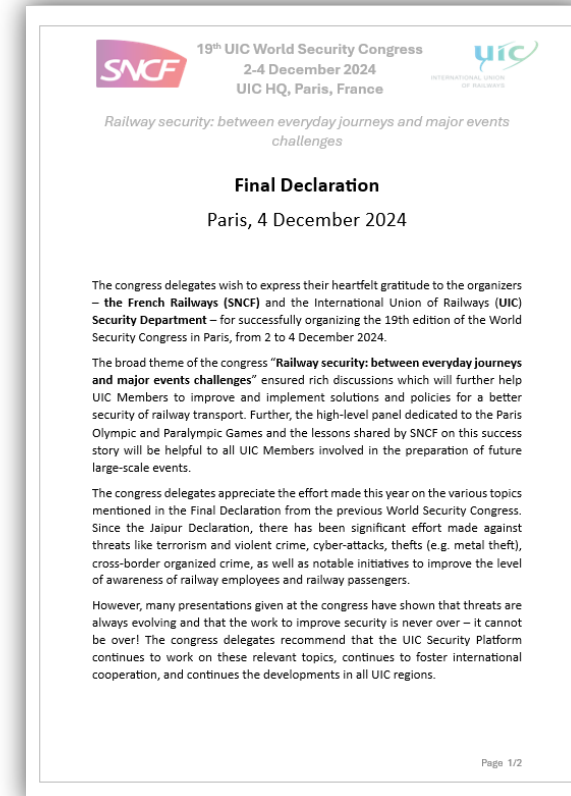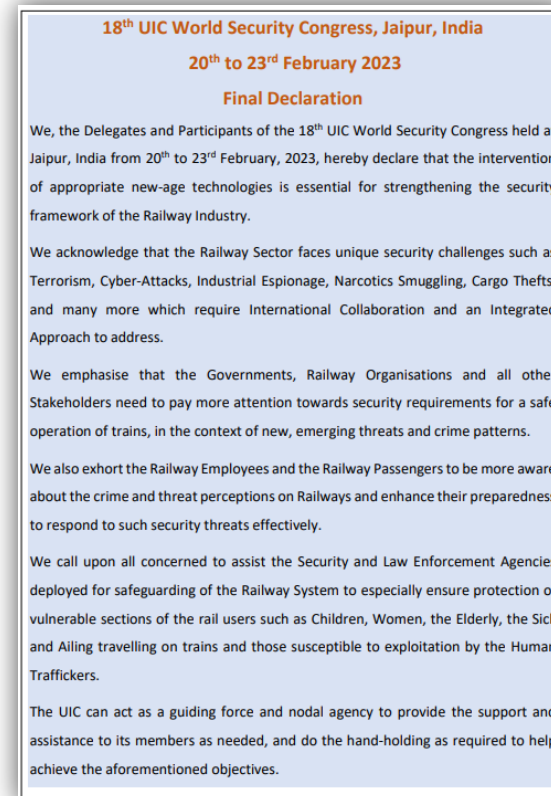## UIC WORLD SECURITY CONGRESS

Annual event

Security of women:
A priority topic for the railways and UIC

Jaipur Declaration 2023

"We call upon all … deployed for safeguarding of the **Railway System** to especially ensure **protection of vulnerable** sections of the rail **users** such as **Women** …"
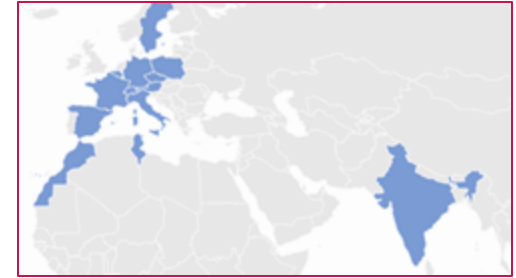
Paris Declaration 2024

"A first major topic is security of **vulnerable people**"

18th UIC World Security Congress, Jaipur, India

20th to 23rd February 2023

Final Declaration

We, the Delegates and Participants of the 18th UIC World Security Congress held at Jaipur, India from 20th to 23rd February, 2023, hereby declare that the intervention of appropriate new-age technologies is essential for strengthening the security framework of the Railway Industry.

We acknowledge that the Railway Sector faces unique security challenges such as Terrorism, Cyber-Attacks, Industrial Espionage, Narcotics Smuggling, Cargo Thefts, and many more which require International Collaboration and an Integrated Approach to address.

We emphasise that the Governments, Railway Organisations and all other Stakeholders need to pay more attention towards security requirements for a safe operation of trains, in the context of new, emerging threats and crime patterns.

We also exhort the Railway Employees and the Railway Passengers to be more aware about the crime and threat perceptions on Railways and enhance their preparedness to respond to such security threats effectively.

We call upon all concerned to assist the Security and Law Enforcement Agencies deployed for safeguarding of the Railway System to especially ensure protection of vulnerable sections of the rail users such as Children, Women, the Elderly, the Sick and Ailing travelling on trains and those susceptible to exploitation by the Human Traffickers.

The UIC can act as a guiding force and nodal agency to provide the support and assistance to its members as needed, and do the hand-holding as required to help achieve the aforementioned objectives.

19th UIC World Security Congress
2-4 December 2024
UIC HQ, Paris, France

Railway security: between everyday journeys and major events challenges

Final Declaration

Paris, 4 December 2024

The congress delegates wish to express their heartfelt gratitude to the organizers – **the French Railways (SNCF)** and the International Union of Railways (**UIC**) **Security Department** – for successfully organizing the 19th edition of the World Security Congress in Paris, from 2 to 4 December 2024.

The broad theme of the congress "**Railway security: between everyday journeys and major events challenges**" ensured rich discussions which will further help UIC Members to improve and implement solutions and policies for a better security of railway transport. Further, the high-level panel dedicated to the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games and the lessons shared by SNCF on this success story will be helpful to all UIC Members involved in the preparation of future large-scale events.

The congress delegates appreciate the effort made this year on the various topics mentioned in the Final Declaration from the previous World Security Congress. Since the Jaipur Declaration, there has been significant effort made against threats like terrorism and violent crime, cyber-attacks, thefts (e.g. metal theft), cross-border organized crime, as well as notable initiatives to improve the level of awareness of railway employees and railway passengers.

However, many presentations given at the congress have shown that threats are always evolving and that the work to improve security is never over – it cannot be over! The congress delegates recommend that the UIC Security Platform continues to work on these relevant topics, continues to foster international cooperation, and continues the developments in all UIC regions.
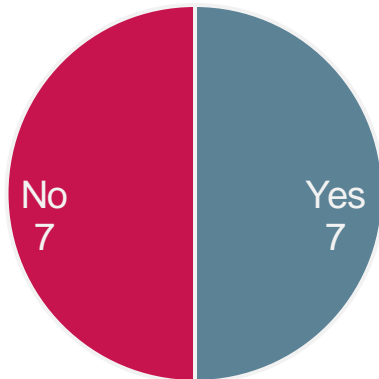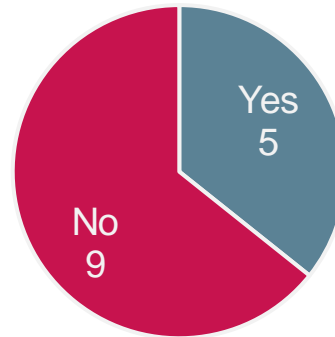
Page 1/2

4

Security of Women Survey Results

- **Survey period**: Summer 2023
- **Respondents**: 14 (from 13 countries)
- **Findings**:

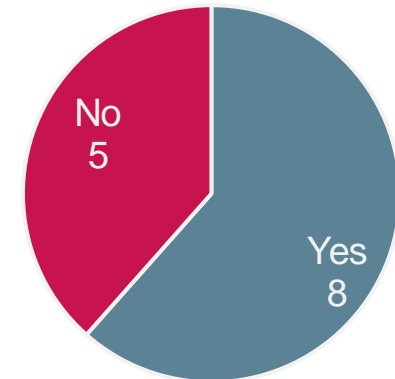### Internal Procedures for the Topic

No 7 | Yes 7

Specific measures to combat GBV

Yes 5 | No 9

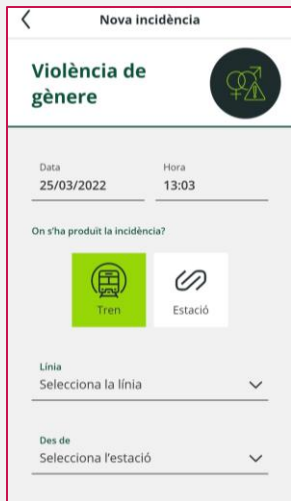### National Regulation on the Topic

No 5 | Yes 8

- Aggression data is not always disaggregated by gender
- Everyday security measures contribute to women's security
- Often times an increase in reporting is linked to a better procedure

Example security measures implemented by railways

Technological

- Smartphone apps
- CCTV

Example

Specific function to report sexual harassment in the Incivic Behaviour FGC App

Environmental

- Adequate lighting
- Clear lines of sight

Example

Passage under Umeå Central railway station redesign with rounded corners, no pillars, minimal roof, artificial lighting that feels like daylight, artwork, etc.

Organisational

- Clear policies
- Management buy-in

Example

In France, Gender-based offences in trains and rail stations are punished by law:

The SNCF internal security service must give priority to prevention and fight against sexual abuse in public transportation (Art. L 2251-1)
   Example: catcalling
   Punishment: up to €3,750 fine.

Human Factors

- Staff presence
- Trauma-informed trainings for staff

Example

Operation Meri Saheli (*my friend*) where women RPF officers accompany women travelling alone from boarding to destination

Conclusion

- Rail Security is a key element in developing rail traffic by attracting more passengers

- Security is at first the responsibility of the authorities, but railways have a major role to play in enhancing security

- **The rail sector is investing greatly in ensuring the security of women**

- However, security of women is a collective responsibility

- And to put an end to gender-based violence / sexist and sexual harassment in the rail environment, **a societal change is needed**

Thank you!

Stay in touch with the UIC Security Department

✉ security@uic.org

🌐 uic.org/security

Marie-Hélène Bonneau

Grigore Havarneanu

Laura Petersen

Bruno De Rosa

Kacper Kubrak

Paula Fernandez Díaz