

## Vision Statement

# SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE RAIL

Safe and sustainable rail can help power the world out of the economic, climate and social crises we face today. Safe and sustainable rail is a **new economic and social model** that redefines the role of passengers, workers, employers, the state and the environment.

Public investment in rail can kickstart the **recovery of our economies**. In India for example, every \$1 invested in rail creates \$5 of GDP in the rest of the economy.

Rail **reduces carbon emissions**. Rail and public transport are the key to the radical, green modal shift we need in transport. Per passenger kilometer, heavy rail emits 75% less **emissions than cars**, and light rail emits 57% less.

Rail **fuels economic and social equality** through access to employment, skilled jobs and higher wages. On average, every one job created in rail creates another job in manufacturing, food, trade or other sectors. Rail also provides citizens with the mobility needed to access jobs and livelihoods.

## SAFE

We need **fully staffed rail operations and services** to protect the safety of all. Two-thirds of surveyed affiliates have seen staff cuts in their workplaces. Ticketing and maintenance workers were found to be most threatened by job losses, the former of which disproportionately threatens women's jobs. This threatens the safety and security of passengers, and the communities rail moves between and through. Low staffing also puts passengers and workers, particularly women, at higher risk of violence and harassment.

We need to fill skills shortages through **decent work** and **free education and training** to ready rail for the future. Falling job formality, pay, conditions and occupational safety and health (OSH) are deepening labour and skills shortages. We need skilled rail workers on our trains, in our stations, and building and repairing our tracks. We need rail **apprenticeships** for women, young people and all workers that face higher barriers to entry, retention and promotion in the industry.

New technology in rail is not necessarily safer or more 'efficient' than skilled, fully-staffed rail systems. **Collective bargaining** must be used to stop exploitation (disproportionately of women and young workers), low pay, overwork, fatigue, stress, gender-based segregation, and safety failures growing alongside new technology.

We demand:

- 1. Full staffing** on trains, stations and all freight and passenger rail operations, and an end to driver-only and driverless operations.
- 2. Decent work** for all workers, through freedom of association, collective bargaining and respect for all ILO Conventions regarding employment and labour rights.

3. **Occupational safety and health** (OSH) standards, [sanitation](#) access, and negotiated and respected rest and leave systems, as fundamental rights for all rail workers.
4. **OSH committees** and elected **representatives** in every workplace, with full employer recognition and representation of women workers.
5. Tripartite **investigations into OSH failures** and rail accidents
6. Protection of workers from **violence and harassment at work**, through ratification and enforcement of [ILO Convention 190](#).
7. An end to **gender-based occupational segregation**, through training and the representation of women workers in decision-making amongst all stakeholders
8. **Equal pay and conditions for work of equal value** for all rail workers, including outsourced and subcontracted services, and [non-standard forms of employment](#).

## PUBLIC

[Privatisation](#) puts passengers, workers, and our communities at risk. Countless examples around the world show that, in rail, the private sector:

- Fails to invest in maintenance and upgrading
- Outsources and subcontracts key operations and services
- Makes prices, ticketing and services too expensive, complicated and inaccessible
- Fragments networks into unequal and inefficient transport systems
- Reduces the amount of track, stations and rail facilities
- Overworks, underpays and exploits staff
- Siphons off public subsidies into private hands
- Relies on diesel-fuelled rail and fails to lower rail's carbon emissions
- Reduces staff, making the railways less accessible for people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups

As a result, passenger miles travelled tend to fall in privatised rail. Seventy-seven percent of surveyed affiliates said rail liberalisation had worsened working conditions. Fundamentally, **privatised rail is unsafe and unsustainable**. It cannot offer the long-term planning and investment required for the green, modal shift to rail.

Subcontracted cleaning, catering, maintenance and other rail services are [less safe](#) and rely on the **exploitation of underskilled workers**. Those jobs that are restructured, subcontracted and/or exploited, in all rail professions, are disproportionately occupied by women and [young workers](#). Subcontracting is also a [major barrier](#) to the modal shift from road freight to rail. Two-thirds of surveyed unions regarded outsourcing as an issue for their members in rail. Maintenance and infrastructure jobs were identified as the main victims of outsourcing.

**Rail is a public good**. Rail must be designed to meet the needs of workers, passengers and communities, not the needs of corporations and private capital.

**Public ownership** is safer, better-planned, more efficient, higher-quality, more accessible, more accountable, and is one of the [great equalisers](#) in society.

Profits must be reinvested in rail, used to subsidise other green public transport, or returned to public funds. **Public financing** is the only way to ensure rail is safe, funded and strong enough to power us out of the crises we face today and tomorrow.

Safe and sustainable rail goes beyond reducing emissions. **It offers a new economic and social model of mobility** that redefines the role of the workers, the state and the environment.

This social model can harness new technology to upskill workers, create decent work and make rail safer. It demands the active **participation of workers**, putting their knowledge and skills to a greater public good, and providing decent, healthy, safe and fulfilling jobs.

We demand:

- 1. Public ownership** of rail as a public good, and an **end to all rail privatisation**.
- 2. Unitary rail systems** with infrastructure, rolling stock and operations all owned by one public entity.
- 3. Public financing** of rail, with profits reinvested back into rail, green public transportation, or returned to public funds.
- 4. Integration of rail** with other modes of public transport to provide affordable, safe and accessible services.
- 5. Negotiation and collective bargaining with trade unions** to determine the transport and other needs of workers, passengers and communities.
- 6.** All public investment and spending must **guarantee freedom of association**, collective bargaining and labour rights throughout the supply chain.

## SUSTAINABLE

We are in a climate emergency. We need a fundamental **economic transformation** to avert catastrophe. Safe and sustainable rail must be at the heart of this new economic model.

Technology alone will not reduce emissions to the level we need to decarbonise transport. Mass transit must replace the majority of cars and inefficient models of freight distribution to sufficiently reduce transport's carbon emissions. Safe and sustainable rail is the key to this **modal shift to mass transit**.

In addition to the modal shift to rail, we must also **decarbonise rail** itself, and the [energy system](#) it relies on. Electric and hydrogen rail (Hydrail) are enjoying lower costs and higher investment in the biggest rail markets. Construction, installation, maintenance and operation of e-rail and Hydrail systems can create and sustain millions of skilled jobs.

Investment in **high-speed rail** reduces emissions from long-distance vehicles, and opens up existing rail capacity for freight transportation. In [Germany](#), a 1% increase in access to high-speed rail leads to a 0.25% increase in economic growth. High-speed rail must be at the heart of any national and international sustainable economy.

We demand:

- 1. A Green New Deal for Transport**, with public stimulus spending of 5% of pre-Covid-19 GDP on a modal shift to rail.
- 2.** Recognition of rail as **green infrastructure** as part of any environmental and decarbonisation targets, policies and spending.
- 3.** Investment in **multi- and inter-modal transport systems**, feeding into existing and new rail networks for both passengers and cargo.
- 4.** Massive and urgent public investment in **high-speed rail** as green infrastructure critical to the modal shift for long-distance transportation.
- 5. Decent work guarantees** from rail operators and employers for all infrastructure investment and operations, including a commitment to the transition from **informal to formal work**.
- 6.** Public investment in, and ownership of **electric, solar- and hydrogen-fueled** rail as part of a green, public energy system.
- 7. Renewable energy** for rail by:
  - Bringing fossil fuel industries under majority public ownership.
  - Public control of, and investment in renewable and sustainable energy sources.

# SOCIAL JUSTICE

The scale of investment in rail that the environment and the economy needs requires support from workers, passengers and citizens. Support for an undertaking this size can only be built on transparency, democracy and accountability at all stages.

**Collective bargaining** is the most effective and powerful form of workplace democracy and accountability, and must therefore be at the heart of safe and sustainable rail. Public operators need collective bargaining and cooperation with trade unions to agree, check and fix safety and labour standards in rail.

Rail is a natural monopoly. The unprecedented modal shift to rail our climate needs therefore demands a **single, coordinated, public entity** responsible for fair planning and delivery.

Transparency cannot end at the train station. There must be **social justice** in railway supply chains. The supply chains of rail systems must be subject to the same standards, scrutiny and improvements. This includes working with the ITF and its affiliates around the world to guarantee **sustainable finance, ethical procurement and human rights due diligence** throughout the supply chain of rail systems.

Multinational rail operators must be held **accountable for the labour and safety standards in all countries they operate in**. Multinational employers and operators must work with the ITF to ensure standards and decent work are enforced across borders.

New technology should be utilised for the social good, not for economic gain. Rail workers must **negotiate, receive training, and be rewarded for working with any new technology** being introduced in rail systems. There should be no automation without negotiation.

**Workers must control their data** and how it is used. New apps and algorithms have inbuilt gender, cultural and ethnic biases, and make life and death decisions with little oversight. Surveillance and control of passengers and workers using new technology is a new problem of which we do not yet know the full implications. Change must be accountable and transparent.

We demand:

- 1. Democratic accountability** in the planning and development of rail through **collective bargaining** with, and **worker representation in rail authorities and management**.
- 2. A single, public entity** responsible for planning, developing and managing the modal shift to rail and other modes of public transport, and the decarbonisation of transport.
- 3. Labour and gender impact assessments** carried out in partnership with trade unions throughout rail and public transport systems and their supply chains.
- 4. Cooperation** with the ITF and its affiliates to carry out effective **human rights due diligence** in procurement, finance and the supply chain of public rail.
- 5. Worker control of their data and its uses**, and **public ownership, regulations and storage** of the data.
- 6. No automation or technology introduced or changed without negotiation** with trade unions.
- 7. Free education and (re)training for all workers**, provided by employers and/or governments, including for the skills required to work with new technology.