

TRAIN2B=QUAL

Combating gender-based violence in rail



Summary of 2nd Webinar of UIC project:

TRAIN 2B EQUAL

November 2023



INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

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Introduction – TRAIN 2B EQUAL project

Joo Hyun Ha,
UIC Senior Sustainability Advisor

Joo Hyun Ha introduced the TRAIN-2B-EQUAL project, its objectives, activities and planned future actions.

The project focuses on supporting the rail sector in achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Gender Equality, through an increased gender balance in the workforce, which would help fill in the chronic skill shortage while transforming the sector into a more inclusive space for everyone. The project’s planned activities include establishing a working group, sharing knowledge through online workshops to bring awareness and to invite more members to join the project.

This is part of the broader gender equality activities carried by UIC in all regions: Asia Pacific (workshop at the Asia Pacific Rail Summit in Kuala Lumpur in October 2023), Latin America (two online workshops with UIC members), and Africa (establishment of a Train 2B Equal chapter, in partnership with African Union Commission for Energy and Infrastructure).

TRAIN-2B-EQUAL

5 GENDER EQUALITY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of UN SDG 2030 Agenda – SDG 5 - Gender Equality – demonstrate rail industry as a responsible employer and business • Chronic skills shortage globally for several roles in the rail industry – need the widest talent pool possible • Improved personal security and customer experience: the fear for their own personal safety prevents women from using rail transport.
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Planned actions and related outputs:

- Establish a **working group** for knowledge sharing
- **Communication and outreach** through online workshops to bring awareness and invite further members to join the project
- Partner with experts and organizations to **build knowledge** in the topics of: gender data, security, gender-responsive design and gender-balanced hiring & work environment practices



Future actions

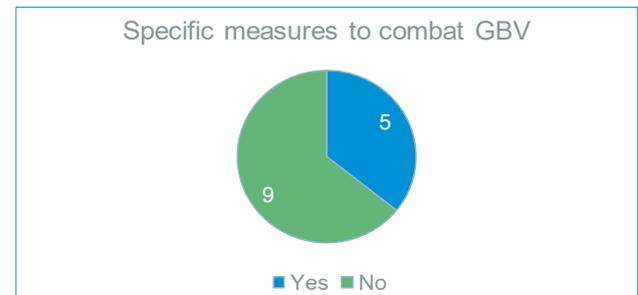
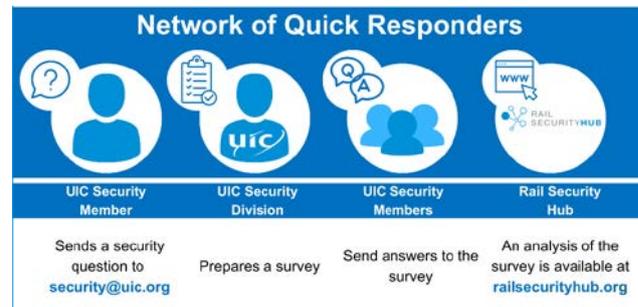
	• Research on barriers to working in rail for women and the female experience as a rail passenger
	• Global charter for women & Rail with guidance
	• Develop training and best practice guidance
	• Promote and deliver e-learning materials

With the support of more UIC members, this **opt-in project could expand its activities to encompass further research, develop a global charter for women and rail, as well as training and e-learning materials, as tools for the broader rail community.**

UIC Security Platform Survey Results

Laura Petersen,
UIC Senior Security Research Advisor

Laura Petersen presented the results from the 44th Network of Quick Responders Survey on the Security of Women. The Network of Quick Responders is a tool provided by the Security Division which enables Security Platform members to exchange fast information about arising security questions. The survey on the security of women had 14 responders from 13 countries and the results demonstrated that aggression data, whether it be for passengers or staff, is not always disaggregated by gender. This lack of data therefore makes it hard to detect any patterns. That said, respondents who did disaggregate gender data indicated that most increases in reported gender-based violence and harassment are due to the facilitation of the procedure to report rather than an actual increase in aggression. Furthermore, most respondents have national regulations on the topic which apply to the company, and about half have developed an internal procedure to deal with the issue. Lastly, **respondents agreed that everyday security measures, such as CCTV, dedicated emergency numbers/apps and security staff presence, contribute to the security of women in the rail environment.**



- Everyday security measures which play a role in women's security include:
 - CCTV
 - Staff training
 - Awareness campaigns
 - Presence of security staff
 - Dedicated emergency numbers and/or apps

Panel Session: UIC members and their combat against gender-based violence

FGC anti-harassment plan: Combat against gender-based violence in rail

Meritxell Salas, FGC Strategic & Prospective Planning

Meritxell Salas presented FGC’s anti-harassment plan to combat against gender-based violence in rail. Salas introduced FGC’s 2018-2023 equality plan that includes all of its gender initiatives and measures, designed both by employees and company representatives. The plan includes a total of 79 actions and addresses anti-harassment initiatives at FGC both internally and externally.

Internally, FGC updated protocol against sexual or gender-based harassment in the workplace and designated people of reference who have undergone specific training and coursework to deal with harassment situations within the company. Furthermore, efforts to disseminate the gender equality protocol among staff are continuous, with FGC having already trained approximately 750 employees and 31 managers to detect and prevent harassment. Spanish law also allowed FGC to further facilitate support measures for domestic violence victims.

Externally, FGC entered a security audit with gender perspective and re-design of their spaces in order to develop criteria to improve stations

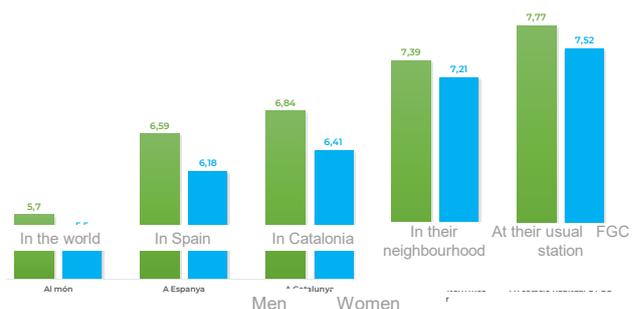
and how they are perceived, with 4 stations and 62 hours of observations done. In collaboration with the Catalan police, training for staff and public awareness campaigns have also been a focal point of the equality campaign.

To conclude, FGC demonstrated the results of the equality plan; both men and women responded indicating that they felt more secure in stations. FGC’s gender equality plan was awarded recognition as the best initiative against harassment in the first ever [Women in Rail Award](#) in 2022.

Users feel safe at FGC stations

Perceived feeling of security (from 0 to 10)

Answers from FGC users in the Barcelona-Vallès line



Beyond the Tracks: Role of Railway Protection Force in combating Gender-Based Violence

**Debashmita Chattopadhyay Banerjee,
Indian Railways Senior Divisional Security Commissioner of
the Railway Protection Force**

Debashmita Chattopadhyay Banerjee detailed the specific challenges that women face during rail travel in India, and the response of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Indian Railways to enhance women's security. They are taking a data-driven approach to identify areas of vulnerability for women passengers and allocating security measures accordingly. Implemented measures include:

- ▶ Deploying train escorts made up of women RPF officers for women travelers
- ▶ Relocating CCTV cameras to cover vulnerable spots
- ▶ Installing proper lighting
- ▶ Removing abandoned structures which are unguarded
- ▶ Closing off unauthorized entries
- ▶ Increasing the presence of police

Two flagship programs were then introduced: Operation My Saheli and Operation AAHT (Action Against Human Trafficking). My Saheli, which means "my friend" in Hindi, employs an end-to-end holistic assistance to women passengers, covering 230 stations across India.

The AAHT provides anti-human trafficking teams on trains as decoys to survey and to protect vulnerable groups of women passengers from human trafficking. RPF did an impact assessment showing a 33% decrease in crime against women after the introduction of the My Saheli program, while the operation AAHT has resulted in a 149% increase in the detection of human trafficking cases.

Internally, RPF have also introduced measures to combat gender-based discrimination and the gender-gap for staff. RPF has the highest percentage of women workforce among all armed forces in India, with the program ensuring pay parity and equal opportunities and gender-sensitive infrastructure, and an internal complaint committee at all divisions on par with international laws which have been ratified within India. **Future activities include enhanced use of AI-based technology in the prevention and detection of gender-based violence, further collaboration with non-government stakeholders and greater gender mainstreaming.**

ÖBB Presentation

Camila Gerdenitsch, Public Safety

Camila Gerdenitsch presented the gender-specific measures taken within ÖBB to reduce instances of gender-based violence, as “one attack is one too many.” Measures include routine training for employees on how to handle sexual harassment and violence, awareness campaigns for both passengers and staff, and emergency call systems to directly alert. While most local trains may run without attendants, employees are placed onto certain routes in

the evening to provide assistance if needed. **Architectural and technological design have played a part in making women passengers more comfortable and increasing the feeling of security within stations and trains. Since these measures have been implemented, there has been a 15% reduction on attacks on women.** ÖBB Corporate Security also works hand in hand with the police, providing them with assistance.

Holistic measures against violence

SNCB Mathieu Huysmans, Corporate Security Service, Passenger Security

Mathieu Huysman presented the holistic measures implemented by SNCB against violence. As gender-based violence is a criminal offense, Federal Railway Police Services are responsible for preventing, repressing and analyzing the crime in the rail environment.

However, SNCB is aware that a wider range of aggression occur in the rail environment, with gender-based assaults being only a small part. For this reason, a maximum investment has been made to prevent and deal with every type of violence, regardless of the motivation.



Fighting against sexual violence at SNCF

Anne Meunier, SNCF Head of Unit, Security Directorate

Anne Meunier presented the data regarding gender-based violence in the French rail environment. When looking into gender based violence occurrences recorded in the SNCF premises, 47% take place on trains and 53% happen in stations. Gender-based offences in trains and railway stations are punishable by law in France. Furthermore, Train operators are legally obligated to prioritize actions to prevent and combat gender-based violence and to provide an annual report, focusing on measures they've taken.

Internal procedures which address gender-based violence include a reporting system (which is also a legal obligation), an international professional network entitled "SNCF Mixité" who has as part of their mission to communicate on the topic, and the organization of specific awareness campaigns, including speeches by the president of the company.

External measures put in place include their dedicated emergency number, emergency alert terminals, and implementing undercover security officers on board trains who are trained in how to stop violence and take care of victims.

Key indicators and legal obligations



2/3

of all public transport travelers are women

53%

of acts sexual abuse take place in stations

47%

of acts sexual abuse take place in trains

9 ↗

points of increase in sexual assault against staff in contact with customers

Discussion

Has there been a business case analysis performed to evaluate the efficacy of the measures implemented to combat gender-based violence?

- While none of the panelists had carried out a business case, they had all carried out surveys to passengers and staff about the feeling of security and safety in the rail environment. RPF/ Indian Railways studied whether or not the security measures they have implemented incite more women to travel and that the rates of crimes are also tracked.

How important is cooperation between the railway staff, rail security staff, the operational center of the railways, and the police?

- RPF/Indian Railways explained that since they are the railway police, they can directly take action when such crimes occur. For the other panelists, they work closely with the police to ensure the security of women.

Gender-Based Violence in Public Spaces

**TfL Nicola Brady,
Senior Operational Policy, Insight and Analysis Manager-
(Compliance, Policing)**

Nicola Brady showcased the measures being taken throughout the public transport sector in London to curb gender-based discrimination such as informing the public on how to handle situations where gender-based violence occurs, public awareness and education campaigns, as well as implementing technolo-

gy to create better reporting mechanisms. TfL places a strong emphasis on the public realm and how spaces are designed, while also taking into account the entire journey from your front door to the destination, while creating a safer, more secure environment for all.

Violence against women in public transports

**Laurence Deglain,
French Directorate General for Infrastructure, Transport
and Mobility Head of the Rail and Public Transport Security
Office**

Laurence Deglain presented the efforts that France has taken to combat violence against women in public transport. In 2016, the Savary Law established the principle of an annual report on gender-based violence on public transport networks. Public transport operators are obliged to report to the Ministry of Transport on occurrences of gender-based violence.

Based on this data, the Ministry is then responsible for analyzing it, producing a summary, and making it available to the public. Since the data is based on that of the operators, the ministry of transport is able to compare data from both the operators and the police perspectives.

Deglain showed data from the 2021 report,

detailing that nearly one third of respondent entities have seen or heard of sexual and gender-based violence on their network, which represented a 7% increase compared to 2020. The total number of offenses equated to about 4.5 million per 10 million trips, with the Paris urban area alone accounting for nearly three quarters of the offenses. The general trends from the report showed that there has been an increase in sexual violence and that the majority of the victims have been women, but men are also represented in the data.

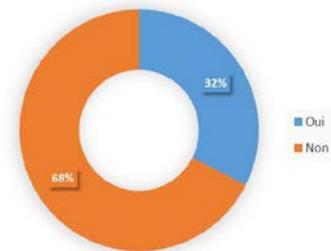
Examples of actions taken by public transport operators that have been supported by the Ministry to combat against gender-based violence were outlined. Exploratory walks, one such measure, consists of mobilizing a group of primarily women volunteers to walk through certain areas to better identify spaces that generate insecurity. The second initiative is the “get off-on-demand”, which allows those vulnerable to attacks to get off between two bus stops in order to bring them closer to their destination.



2. « GET-OFF-ON-DEMAND »

- **Definition:** The “get-off-on-demand” system consists of offering them the possibility of getting off between two bus stops in order to bring them closer to their destination.
- **Legal framework**
 - 2020 : Modification of the law to allow busses to stop inbetween get-off points
 - It can be deployed at the initiative of mobility authorities (décret 19 Oct 2020)
- = **Response to the feeling of insecurity experienced by bus users in the evening and at night and a tool to limit the exposure of vulnerable publics on the streets.**
- In France, a dozen transport networks have tested or deployed such a system on one or more lines, or even on their entire network. In order to foster the use of this system, the ministry of transports had published a guide of recommendations as well as a video presenting this new service offer.
- **September 2023 : generalization in Paris area**

Nearly one-third of respondent entities have seen or heard of sexual and gender-based violence on their network (7% increase compared to 2020)



Discussion

How are legal changes helping transport operators combat gender-based violence?

- ▼ Delgain responded by indicating some of the legal challenges the Ministry of Transport faces, but highlighted that progress has been made in identifying the problem and advancing legal frameworks that allow transport operators to implement initiatives that combat gender-based violence like the “Get off on Demand” initiative.
- ▼ Brady from TfL then joined the discussion to talk about how the legal framework has a huge impact on how crime is quantified and how solutions are developed. This is why TfL has joined lobbying efforts to change legislation in order to better combat gender-based violence.

StandUP Against Street Harassment

Terry Castillo,
Right to Be trainer

Terry Castillo concluded the 2nd UIC Train 2B Equal webinar by conducting an interactive StandUP Against Street Harassment training. StandUP is the result of a partnership between L'Oreal Paris and the grassroots organisation Right To Be.

The presentation started with a quick poll to the audience on what percentage of people had said it was beneficial when someone intervened on their behalf to stop street harassment. The audience correctly guessed that 79% had said that the situation improved when someone intervened. Even though a large portion of people said intervention was helpful, only 25% of respondents in the survey indicated that someone had helped them while being harassed, pointing to the fact that some people do not feel comfortable intervening.

Another audience poll showed what are the most common forms of street harassment seen in public transport: catcalling, whistling, and being followed, and Castillo added examples of unwanted non-verbal aggressions. A video demonstrating examples of street harassment and the bystander effect was used to base a discussion on the psychological effects such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD as well as the social and financial impacts of limited mobility and losing a sense of community.

Then, Ms Castillo went into details on the 5 D methodology bystanders can use when witnessing street harassment.

1. **Distract:** to de-escalate the situation at hand. This can be done by asking the person experiencing the harassment for the time or simply just interrupting the harassment that is taking place.
2. **Delegate:** to intervene indirectly by using someone in a position of authority to intervene on your behalf. For example, if the situation took place on a bus, getting the bus driver's attention to the situation at hand would be an example of delegating.
3. **Document:** to aid the person experiencing the harassment and create a record on their behalf, whether a video or picture, giving the victim a record of the situation that took place.
4. **Direct intervention:** to call out the behavior. It involves confronting the person who is carrying the harassment but making sure to keep it short and polite so as to not escalate the situation.
5. **Delay:** waiting until after the event transpired and checking in with the victim, and asking other ways that would help them feel supported.

As seen during the audience poll, data shows that in cases of street harassment, only about 25% of people intervene. Attendees pointed out to fear, indecisiveness, and not wanting to escalate as being potential reasons for inaction. A video was shown to demonstrate real-life, practical examples of how the 5D approach can be implemented in a subtle way while reducing harm for both the bystander and the victim experiencing the harassment.

Three strategies to respond to harassment were shared:

1

Trust your **instincts**

2

Reclaim your space

3

Practice **resilience**

To conclude, real life examples were presented for the audience to take part in and practice their responses when they are in the position of a bystander.



Calendar of TRAIN 2B EQUAL workshops



7 July 2023	Launching event Gender data gap	
13 September 2023	Security	
February 2024	Gender responsive design for stations/ infrastructure	
March 2024	Gender equality in hiring and in the work environment	
Q2 2024	Sharing of outcomes with broader transport community	

More resources



Contact our team

UIC Sustainability:

Joo Hyun Ha

ha@uic.org

UIC Talent & Expertise Development:

Meryem Belhaj-Clot

belhaj-clot@uic.org

UIC Security:

Laura Petersen

petersen@uic.org



Recordings of presentation

UIC YouTube channel:

[TRAIN 2B EQUAL launching event playlist](#)



Slides of the event

Download the slide deck [here](#)

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