



UN Tourism



# Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport



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## Acknowledgements

This report was commissioned jointly by UN Tourism and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). Dr Anke Winchenbach authored the report, with strong support from Prof. Albert Kimbu, both from the University of Surrey, and Ms. Emily Mitchell, an independent analyst. We would also like to acknowledge Prof. Emily Ma, from the University of Surrey, for her support in this study.

The report was coordinated and edited by Giorgia Ventura, Benjamin Owen and Susana Costa Resende, from the Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility Department at UN Tourism and was reviewed by Mr. Rob Johnston, Mr. Luke Menzies, Ms. Joanne Martin and Ms. Angel-Marie De Gracia at ITF. Research support was provided by the Market Intelligence, Policies and Competitiveness Department, Regional Departments and Statistics, Standards and Data Department at UN Tourism.

Thank you to ver.di (Germany) for their valuable insights and contribution to the report.

UN Tourism would like to thank all member, non-members states and territories who contributed to the National Questionnaire, namely: Andorra, Bahrain, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, El Salvador, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Macao (China), Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Slovenia and Venezuela.

UN Tourism extends its acknowledgements to all respondents to the Business Survey: All Aboard America! Holdings; American Airlines Colombia; Ana Holdings; Anderson Coach and Travel; Anyway Travel; Autolineas Rubiocar; Birmingham Airport Limited; CONFEBUS – Spanish Confederation of Bus and Coach Transport; Desarrollos Turisticos (Fun And Tickets); East Japan Railway Company; Fédération Nationale des Transports de Voyageur; Fidex Car Hire and Safaris; Flynas; Greenwave Transportation; Grupo Renfe; Grupo Viajes Tulum; Hertz Rent a Car Costa Rica; Iberia, iGA Istanbul Airport; Jambojet; Japan Airlines; Kallithea Shipping Company; Kansai Airports; Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers; Malta International Airport; María Ofelia Somma; Middle East Airlines AirLiban, Museumstoomtram Hoorn-Medemblik; Nuestra Señora de la Asunción; Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau; RifVans; Royal Jordanian Airlines; Solaris Broker Aereo; Splendacious Corporation Private Limited; Tirana International Airport; Top Line KZ; and Transportes Automotores Plusmar.

UN Tourism and ITF express their gratitude to everybody involved in producing this report.

# Foreword

by **Shaikha Al Nuwais**  
**Secretary-General,**  
**World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism)**



I am proud to introduce this report on women in tourism transport, because it does something we have not done before.

For the first time at a global level, it shows clearly what is holding women back in tourism transport. Not in theory, but in practice, from gaps in law and access to training to cultural barriers, safety concerns and infrastructure that was not built with women's needs in mind.

That matters. Because tourism transport is the backbone of our sector. It is what moves people, connects cultures and keeps economies alive, and within it sits real opportunity, across every role and every level.

I have seen what happens when women are part of that story. Businesses do not just grow, they evolve. Communities feel it. Economies become more resilient.

Yet women remain underrepresented, particularly in technical roles and leadership. And that is exactly what this research brings into focus, where the gaps are and what is required to address them.

Addressing this is not just about fairness. It is about building a stronger sector.

This report gives us the clarity to act and the responsibility to do so. I thank the ITF for their collaboration on this timely and important research, and I look forward to continuing our collaboration as we turn these recommendations into action.

# Foreword

by **Stephen Cotton**  
ITF General Secretary



Transport is the backbone of the global economy and the tourism industry. But for too many women workers, it is built on insecurity, low pay and unsafe conditions.

This joint study with UN Tourism sets out new global evidence on the structural inequalities facing women in passenger transport. It shows a clear failure of the current industry model – one that continues to rely on precarious and undervalued labour, unsafe and unequal working conditions, and systemic barriers that limit women's access to employment, particularly leadership and decision-making roles.

At the same time, the industry faces growing labour shortages and widening skills gaps, while women remain significantly underrepresented. The message from this report is clear: change is both necessary and possible.

What is needed now is not more commitments, but implementation and accountability.

Governments must enforce rights and raise standards. Employers must take responsibility across their operations and supply chains, investing in safe and inclusive workplaces. Women must have access to training, skills and leadership opportunities. And better data and accountability are essential to drive progress.

Social dialogue is central to delivering this change. Trade unions will play a critical role in advancing gender-responsive collective bargaining, ensuring women's voices are heard, and securing safe and dignified working conditions. This report is a call to action.

I thank UN Tourism for their collaboration on this important study. Achieving gender equality in transport is not optional – it is essential to building a fair, resilient and future-ready workforce.

# Executive summary

**Tourism transport** refers to passenger transport services used primarily for tourism purposes, enabling visitors to travel to, from and within destinations. It forms a core component of the tourism economy and includes transport modes that move visitors as part of their tourism trip, whether for access, mobility at destination or sightseeing.<sup>1</sup>

The aim of this landmark *Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport* is to examine the participation of women in tourism transport employment at a global and regional level, including the five UN Tourism world regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, with the two sub-regions of East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia displayed separately due to the clear differences in women's participation in tourism transport that is seen in the available data.

Tourism is an important driver for women's empowerment, global employment and economic growth, which are key commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all), SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) and SDG 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

Tourism transport and its component industries (air, land, water) form the foundation of the tourism sector, connecting travellers and destinations while providing employment opportunities for millions of people worldwide. The tourism transport workforce however remains dominated by men across all industries and regions of the world, with a variety of different barriers preventing women's full and equal participation.

In many parts of the world, the demand for female passenger transport workers and the number of commitments from governments and businesses for increasing women's employment are rising. Reasons behind this trend include the continued growth of the tourism sector, increased demand for women's economic participation and empowerment, women passenger safety, as well as wider tourism and passenger transport labour shortages in many parts of the world.

This report maps the role of women in tourism transport at a global level for the first time and examines the factors that inhibit their entry and career progression in the workforce.

<sup>1</sup> Further details on how tourism transport is defined is available in chapter 1.1 and annex 1.

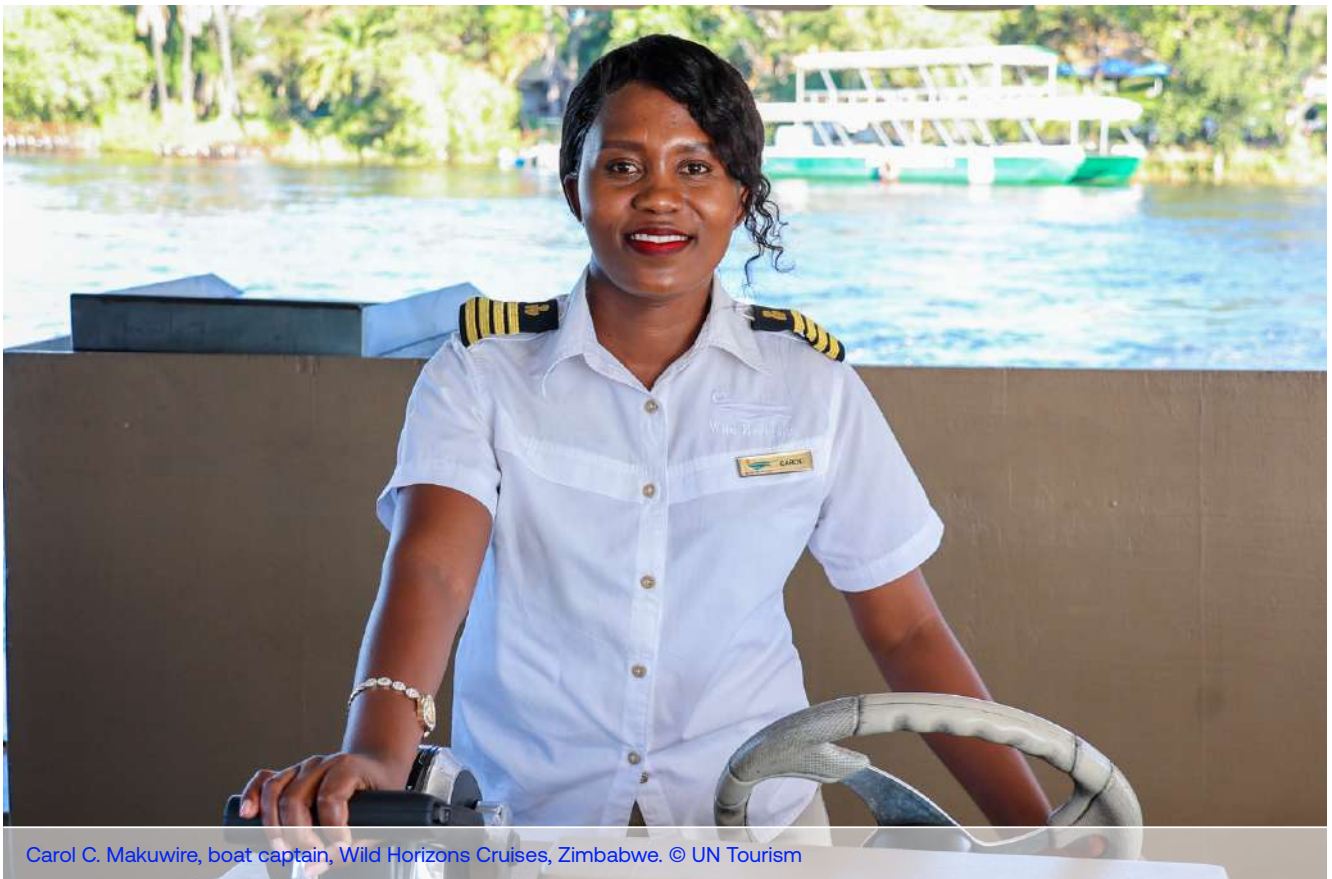
## Key findings

**36%** of people working in **air** passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data. While ‘air’ has the largest proportion of women working among the different passenger transport industries, ‘air’ accounts for only **2% of tourism transport employment** in countries and territories with available data.

**12%** of people working in **water** passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data. Water transport accounts for only **2% of tourism transport employment** in countries and territories with available data.

**3%** of people working in **land** passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data. This is by far the lowest proportion of women working among the different passenger transport industries, but ‘land’ accounts for **96% of tourism transport employment** in countries and territories with available data.

- The representation of women in tourism transport varies widely geographically and between passenger transport industries.
- While some progress has been made towards women’s socioeconomic participation in work, critical legal and cultural barriers remain to achieving gender equality and guaranteeing women’s rights.
- Women are underrepresented in senior and board positions in tourism transport across all industries.
- Harassment, gender-based violence and a lack of safe access to decent sanitation facilities are prevalent issues that women workers face in tourism transport employment.
- The scarcity of tourism transport data disaggregated by sex limits informed progress towards gender equality, decent work and women’s empowerment, and requires urgent attention.



Carol C. Makuwire, boat captain, Wild Horizons Cruises, Zimbabwe. © UN Tourism

## The way forward

Policy makers, tourism businesses and other key stakeholders are encouraged to join the efforts of the international community in progressing towards gender equality in passenger transport by intensifying their data collection and reporting efforts, and showcasing examples of good practice. Detailed recommendations and goals with clear action points and actors responsible are presented in chapter 5.2 of this report.

This report presents recommendations in five thematic areas with associated goals:

### Thematic area 1

Gender-responsive laws, corporate policies and social protection

**Goal:** Gender-responsive laws, gendered corporate policies and social protection measures create institutional mechanisms for the advancement of gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in tourism transport employment.

### Thematic area 2

Health, safety and working environments

**Goal:** Having safe and healthy working environments helps to attract and retain female talent in tourism transport by ensuring that women's needs are met, that women feel safe and supported at work, that they are free of fear and harassment and have access to sanitary facilities and effective support services.

### Thematic area 3

Education, training, career progression and leadership

**Goal:** Education, training and awareness-raising help to attract future talent, support women's career development and enable access to leadership positions in tourism transport.

### Thematic area 4

Measuring, monitoring and reporting

**Goal:** Measuring, monitoring and reporting data on tourism transport are critically important to track performance, ensure compliance, manage risks and facilitate research that informs decision-making for improving gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment.

### Thematic area 5

Collaboration and partnerships

**Goal:** Strong collaborations and partnerships enable the creation of inclusive, safe and sustainable work environments for women by fostering systemic change, enhancing resource efficiency and accelerating progress toward gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in tourism transport.



# Introduction

**Summary:** The *Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport* provides the first global, data-driven analysis of women's employment in tourism transport across air, land and water passenger transport industries. This chapter provides the background and context for the work and presents a brief overview about the methodology applied in this research (for the detailed methodology see annex 1) with details about the data collection methods and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and the case studies presented in this report.

**Key messages:**

- Tourism transport is an enabler of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), yet women remain underrepresented and face persistent inequalities.
- Structural barriers – including gender stereotypes, discriminatory cultures and limited career progression – continue to restrict women's participation.
- Closing gender gaps in transport could unlock significant economic, social and environmental benefits globally.
- Advancing gender equality requires targeted policies, better data and coordinated action aligned with the SDGs and International Labor Conventions.

**Key words:** Gender equality | tourism transport | women's employment | SDGs | barriers | inclusion

# Background and methodology

Tourism has been shown to have enormous potential in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its associated 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This *Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport* is the first of its kind to disaggregate global data on women in tourism with a focus on women's employment in tourism transport.<sup>2</sup> It documents in greater detail than ever before the participation of women in tourism transport employment, considering three main research questions:

1. What data is available on the participation of women in tourism transport employment?
2. What are the key challenges to gender equality, decent and secure work, and women's empowerment in the tourism transport sector?
3. What concrete measures can be implemented to achieve gender equality, promote decent and secure work and women's empowerment in the tourism transport sector as envisaged in the SDGs, particularly SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 8 (Decent work), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)?

Across these questions the research scope is focussed on the following three categories of tourism transport employment:

1. Air passenger transport
2. Land passenger transport (railway and road passenger transport)
3. Water passenger transport



Woman train conductor in Morocco. © ITF

<sup>2</sup> Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

For further details see annex 1 Methodology.

## What is tourism transport?

Tourism transport refers to passenger transport services used primarily for tourism purposes, enabling visitors to travel to, from and within destinations. It forms a core component of the tourism economy and includes transport modes that move visitors as part of their tourism trip, whether for access, mobility at destination, or sightseeing.

Tourism transport is defined through the concept of “tourism characteristic activities”, as set out in the *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*.<sup>a</sup> Under this framework, tourism transport comprises of the following passenger transport industries:

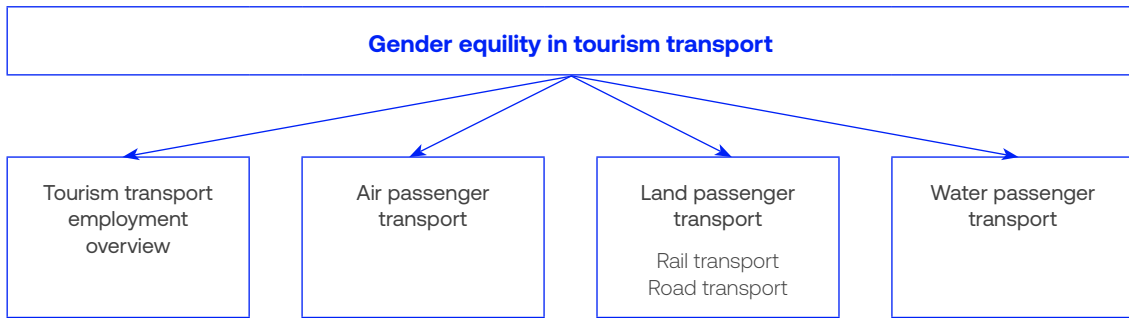
- Air passenger transport;
- Land passenger transport, divided into:
  - Rail passenger transport; and
  - Road passenger transport (including buses, coaches, taxis and similar services); and
- Water passenger transport (including ferries, cruise ships, excursion and sightseeing boats).

These activities correspond to the categories within the *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* (ISIC Rev.4)<sup>b</sup> and are consistent with the international statistical frameworks developed by UN Tourism and other international organizations:

1. *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008* (IRTS 2008);<sup>a</sup>
2. *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008* (TSA: RMF 2008);<sup>c</sup> and
3. *Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism* (SF-MST) statistical framework.<sup>d</sup>

Note: Further details are available in the detailed methodology in annex 1.

- Sources:
- a) United Nations (2010), *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*, UN, New York, available at: [www.e-unwto.org](http://www.e-unwto.org) [11-02-2026].
  - b) United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].
  - c) United Nations; Commission of the European Communities; Eurostat; World Tourism Organization and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010), *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008*, UN, New York, available at: [www.e-unwto.org](http://www.e-unwto.org) [11-02-2026].
  - d) World Tourism Organization (n.d.), ‘Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST)’, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/> [18-07-2025].

Figure I.1: **Thematic structure of the report**

This Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport used different analysis methods consisting of primary and secondary quantitative and qualitative data. (See annex 1 for a detailed methodology.) The geographic scope of this report is global and includes data from a total of 99 countries (see annex 2).<sup>3</sup>

This report exposes the gender gaps that exist at a global and regional level, analyses the barriers that women face to starting or progressing their careers in tourism transport and provides a set of concrete recommendations in chapter 5.2. The report is intended to act as a springboard for future work to reduce gender-inequalities, improve the conditions of women workers, redress gender-imbalances, increase women's employment in roles that challenge gender-based occupational segregation and retain and progress women in tourism transport employment.

<sup>3</sup> The detailed methodology and source data used for calculated tables and figures are available in annexes 1 and 2 in this report.

# Context

## The link between tourism and transport industries

In 2025, approximately 1.52 billion tourists travelled internationally, generating estimated USD 2.2 trillion total export revenues.<sup>4</sup> Tourism and transport are intertwined, as tourism relies on strong connectivity and tourism is an important market for many regional, national and international transport providers.<sup>5</sup> Transport as a whole, both freight and passenger, is the worldwide third-largest job provider, supporting 168 million jobs in 2017, representing approximately 7% of total employment in the world.<sup>6</sup> Passenger transport is not just a link between geographical locations; instead, it shapes society as it influences the location of productive and leisure activities, as well as affecting where people live.<sup>7</sup> Passenger transport plays a vital role in enabling tourism by facilitating access to and mobility within destinations;<sup>8</sup> and contributes significantly to tourism

employment. The cruise industry alone is estimated to support approximately 1.6 million jobs globally<sup>9</sup> and aviation-enabled tourism generates around 37.3 million jobs globally.<sup>10</sup> Research found that in Canada, for example, even though only 3% of tourists use urban public transport and 30% use taxis, 80% of tourists are clients of air, water, car rental and rail companies.<sup>11</sup> This shows that the link between transport and tourism is both interdependent and mutually reinforcing, forming a dynamic and symbiotic relationship.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, transport is a precondition for the competitiveness of a tourism destination, an *enabler* to shared prosperity and a major *employer* – albeit primarily of men especially in mid and senior management.<sup>13</sup>

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Duval, D.T. (2007), 'Tourism and transport: Modes, networks and flows', Channel View Publications, Clevedon.
  - 13 According to ILO, "managers plan, direct, coordinate and evaluate the overall activities of enterprises, governments and other organizations, or of organizational units within them, and formulate and review their policies, laws, rules and regulations". See: International Labour Organization – ILOSTAT (2024), 'International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)', ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org> [12-02-2026].  
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## The gendered nature of transport sector employment

*Transport is one of several sectors that have traditionally been regarded as ‘no place for women’.<sup>14</sup>*

While this report focusses specifically on tourism transport,<sup>15</sup> previous research on the wider transport sector, covering both freight and passenger transport, and on working conditions and labour rights in the tourism sector<sup>16</sup> provide useful context for this study.

Women’s participation in the wider transport sector varies across subsectors: Women are least represented in wider land and water transport industries, accounting for only 5% and 10% of the workforce, respectively.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, women make up 38% in the wider aviation industry.<sup>18</sup> This distribution pattern persists at both regional and country levels, yet percentage figures vary. For example, in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA),<sup>19</sup> women account for only 3% of the transport workforce in the region: 1% in land transport, 5% in water transport and comparatively higher in air transport (26%).<sup>20</sup> In Europe and Central Asia (ECA), women’s participation is lowest in

land transport (15%), followed by water transport (20%) and air transport (37%).<sup>21</sup>

The low participation of women in transport has been linked to several underlying issues, such as women being widely regarded as secondary workers. In addition, their labour market participation is often characterized by part-time, short-term, casual and low-skilled employment, meaning they enter the labour market on terms that are not equal to those of men.<sup>22</sup> The jobs women typically work in transport are usually of lower status, lower quality, insecure and less well paid.<sup>23</sup> Many women in transport are informally employed, and often not protected by legal or regulatory frameworks, depriving them of access to equal pay, safe and hygienic working environments, and essential social protection services.<sup>24</sup> Further, global estimates indicate that women occupy just 23% of senior leadership positions in transportation companies.<sup>25</sup> Women representation tends to decline with seniority, highlighting persistent barriers to progression within the sector.<sup>26</sup> While women hold 34% of entry-level roles, their share drops to only 17% at the senior executive and managerial levels.<sup>27</sup> The wider transport sector<sup>28</sup> suffers from a severe gender wage gap due to the fact

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- 14 International Labour Organization (2013), *Women in the transport sector*, Transport Policy Brief 2013, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/> [30-11-2025].
- 15 Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].
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- 27 World Economic Forum (2022), *Global Gender Gap Report 2023*, WEF, Geneva, available at: <https://www.weforum.org> [22-05-2025].
- 28 World Economic Forum (2022), *Global Gender Gap Report 2023*, WEF, Geneva, available at: <https://www.weforum.org> [22-05-2025].

that women tend to engage in paid work for fewer hours than men, as women continue to have greater family and domestic responsibilities.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast to traditional male jobs in transport, such as maritime engineers, airline pilots or train drivers, jobs where women are most prevalent – often referred to as ‘feminized’ or ‘opened’ to women roles – include: technical-nautical and cruise staff in the maritime sector; cabin crew and customer service positions in aviation; tram (and bus) drivers in urban transport; conductors and station staff in railways.<sup>30</sup> Even when women do access roles traditionally ascribed to men, they are often disadvantaged due to unfavourable working conditions and workplace attitudes and structures.<sup>31</sup> According to World Bank data, in 12 countries<sup>32</sup> women are still legally barred from certain jobs in the transport sector (e.g., operating trains, driving large vehicles or working in railway, road transport or civil aviation).<sup>33</sup> These restrictions constrain women’s access to employment and reinforce gender stereotypes, re-emphasizing that the transport sector is unsuitable for women.<sup>34</sup>

## Barriers to women’s access and progress in the transport sector

Research by Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) identified five barriers to women’s access and progress in the transport sector:

1. Gender stereotyping for certain jobs, especially technical ones;
2. Discriminatory work cultures;
3. Lack of flexible working and childcare provision;
4. Invisible glass ceilings and restricted career options; and
5. Gender equity and its relationship with wider diversity, behaviour and culture change.

The SuM4All toolkit offers detailed action plans across these areas to advance gender-equitable employment in passenger transport industries.

Source: Sustainable Mobility for All (2023), *Gender Imbalance in the Transport Sector: A Toolkit for Change*, SuM4All, World Bank Group, Washington D.C., available at: <https://www.sum4all.org/> [19-12-2025].

29 European Investment Bank and International Association of Public Transport (2024), *Gender best practices in public transport*, UITP, Brussels, available at: <https://www.uitp.org> [17-05-2025].

30 Turnbull, P. (2013), *Promoting the employment of women in the transport sector – Obstacles and policy options*, ILO, Geneva, p. 36, available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [23-04-2025].

31 Turnbull, P. (2013), *Promoting the employment of women in the transport sector – Obstacles and policy options*, ILO, Geneva, p. 36, available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [23-04-2025].

32 Examples include operating trains (Argentina); driving large, machined engine vehicles (Lebanon); working in railway or road transportation and civil aviation (Tajikistan). Source: World Bank Group (2024), *Women, Business and the Law*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [22-05-2025].

33 World Bank Group (2024), *Women, Business and the Law*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [22-05-2025].

34 World Bank Group (2023), *Gender Equality in Development: A Ten-Year Retrospective*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1596/39939>.

## Bridging the gender gap in the tourism transport

Bridging the gender gap in tourism transport could generate significant gains for corporations, employees, communities and the environment. The International Labour Organization (ILO) shows that greater diversity correlates with improved business outcomes, and previous studies estimate that closing the gender participation gap in transport by 25% could boost global GDP by 3.9%, equivalent to USD 5.8 trillion.<sup>35</sup> Other studies suggest that firms with more diverse management teams report 19% higher revenue from innovation.<sup>36</sup> Economic growth opportunities would present particularly in regions where gender gaps are most pronounced, as well as in developing economies.<sup>37</sup>

Access to quality jobs benefits women, their families and communities, enhancing self-esteem, reducing poverty and promoting shared prosperity.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, closing the gender employment gap could increase income per capita in emerging markets by up to 14%.<sup>39</sup> Yet nearly half of women's productive potential is still unutilized and/or underutilized globally, compared to 22% for men.<sup>40</sup> Achieving gender parity in the transport sector employment could result in over 20 million more women joining the workforce in this sector and thereby

address gender biases, staff shortages and contribute to achieving SDGs.<sup>41</sup>

A more gender-diverse workforce can also enhance the ability of the transport sector to understand and meet the varied needs of its users, especially women, who tend to rely more on public transport.<sup>42</sup> Research shows that women passengers felt that public transport service is safer when they interact with female workers.<sup>43</sup> Women are often recognized for their strengths in managing client relationships, an asset in public-facing roles such as passenger transport. In Ireland, for instance, Dublin Bus found that on average complaints per driver were 38% lower for women than for men.<sup>44</sup> Interviews conducted by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) with Dutch Railways worker representatives indicated that female workers also showed higher levels of empathy with attending people with disabilities and elderly passengers.<sup>45</sup> However, rather than occupying such roles based on perceived feminized characteristics, women's skills should be recognized as a competency acquired through experience and training.<sup>46</sup>

Enhancing women's involvement in decision-making and leadership within the transport sector not only supports more inclusive transport systems but also contributes to broader institutional improvements. Greater gender

35 International Labour Organization (2019), *Women in business and management: The business case for change*, ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/> [30-11-2025].

36 Lorenzo, R. et. al. (2018), 'How Diverse Leadership Teams Boost Innovation', Boston Consulting Group, available at: <https://www.bcg.com/> [05-05-2025].

37 International Labour Organization (2017), *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for women 2017*, ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/> [30-11-2025].

38 World Tourism Organization and World Tourism Alliance (2025), *Tourism – A Driver for Shared Prosperity*, UN Tourism, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284425822>.

World Tourism Organization (2019), *Global Report on Women in Tourism – Second Edition*, UN Tourism, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420384>.

39 World Bank Group (2013), *Gender at Work: Emerging messages*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1596/17105>.

40 World Bank Group (2013), *Gender at Work: Emerging messages*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1596/17105>.

41 Legovini, A. et al. (2022), 'All too often in transport, women are an afterthought', published on 8 March 2022, *World Bank Blogs*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org/> [13-04-2025].

42 Kurshitashvili, N. (2025), *Addressing barriers to women's participation in transport: Global, ECA, and MENA perspectives*, Mobility and Transport Connectivity Series, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099010925132542721> [22-05-2025].

43 Turnbull, P. (2013), *Promoting the employment of women in the transport sector – Obstacles and policy options*, ILO, Geneva, p. 36, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/> [23-04-2025].

44 European Commission: Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, ISI-Fraunhofer, ECORYS, PwC and Panteia (2019), *Business case to increase female employment in transport*, European Union, Luxembourg, DOI: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2832/93598>.

45 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Equality in reverse: Women's work and automation in public transport*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org/> [05-05-2025].

46 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Equality in reverse: Women's work and automation in public transport*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org/> [05-05-2025].

diversity in leadership can lead to enhanced financial performance, increased innovation, better employee retention and improved service outcomes.<sup>47</sup>

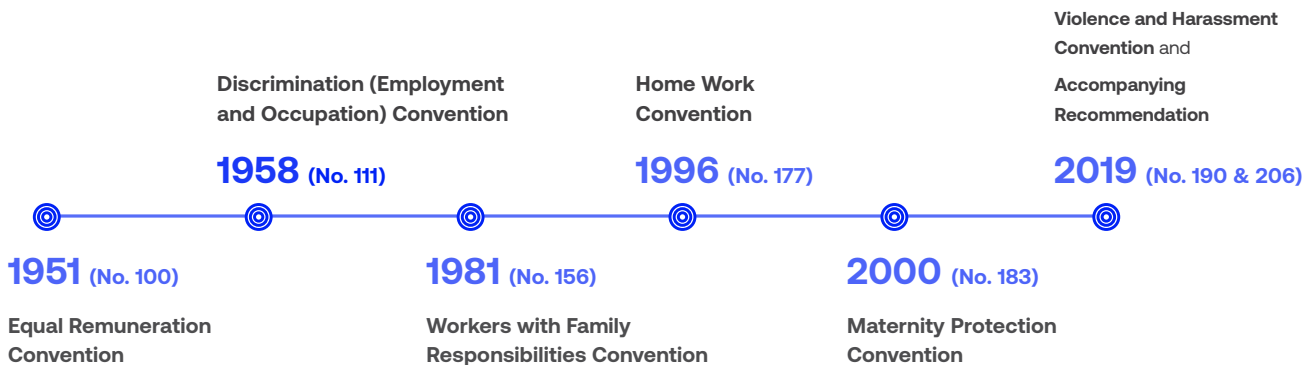
A diverse workforce expands the talent pool and strengthens the reputation of transport companies committed to improving working conditions for all.<sup>48</sup> Specifically, increased participation of women in the workforce can enhance team effectiveness, as diverse teams are better equipped to challenge uniform thinking and incorporate varied perspectives into decision-making.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, transport companies with more balanced gender representation are typically more reflective of the communities they serve, helping them

build greater trust, social license to operate and long-term community support.<sup>50</sup>

Beyond tourism transport, gender diversity also has a ripple effect on wider society. Increased women participation and leadership can inspire future generations of transport professionals and challenge engrained gender stereotypes about what jobs and job roles women can or should occupy.

Importantly, having the freedom to work and being in a job of one’s choice – in dignified, safe and fair conditions – is a human right<sup>51</sup> and integral to human well-being. A guarantee for women to obtain this right is an important end in itself.

Figure 1.2: **ILO Conventions related to gender equality, women’s empowerment and decent work. Gender equality, women’s empowerment and decent work are supported by several key ILO Conventions**



Source: International Labour Organization (n.d.), 'NORMLEX – Information System on International Labour Standards', ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [01-02-2026].

47 Peltier-Thiberge, N. and Brixi, H. (2023), 'She drives change: Breaking barriers for women in transport', published on 20 December 2023, *World Bank Blogs*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [12-04-2025].


48 Fraszczyk, A. and Piip, J. (2019), 'A review of transport organisations for female professionals and their impacts on the transport sector workforce', *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, volume 31, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rtbm.2019.100379>.

49 International Finance Corporation (2017), *Investing in women: New evidence for the business case*, IFC, Washington DC, available at: <https://www.ifc.org> [04-05-2025].

50 International Finance Corporation (2024), 'The business case for gender in the transport sector', IFC, Washington DC, available at: <https://ifcsia.org/> [05-05-2025].

51 United Nations General Assembly (1948), 'Article 23', in: *Universal declaration of human rights*, General Assembly resolution 217 A, UN, New York, online available at: <https://www.un.org/> [12-02-2026].

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# 01. Tourism transport employment overview

**Summary:** This chapter gives an overview of tourism transport employment and compares women's participation across air, land and water passenger transport. It further discusses critical issues, such as the gender-pay gap, and the persisting legal and sociocultural barriers women face in accessing and pursuing fair and equal employment opportunities. The chapter presents case studies that showcase advanced women's participation in tourism transport employment, focussing on initiatives that enhance gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment, and that improve their lives and livelihoods.

**Key messages:**

There is a severe lack of sex-disaggregated passenger transport data available, however from the available data the following trends are visible:

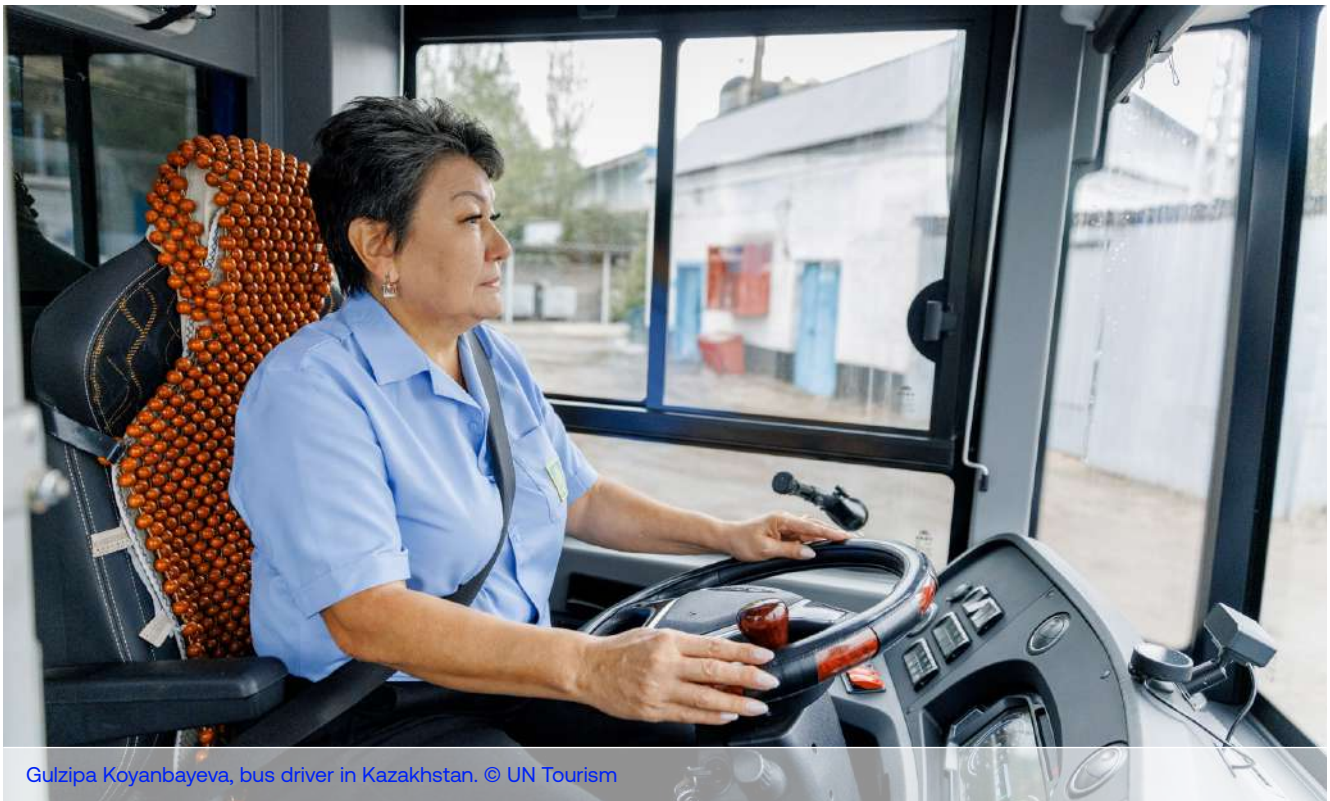
- Women are underrepresented in tourism transport employment.
- The vast majority of tourism transport workers are concentrated in land passenger transport (96%), compared to 2% in water and 2% in air passenger transport.
- 36% of people employed in air transport are women in countries and territories with available data.
- 3% of people employed in land transport are women in countries and territories with available data.
- 12% of people employed in water transport are women in countries and territories with available data.
- Critical legal and cultural barriers remain to realize women's potential and guarantee their rights.

**Key words:** Passenger transport industries | sex-disaggregated data | women employment | gender equality policies | decent work | gender wage gap

# 1.1

## Data overview

This section presents the analysis of statistical tourism transport<sup>52</sup> data from the National Questionnaire<sup>53</sup> for Member States of the United Nations and territories, data from the Business Survey,<sup>54</sup> complemented by data from UN Tourism, ILOSTAT and other sources. Additionally, qualitative data from survey responses and secondary data are provided as examples of good practice for gender equality, women's empowerment and decent work.



Gulzipa Koyanbayeva, bus driver in Kazakhstan. © UN Tourism

52 Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

For further details on methodology see annex 1.

53 UN Tourism conducted a National Questionnaire for Member-States of the United Nations from 29/04/2025 to 30/06/2025 as part of the research for this report. It was sent to 187 countries and territories, and 28 valid responses were received. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

54 UN Tourism conducted a Business Survey for passenger transport businesses from 29/04/2025 to 31/10/2025 as part of the research for this report. 29 valid responses were received from 20 different countries. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

### 1.1.1 Statistical overview

Figure 1.1: Proportion of people working in the different passenger transport industries, in countries and territories with available data (%)

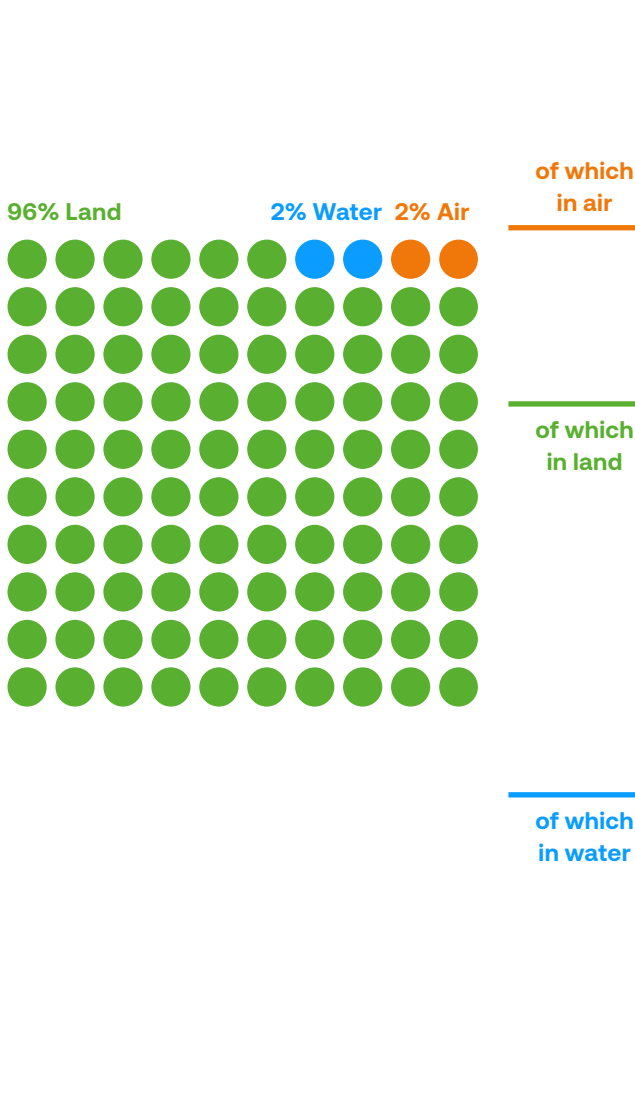
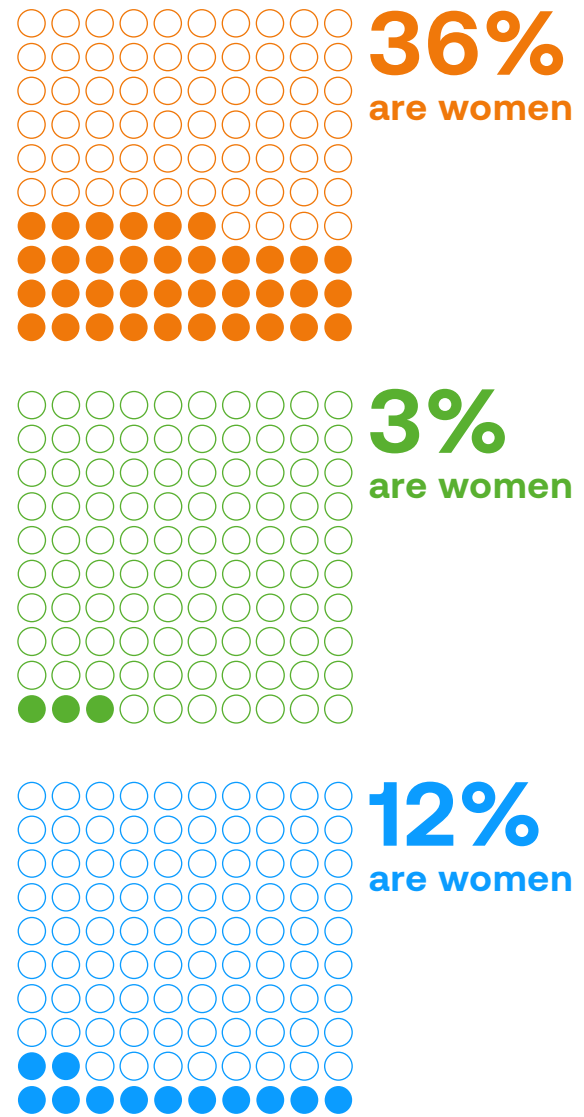


Figure 1.2: Proportion of people working in tourism transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)



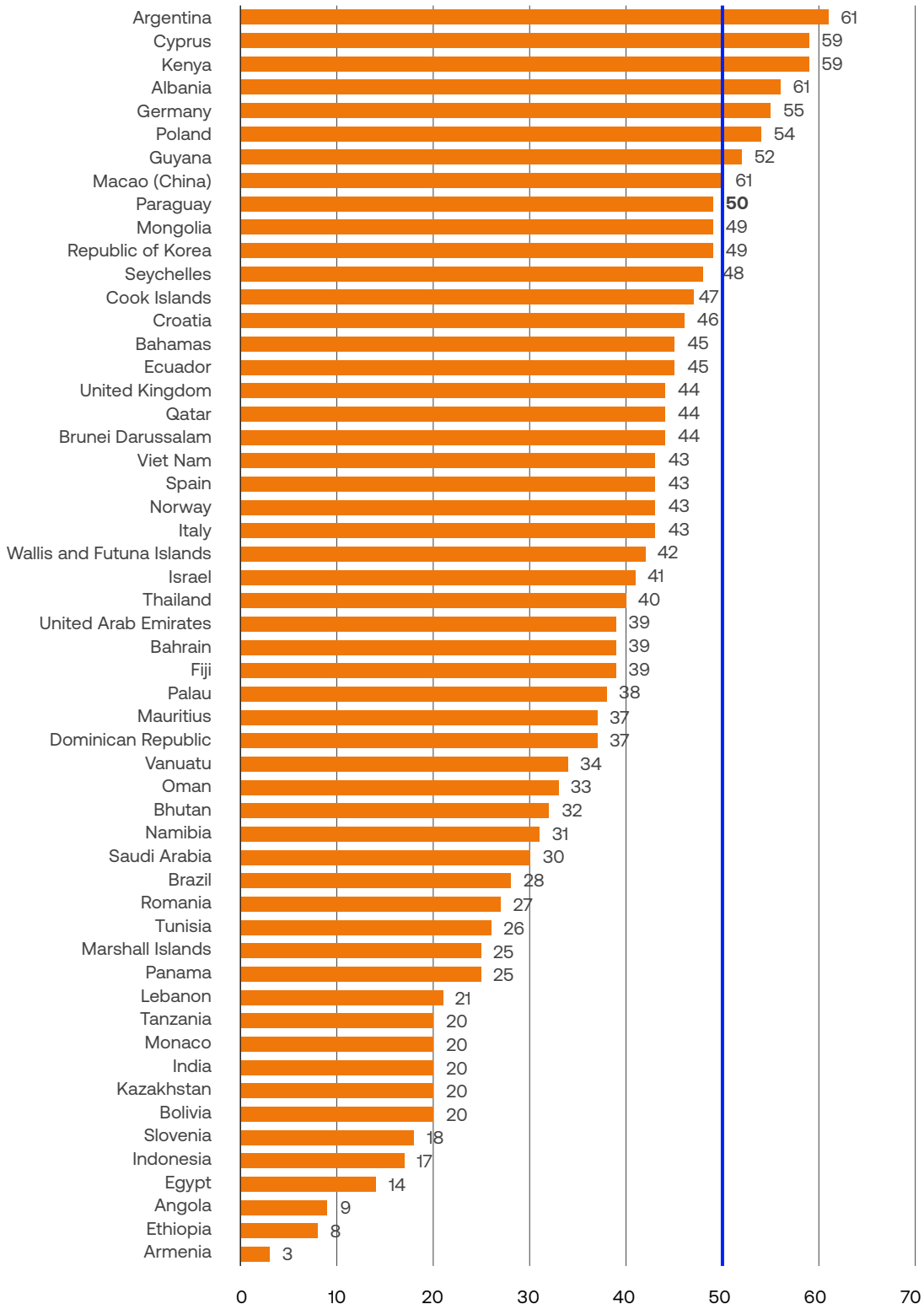
Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in annex 2.

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Figure 1.3: **Proportion of people working in air passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



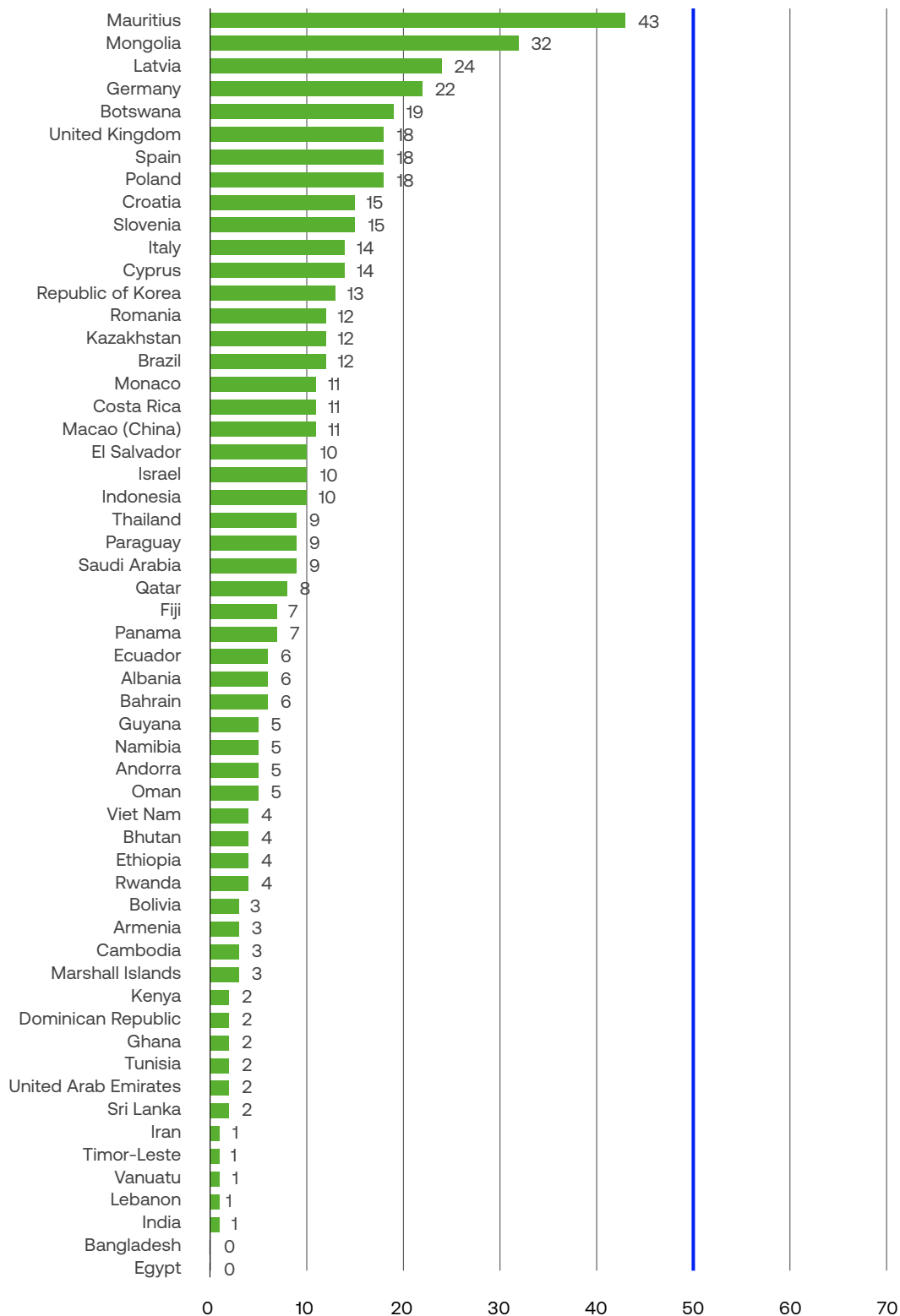
Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008 - 2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment>, and;

World Tourism Organization (2025), *National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations*. Source data available in Annex 2.

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Figure 1.4: **Proportion of people working in land passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

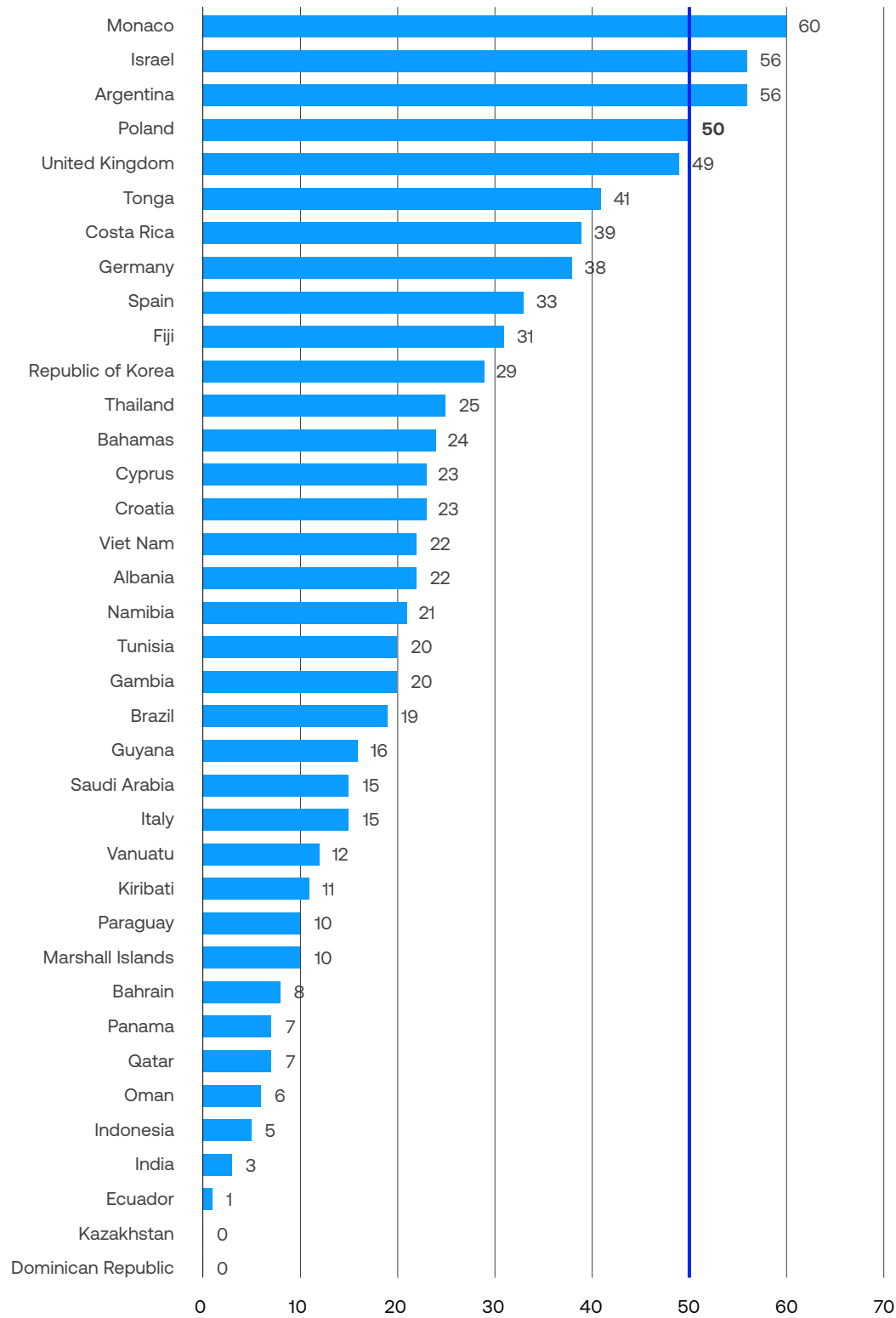


Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in annex 2.

Figure 1.5: **Proportion of people working in water passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008 - 2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment>, and;

World Tourism Organization (2025), *National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations*. Source data available in Annex 2.

## 1.1.2 Women in tourism transport: observed trends

The scarce available data shows that the majority of tourism transport workers are found in land passenger transport (96%) with both water (2%) and air (2%) passenger transport employing considerably fewer people in comparison. Notwithstanding the importance of water and air passenger transport as key economic drivers and employers in tourism, these figures reflect the critical role land passenger transport has in global tourism transport.

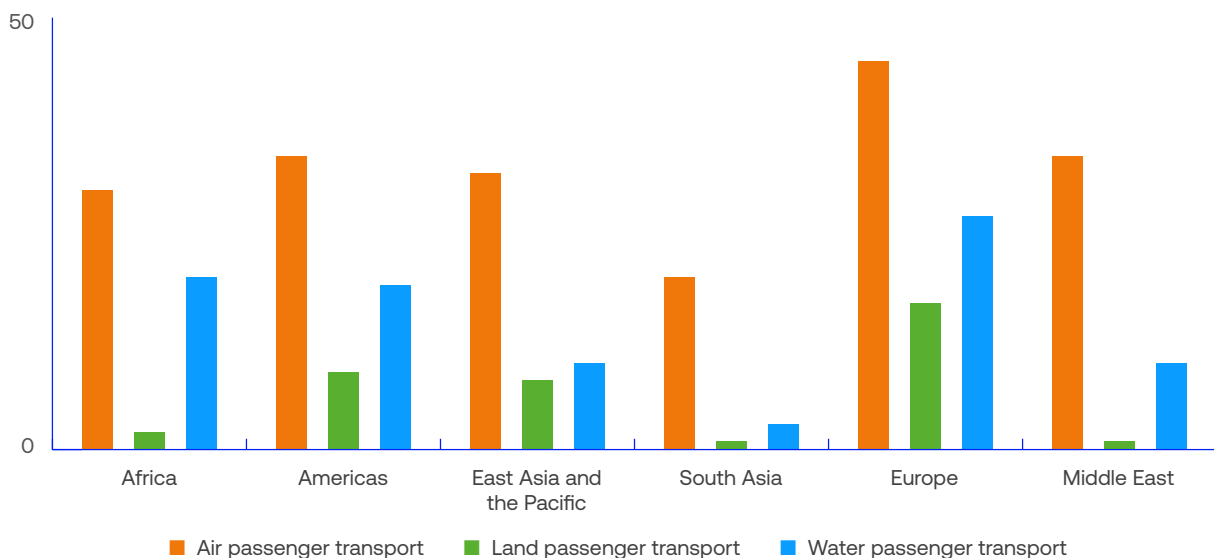
When considering the proportion of men and women that make up the workforce in each industry, results show that women account for approximately 36% of workers in air passenger transport industry but only constitute approximately 12% of workers in water passenger workforce and are severely underrepresented in land passenger transport at approximately 3%. This distribution broadly aligns with the wider transport

industry as discussed in the previous introduction section, showing that women are underrepresented in all tourism transport industries, and that there is an urgent need to address the barriers women are facing.

When looking at the proportion of women participating in countries across different geographic regions, the available data shows some clear trends: women's participation in the air passenger transport industry is highest in all regions, followed by water passenger transport and land passenger transport, which has the lowest participation rate of women in all regions.

Available data shows that the proportion of women in air passenger transport is highest in countries in Europe and lowest in South Asian countries. Countries in South Asia also show the lowest participation of women in water and land passenger transport, whereas countries in Europe dominate water and land passenger transport statistics.

Figure 1.6: **Regional trends: People working in the tourism transport industries that are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

While more needs to be done to achieve gender equality in the passenger transport industries in all regions, the analysed European performance could be explained by the growing attention of many countries in the region for improving gender equality through legislative changes, industry initiatives and partnerships over recent years, with a specific focus on women in transport.<sup>55</sup>

Results from the Business Survey show significant regional and inter-regional differences among businesses: for example Flynas (Saudi Arabia), Middle East Airlines – Air Liban S.A.L (Lebanon), and Royal Jordanian Airlines (Jordania) reported respectively 28%, 42% and 22% of women employed in their businesses; however, the data collected seems to be in line with the regional Middle East trend in air passenger transport.

Among road passenger transport businesses in the Americas that participated in the survey, the disparity was even more pronounced. For example, Transportes Automotores Plusmar S.A. (Argentina) reported that women accounted for just 3% of its workforce, compared with 40% at Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (Paraguay).

While the limited data and significant differences among them show that these figures are not representative, the majority of the Business Survey respondents paint a similar picture of an industry that continues to be dominated by men.

### 1.1.3 Policies, legislation and programmes related to gender equality and decent work at national level

Policy implementation and gender equality initiatives play a crucial role for the representation of women in the workforce, and laws are the necessary foundation for gender equality, women's empowerment and decent work. More equal laws are associated with increased wages, more women participating in work and women entrepreneurship, and a higher proportion of women in leadership and parliamentary positions.<sup>56</sup>

Participating member states were invited to include information (i) specific to passenger transport businesses or (ii) more widely to tourism businesses, should no specific information be available for passenger transport businesses. This section contains an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data about legislation, policies and initiatives related to gender equality and decent work at a national level.



Woman taxi driver in Uganda. © ITF

55 European Commission (2025), *Women in transport – EU platform for change*, European Commission, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg: DOI: 10.2832/1448625.

56 World Bank Group (2024), *Women, Business and the Law*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [22-05-2025].



Japanese train conductor. © Cowardlion | Dreamstime.com

### 1.1.4 Legal frameworks

In regard to creating legal provisions for gender equality, survey results from the 28 participating countries show that:<sup>57</sup>

- 25 of the responding countries (89%) removed all legislation (or public policies) that limit or restrict women's employment in passenger transport;
- 16 of respondent countries (57%) have legal requirements for tourism businesses to provide family-related benefits;
- 16 of respondent countries (57%) have legal requirements for tourism businesses to have a policy to combat sexual harassment; and
- 10 of respondent countries (36%) have a legal requirement for tourism businesses to submit a professional equality plan.

Of the 28 respondents to the National Questionnaire, Columbia, Croatia, El Salvador, Italy, Macao (China), Oman, Paraguay and Slovenia had most advanced legal structures that facilitate women's participation in the labour market.<sup>58</sup> Laws and policies from other countries are partly underdeveloped when referring to supporting and protecting women, thereby limiting women's employment in tourism and passenger transport.

Global data show that major legal restrictions on women's participation in transport employment remain – mainly because of outdated gender roles and societal norms that are embedded in some national legal frameworks. A lack of legal protections and/ or weak enforcement and inadequate implementation across important aspects of workplace equality, seriously affect women's ability to access and remain in work.<sup>59</sup>

57 UN Tourism conducted a National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nation from 29/04/2025 to 30/06/2025 as part of the research for this report. It was sent to 187 countries and territories, and 28 valid responses were received. Further details are available in annex 1 and annex 3.

58 The full list of respondent countries is available in annex 1.

59 World Bank Group (2024), *Women, Business and the Law*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [22-05-2025].

Table 1.1: Legal frameworks, national policies and initiatives for women in tourism transport employment

<p><b>Legal framework</b></p> <p>Is there any legislation or public policies that limit or restrict women's employment in passenger transport?</p> <p>Is there a legal requirement for tourism businesses to submit a professional equality plan?</p> <p>Are there legal requirements for tourism businesses to provide family-related benefits? (such as family-related leave, antenatal care, childbirth care, postnatal care, flexible working arrangements, flexible breaks, flexible and remote working opportunities, paid time-off, etc.)</p> <p>Are there legal requirements for tourism businesses to have a policy to combat sexual harassment?</p>	Venezuela	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N
	Slovenia	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
	Qatar	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
	Poland	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	Peru	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
	Paraguay	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Oman	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	New Zealand	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
	Nepal	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	Macao (China)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
	Lebanon	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N
	Jordan	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
	Japan	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
	Italy	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Israel	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	Indonesia	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
	India	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
	Guatemala	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	Germany	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Georgia	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
El Salvador	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Croatia	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Colombia	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Chile	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	
Cape Verde	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	
Bhutan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Bahrain	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Andorra	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	
<p><b>National policies or initiatives</b></p> <p>Are there specific public bodies responsible for promoting equal opportunities?</p> <p>Are there incentives for tourism businesses to increase the number of women that they employ?</p> <p>Are there public policies for the provision of support to victims of sexual harassment and gender-based violence?</p> <p>Are there incentives for tourism businesses to provide gender-equality training?</p>	Venezuela	Y	N	Y	N				
	Slovenia	N	N	Y	Y				
	Qatar	Y	N	Y	N				
	Poland	N	N	N	N				
Peru	Y	N	Y	Y					
Paraguay	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Oman	Y	Y	Y	Y					
New Zealand	Y	N	Y	N					
Nepal	N	N	N	N					
Macao (China)	Y	N	Y	Y					
Lebanon	Y	N	Y	N					
Jordan	N	N	N	N					
Japan	Y	Y	Y	N					
Italy	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Israel	N	N	N	N					
Indonesia	Y	N	Y	Y					
India	Y	N	Y	N					
Guatemala	N	N	N	N					
Germany	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					
Georgia	N	Y	N	N					
El Salvador	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Croatia	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Colombia	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Chile	N	N	N	N					
Cape Verde	Y	N	Y	Y					
Bhutan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a					
Bahrain	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Andorra	Y	N	Y	Y					

■ No available data  
■ Legal frameworks, national policies and initiatives provides for gender equality in this area. A green colour does not however indicate that the laws, policies and initiatives are perfect or that gender equality in this area has been fully achieved.  
■ Legal frameworks, national policies and initiatives do not provide for gender equality in this area.  
 Note: Information based on national data from 28 countries who responded to the National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations, questionnaire available in annex 3.  
 Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

**Box 1.1: Legal limitations on women's employment in transport**

The latest data from 190 countries published in *Women, Business and the Law* by the World Bank reveals that globally many governments fail to put women on an equal footing with men when it comes to legal support and protection:

- Still 19 economies (10%) where women cannot get a job the same way as a man;
- 28 countries (15%) have not introduced legal protections that prohibit discrimination against women in employment based on gender;
- 92 out of 190 economies (48%) lack provisions for equal pay for work of equal value;
- 20 countries (11%) prohibit night work for women;
- 45 countries (24%) prohibit women from working in jobs deemed dangerous;
- Women have only about one third of the legal protections they require in regard to domestic violence, and sexual harassment; and
- 39 economies (21%) have no legal protection against sexual harassment in the workplace.

There has, however, been some progress towards achieving gender equality and decent work in the areas of 'parental rights', 'workplace safety and sexual harassment', and 'equal pay and equal opportunities'. For example, Azerbaijan recently reformed its laws and repealed 674 job restrictions that prevented women from taking up specific positions deemed as potentially too strenuous or dangerous for women – including roles in transportation (e.g., driving large buses or working as train engineers). These examples demonstrate an important shift towards greater equality where women have equal job opportunities and legal frameworks that support their potential and ambitions.

Source: World Bank Group (2024), *Women, Business and the Law*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [22-05-2025].

## 1.1.5 National policies and initiatives

In addition to legal provisions, policies, frameworks and initiatives can also play an important role for enhancing gender equality, women empowerment and decent work.

Survey results from the 28 respondents to the National Questionnaire show that:<sup>60</sup>

- 19 of respondent countries (68%) have public policies for the provision of support to victims of sexual harassment and survivors of gender-based violence;
- 18 of respondent countries (64%) have specific public bodies responsible for promoting equal opportunities;
- 13 of respondent countries (46%) have incentives for tourism businesses to provide gender-equality training; and
- 9 of respondent countries (32%) have incentives for tourism businesses to increase the number of women that they employ.

Notably, 7 respondent countries are engaged in all four of the above areas, however, 6 respondent countries have not implemented any of these measures. The data further shows that there are limited business incentives for increasing the proportion of women in employment and

for gender equality training – especially those targeting the passenger transport sector, where women remain severely underrepresented. Details on specific initiatives and outcomes were limited, suggesting the need for a greater focus on targeted measures for passenger transport, as well as strengthened monitoring and evaluation of their impact. A particular area of concern is that 9 countries do not have any initiatives in place, even though 19 countries offer support for women who are victims of sexual harassment and survivors of gender-based violence – an issue that not only affects women in transport but across the wider tourism sector and society.

## 1.1.6 Women's safety and health

Women's personal safety and health are significant concerns in tourism transport, where roles often require working in tourist-facing, isolated or high-risk environments or involve travel during, to and from the workplace.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global issue that affects many different aspects of the lives of survivors, including employment, education, housing and health. Additionally, GBV has economic consequences for survivors, their families and wider society. For example, domestic violence can cost countries an estimated 1%–2% of their annual GDP through the support for survivors and additional load on the justice system.<sup>61</sup>

60 UN Tourism conducted a National Questionnaire for Member-States of the United Nations from 29/04/2025 to 30/06/2025 as part of the research for this report. It was sent to 187 countries and territories, 28 valid responses were received. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

61 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023), *Joining Forces for Gender Equality: What is Holding us Back?*, OECD Publishing, Paris, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/67d48024-en>.

**Box 1.2: Gender-based violence and passenger transport**

According to a survey from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) conducted across 56 countries, one in four women railway workers reported being aware of incidents of gender-based violence and harassment in their workplace, while 15% had personally experienced such incidents.<sup>a</sup> Among reported cases, 44% of perpetrators were colleagues, 35% were managers and 13% were travellers with the remainder preferring not to say.

Research found an increase in numbers and gravity of traveller incivility, including an increasing frequency and severity of unruly passenger incidents in air passenger transport, posing serious risks for crew and passengers. Third-party violence and harassment often cause adverse effects for victims, including increased stress, anxiety, depression and burnout, reduced mental well-being, cardiovascular disease, reduced job satisfaction, weakened organizational commitment and an increased likelihood of contemplating resignation or reduced working hours.<sup>b</sup>

Following a surge in violence and abusive behaviour toward front-line aviation workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, trade unions organized strike action to press authorities and airport management to prioritise worker safety. A joint working group bringing together management, authorities and workers' representatives was subsequently established to address third-party violence and harassment, and develop practical solutions.

As part of this response and as an example of good practice to combat customer incivility and to raise traveller awareness, Bologna airport ran a campaign in the airport and on their social media channels to remind passengers of appropriate behaviour and possible repercussions for aggressive and indecent behaviour. It implemented several additional strategies to combat abuse, including engagement in social dialogue with workers' unions and improved training and reporting procedures.<sup>c</sup>

Source: a) International Transport Workers' Federation (2023), *ITF Women Railway Workers Survey*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [19-12-2025].

b) Baum, T. and Winchenbach, A. (2025), 'The neglected role of customers in the decent work equation in the service sector', *Journal of Services Marketing*, volume 39(8), pp. 949–959, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-03-2025-0194>.

c) International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Make work safe: Eliminating violence and harassment against aviation workers*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [05-05-2025].

### Case study 1.1 on gender-equality training

#### Code of Conduct and training to Prevent Gender-Based Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking, El Salvador

In 2022, the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), launched the Code of Conduct to Prevent Gender-Based Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking in the Tourism Sector. This instrument is voluntary for businesses in the value chain, and its implementation involves the following steps:

- 1. Outreach to companies encouraging adherence** including field visits to business owners where the instrument is presented, outlining the benefits to the sector of adhering to the Code of Conduct and encouraging them to sign the declaration of adherence to the Code.
- 2. Training for staff** at participating companies to create conditions for preventing, detecting and responding to cases of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

- 3. Technical assistance** to participating companies for the development of internal norms and policies with zero tolerance for gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and human trafficking.
- 4. Verification of the implementation** of the Code of Conduct.
- 5. Delivery of membership badges.**

Within this framework, between 2023 and 2024, 250 companies from the food, recreation, information, lodging and transportation sectors (30 transportation companies) have joined the initiative and are adhering to the Code of Conduct, representing an estimated 1,200 service providers in the tourism sector. This has generated capacity among participating companies to prevent and detect violations of gender-based rights in the sector.



Presentation of the Code of Conduct to business representatives at the Port of La Libertad.  
© Ministry of Tourism El Salvador



Example of San Miguel Tourism's campaign, Human trafficking and sexual exploitation don't have space in tourism. Together we say: Responsible tourism, safe tourism!  
© Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador.

## 1.1.7 Occupational safety and health (OSH)

While very limited sex-disaggregated data for ‘occupational safety and health’ (OSH) in tourism transport was provided through the National Questionnaire, Macao (China) provided some information on OSH activities, reporting that its Labour Affairs Bureau conducted for all sectors OHS specific trainings, thematic talks, modular courses and various types of publicity and publications, as well as on-site inspections where possible. According to their survey response, 23,564 people participated in training in 2024, and 5,891 people in the first three months of 2025 in the ‘hotels, restaurants and similar activities’ industries (including coach drivers).

The very limited OSH data for the global passenger transport industries is a significant knowledge gap. Beyond harassment and gender-based violence, safe access to decent sanitation facilities is the most frequently reported issue women workers face in the transport sector.<sup>62</sup> The lack of access to sanitation disproportionately affects women, creating health issues, safety concerns (including violence), undermining their dignity<sup>63</sup> and hindering their participation in tourism transport.

### Case study 1.2 on sanitation

#### ITF Workers Sanitation Charter

ITF developed the Transport Workers’ Sanitation Charter that focusses on the urgent improvements needed to protect the health and safety of transport workers, as well as the consequential benefits to transport safety and public health; gender equality and the removal of barriers and non-discrimination generally. The charter calls for global action and provides detailed information and guidance for governments and employers to implement and enforce policies that create tangible solutions to guarantee healthy and safe working environments for women and all workers. It also includes a checklist for employers regarding decent sanitary facilities for transport workers that can be used to guide implementation.

Some of the demands in the charter are:

- Access to secure and clean toilets for women and men, which are well lit inside and outside;
- Ventilated, lockable cubicles;
- Appropriate hygiene (washing) facilities with clean water;
- Provision of affordable and appropriate menstrual hygiene products;
- Paid rest breaks for transport workers who should be able to access toilets when they need them during working hours – without delay and income loss.

The charter also highlights the ILO Conventions that are particularly relevant to the right of adequate sanitation in the workplace, namely ILO Conventions No. 155, No. 161, No. 187 and No. 190.

Source and further information:

International Transport Workers’ Federation (2019), *Transport Workers’ Sanitation Charter*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/resources/itf-sanitation-charter> [18-03-2026].

International Labour Organization (n.d.), ‘NORMLEX – Information System on International Labour Standards’, ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [01-02-2026].

62 For more information, consult: International Transport Workers’ Federation (2019), *Transport Workers’ Sanitation Charter*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/resources/itf-sanitation-charter> [18-03-2026].

63 Winchenbach, A.; Hanna, P. and Miller, G. (2019), ‘Rethinking decent work: The value of dignity in tourism employment’, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, volume 27(7), pp. 1026-1043, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2019.1566346>.

## 1.1.8 Gender wage gap

Payment disclosure and transparency initiatives are effective means of uncovering existing payment disparities between men and women as they can help address persisting gender wage gaps and contribute to reducing wider gender inequalities in the workforce.<sup>64</sup>

Global statistics for the gender wage gap, specifically for tourism transport, are currently unavailable and the survey data received on gender wage gap<sup>65</sup> was too fragmented and some other data samples too inconsistent to be able to draw reliable global or regional averages. However, the available data shows that women's wages are unequal to those of men across the different passenger transport industries. This is supported by findings for women's employment more widely, with UN Women estimating that the global gender wage gap stands at 20%, meaning that women earn 20% less – or 80 cent of each dollar earned by a man for work of equal value.<sup>66</sup>

Similarly, ILO puts the gender wage gap for female workers at 22% globally, factoring in that there are 1.4 billion employed women compared to 2.1 billion employed men.<sup>67</sup> These factors – including fewer annual earnings and less women in the global workforce – are considerable issues to address in closing the labour wage gender gap.

Gender disparities in annual earnings are partly explained by differences in working time, occupational segregation, and the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work: In 2025, women worked on average 6 hours and 25 minutes fewer per week in paid employment than men, a gap that has changed little since 2005. However, focussing solely on paid work understates women's overall contribution to the economy. Globally, women consistently spend more total time working than men when both paid and unpaid care and domestic work are.<sup>68</sup>

The gender wage gap is even higher for women with children, women of colour, migrant women and women with disabilities.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, regional disparities exist: recent figures indicate disparities ranging from 13% to 28% in countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia.<sup>70</sup> Ingrained inequalities, such as discriminatory recruitment practices, gender stereotypes in certain jobs (including in tourism transport), and informal and low-skill work exacerbate the gender wage gap.<sup>71</sup> In order to address such disparities and encourage higher female participation rates in tourism transport, the World Bank underlines the importance of legislative measures to address the gender wage gap, highlighting how the lack of robust legislation on equal pay can exacerbate gender inequality in transport.<sup>72</sup>

64 International Labour Organization (2022), *Pay transparency legislation: Implications for employers' and workers' organizations*, ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [11-02-2026].

65 The gender wage gap is defined as: "The gender wage gap is calculated as the difference between average hourly earnings of men and average hourly earnings of women expressed as a percentage of average hourly earnings of men. This indicator is not adjusted according to individual characteristics that may explain part of the earnings difference." From: International Labour Organization – ILOSTAT (n.d.), 'Wages and Working Time Statistics (COND database)', ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org> [18-03-2026].

For more information consult: International Labour Organization (2018), *Global Wage Report 2018/19. What lies behind gender pay gaps*, ILO, Geneva, online available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [30-11-2025].

66 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2025), 'Everything you need to know about pushing for pay equity', UN Women, New York, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org> [12-02-2026].

67 International Labour Organization – ILOSTAT (2025), 'What labour income reveals about gender inequalities at work', ILO, Geneva, online available at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org> [30-01-2026].

68 International Labour Organization – ILOSTAT (2025), 'What labour income reveals about gender inequalities at work', ILO, Geneva, online available at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org> [30-01-2026].

69 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2025), 'Everything you need to know about pushing for pay equity', UN Women, New York, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org> [12-02-2026].

70 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Labour Organization and Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (2020), *Changing laws and breaking barriers for women's economic empowerment in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia*, Competitiveness and Private Sector Development, OECD Publishing, Paris, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/ac780735-en>.

71 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2025), 'Everything you need to know about pushing for pay equity', UN Women, New York, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org> [12-02-2026].

72 Kurshitashvili, N. (2025), *Addressing barriers to women's participation in transport: Global, ECA, and MENA perspectives*, Mobility and Transport Connectivity Series, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099010925132542721> [22-05-2025].

## 1.1.9 Employment status

### Women in leadership positions

Women remain underrepresented in leadership positions, with many facing systemic barriers that hinder their progression. With regard to managerial positions in tourism transport, the very limited data received indicates that less women compared to men work in managerial positions in tourism transport. Bridging this leadership gap will not only ensure a more inclusive workforce but will also lead to more effective and equitable service delivery for all. Although research shows that gender diversity at executive level delivers a competitive advantage and that gender-diverse executive teams outperform non-gender diverse teams financially, progress remains uneven.<sup>73</sup>

### Women business ownership and entrepreneurship

Country data on business ownership disaggregated by business size and sex was also extremely limited in responses to the National Questionnaire.<sup>76</sup> However, available data suggests that most registered businesses are owned by men and that women are more likely to be registered as owners of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) compared to larger businesses. A reason for this might be that despite evidence that women are better at repaying credits and having a better credit risk for lending institutions,<sup>77</sup> women are more likely than men to experience business loan rejections and pay higher interest rates. Additionally, due to gender-bias, women experience greater barriers in entrepreneurial activities that are societally perceived as more masculine, such as transport.<sup>78</sup>

#### Box 1.3 on women representation at board level

Equality in Tourism International, a charity dedicated to promoting gender equality in tourism and hospitality, analysed 68 British and international companies finding that boardroom positions remain uneven in terms of gender composition.<sup>74</sup> While the proportion of women in leadership across businesses in tourism and the hospitality industries has increased to 33% from 16% in 2013, the 50% target for 2025 has not been achieved. The carriers, airlines and cruises industries show the largest and significant progress from only 13% women on boards in 2013 to 33% in 2025, but a closer look at individual level reveals wide disparities. While some committed organizations are making headway in rebalancing boardroom gender-equality, others are missing out on opportunities afforded by increased boardroom equality:

- Men still outnumbered women in all of the 15 organizations in the ‘carriers, airlines and cruises’ category of the sample;
- Only 8 out of the 15 companies in the study show an increase in female board membership;
- Ryanair increased women directors from two to six between 2013 and 2025 (while keeping seven male directors);
- International Airlines Group (IAG)<sup>75</sup> showed a fivefold increase in women directors, increasing to five women (while keeping six men) in 2025.
- In contrast, British Airways has reduced from two women board members in 2013 to only one in 2025.

73 McKinsey (2020), *Diversity wins: How inclusion matters*, McKinsey, available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com> [26-01-2026].

74 Equality in Tourism International (2025), *Sun, Sand and Ceilings: Women in Tourism and Hospitality Boardrooms*, available at: <https://www.equalityintourism.org/> [06-04-2026].

75 International Airlines Group (IAG) is one of the world’s largest airline groups, with a fleet of more than 550 aircraft. The company is based in Spain and its shares are traded on the London Stock Exchange and on the Spanish stock markets. The airlines that make up the group are Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia, Level and Vueling.

76 Only one country (India) provided complete statistical data on this question, two countries El Salvador and Georgia provided partial data. Bahrain submitted a case study (see snapshot 1.1).

77 Alam, J.; Moir, R. and Ibn Boamah, M. (2021), ‘Gender and micro-credit: who repays? Evidence from a Canadian individual-lending approach’, *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*, volume 33(3), pp. 249–267, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08276331.2019.1606966>.

78 Malmström, M. et al. (2024), ‘A meta-analysis of the impact of entrepreneurs’ gender on their access to bank finance’, *Journal of Business Ethics*, volume 192, pp. 803–820, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-023-05542-6>.

### Snapshot 1.1 from Bahrain

The Tamkeen initiative to support women entrepreneurship and employment

There are several public programmes and initiatives in Bahrain aimed at empowering women and increasing their economic participation through entrepreneurship and employment support, including tourism transport (such as road and maritime transport).

The Supreme Council for Women, in collaboration with Tamkeen (Labour Fund), launched a project encouraging women to establish their own transport businesses. In its second phase, loans were provided to a number of women to purchase small buses, allowing them to start their own transportation services.

Tamkeen is committed to advancing female economic participation, with 40% of Bahrainis supported for labour market entry being women. Overall, the Takeem scheme:

- Supported more than 15,800 women-led businesses;
- Trained more than 92,600 women;
- Contributed to the creation of more than 32,500 jobs for women; and
- Supported 7,100 female entrepreneurs.

Source: Tamkeen (n.d.), 'Supporting Women. Growing Bahrain. Initiative', available at: <https://www.tamkeen.bh> [01-04-2026].



Woman taxi driver at Manama Airport, Bahrain. © Ruben Gutierrez | Dreamstime.com

# 1.2

## Key findings and observations

Despite some countries and businesses recognizing the strategic importance of women in passenger transport, available data suggests that women's ability to contribute to the growth of tourism transport remains largely underestimated and underutilized. More needs to be done to achieve gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in tourism transport.

### 1.2.1 Barriers to women's access to transport sector employment

There are few existing studies and scarce data available on women in tourism transport, and the results presented in section 1.1 largely confirm findings from previous studies on women's participation and gender equality in the transport industries.

**Women who decide to pursue a career in tourism transport often face workplace challenges and barriers**, including a lack of equal opportunities, social acceptance<sup>79</sup> and sanitary facilities in addition to sexual harassment, discriminatory recruitment practices<sup>80</sup> and cultural sexism.<sup>81</sup> The barriers that prevent the full integration and acceptance of women in the transport sector, according to previous research, are summarized in box 1.4.

#### Box 1.4 on barriers for women's access to transport employment

- Legal restrictions on women's employment in transport (e.g. train operators, bus drivers)
- Gender bias
- Wage disparities
- Occupational safety and health concerns, including vehicle design, uniform and personal protective equipment
- Occupational segregation concentrating women's employment in less senior, lower paid and more precarious jobs
- Lack of separate sanitary facilities for women on the work sites
- Stereotypes (e.g., women's lack of technical skills)
- Lack of political strategies to augment the share of female staff members
- Poor work-life balance, including long working hours and inflexible shift patterns
- Limited opportunities for training and development
- Violence, harassment and bullying from colleagues and passengers
- Limited maternity protection
- Few female role models

Sources: Fraszczyk, A. and Piip, J. (2019), 'A review of transport organisations for female professionals and their impacts on the transport sector workforce', *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, volume 31, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rtbm.2019.100379>.

International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Understanding informal transport in Africa: Labour impact assessments as tools to improve workers' conditions*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

79 Newcomer, M. et al. (2018), 'Gender diversity in aircraft maintenance: A cross-sectional triangulation of male perspectives', *Journal of Gender Studies*, volume 27(5), pp. 509–521, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2016.1243046>.

80 Baum, T. (2012), 'Working the skies: Changing representations of gendered work in the airlines industry, 1930–2011', *Tourism Management*, volume 33(5), pp. 1185–1194, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.11.012>.

81 Neal-Smith, S. and Cockburn, T. (2009), 'Cultural sexism in the UK airline industry', *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, volume 24(1), pp. 32–45, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910930734>.

Women's low participation in the tourism transport has been attributed to: (i) working conditions (including the time, timing and place of work), and (ii) gender stereotyping.<sup>82</sup> Running a business in transport is perceived to be unsuitable for women; for example, in Kenya, most car rental companies and tour operators are dominated by men and run as family businesses in-line with the data presented in this report and indicating the existence of domestic social attitudes that discourage women from entering the land passenger transport workforce.<sup>83</sup>

A report by the European Parliament further outlined the reasons for the unattractiveness of transport sector to women:<sup>84</sup>

- Transport is perceived as a typically male sector and therefore women fear forms of possible discrimination;
- Limited attention to women's needs in transport planning, including safety issues; and
- Scarce attention to work-life balance measures and working time flexibility, women-friendly equipment and services.

A large-scale survey conducted by the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) among women working in the transport sector revealed several key concerns:<sup>85</sup>

- Half of the respondents reported limited opportunities for career advancement and professional development;

- Nearly 49% felt that their workplace did not sufficiently prioritize a safe and appropriate working environment for women;
- 23% expressed dissatisfaction with the gender imbalance in the sector;
- 25% believed that being a woman negatively affected their wages; and
- Sanitary conditions were also highlighted, with 23% of participants identifying them as a major workplace issue.

The gender wage gap is another significant barrier in the transport sector. According to available data, women tend to earn less than men across most transport subsectors. The gap is believed to be especially pronounced in the private sector, where women often face greater wage inequality.<sup>86</sup>

**Despite the progress some countries made to strengthen their laws and policies on gender-equality, several gaps remain, and further efforts are needed to ensure that legal frameworks are fully comprehensive and implemented.** However, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), competing government priorities, lack of interest at the central government level, as well as limited funding, capacities and expertise of policymakers represent the most reported challenges for implementing structures and frameworks to support women.<sup>87</sup> Data from the World Bank covering 190 global economies indicates that women currently have access to less than two-thirds of the legal rights afforded to men.<sup>88</sup> Laws in 20 countries limit women's ability to work at

82 Neal-Smith, S. and Cockburn, T. (2009), 'Cultural sexism in the UK airline industry', *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, volume 24(1), pp. 32–45, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910930734>.

83 World Tourism Organization (2019), *Global Report on Women in Tourism – Second Edition*, UN Tourism, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420384>.

84 European Parliament (2021), *Women and transport*, European Union, available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu> [04-05-2025].

85 European Transport Workers' Federation (2020), *Making the transport sector fit for women to work in. Findings from a survey of women transport workers by the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)*, ETF, Brussels, available at: <https://www.etf-europe.org> [09-05-2025].

86 World Bank Group (2020), 'Women's economic participation in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1596/34535>.

87 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023), *Joining Forces for Gender Equality: What is Holding us Back?*, OECD Publishing, Paris, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/67d48024-en>.

88 World Bank Group (2024), *Women, Business and the Law*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://worldbank.org> [22-05-2025].

night, effectively excluding them from roles that require overnight shifts.<sup>89</sup> Social norms strongly influence gender equality in employment. Nearly four in ten people globally – and almost half in developing economies – believe that when jobs are scarce, men should be given priority, reflecting the widespread perception that women are primarily responsible for housework, child-rearing and caring for dependents.<sup>90</sup> From an early stage of life, this phenomenon has its roots in gender stereotyping and

influences girls' educational choices and subsequent career opportunities.<sup>91</sup> Due to this fact, international organizations and policymakers in different countries tackle inequalities through education, training and financial support. The Tanzanian national curriculum that includes substantial gender-related material in its secondary school civics syllabus and examinations is an example, as well as its specific initiatives in the transport sector.<sup>92</sup>

### Case study 1.3 **The World Bank initiative** ***She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport***

Between 2019 and 2024, 94% of the 159 transport projects financed by the World Bank incorporated activities to bridge gaps between women and men within the transport sector. Through these projects:

- 2.84 million people benefited from improved transport services and infrastructure, including 1.4 million women;
- Over 21.2 million women, out of a total of 42 million people, are expected direct benefit from projects. (For instance, the Egyptian National Railways (ENR) is to reinstate its in-house childcare facility to enable women's entry and retention in the rail workforce.); and
- The World Bank-funded youth employment programme in Liberia increased young women's employment by 50% and average weekly earnings by 115%.

Source: World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

89 World Bank Group (2023), *Gender Equality in Development: A Ten-Year Retrospective*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1596/39939>.

90 World Bank Group (2013), *Gender at Work: Emerging messages*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1596/17105>.

91 European Parliament (2021), *Women and transport*, European Union, available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu> [04-05-2025].

92 World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

**Violence and harassment are endemic in the transport industry, affecting women workers disproportionately.**

They negatively impact the health and dignity of transport workers, threaten decent work and contribute to the systemic exclusion of women from decent jobs in the transport sector. In its *Transport Workers' Toolkit*<sup>93</sup> ITF calls for sector-specific gender-based violence (GBV) training and lobbies national governments to implement laws and actions. Domestic violence, alongside other forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harassment, is recognized as a global human rights issue by UN Women and the World Health Organization (WHO),<sup>94</sup> with almost a third of 15–49-year-old women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence from their spouse or partner.<sup>95</sup> Domestic violence also impacts the professional workplace in many ways: domestic violence has been found to limit people's ability to work, it reduces productivity, compromises co-worker relations and threatens workplace safety,<sup>96</sup> which in turn prevents women from developing their full potential and contribute to economic development. Research found that domestic violence reduces the likelihood of securing or maintaining employment<sup>97</sup> and is correlated with more precarious, short-term and part-time work jobs that offer insufficient pay and legal and social protection.<sup>98</sup> At the same time, employment provides significant protective value for those experiencing intimate partner violence.<sup>99</sup>

A recent ITF study on the impacts of domestic violence on Nepalese transport workers found that 72% of women transport workers have experienced domestic violence, and 95% reported that this impacted their work. The study highlights the critical role employers and unions play in assisting women who are experiencing relationship abuse by developing workplace policies that support victims, by offering education and training on domestic violence, as well as counselling services and paid leave for victims and applying accountability measures for workers perpetrating domestic violence. The study further identified the essential role of the government in introducing legal changes, including requirements for employers to legislate for paid leave and the recognition of domestic violence in workplace policies and processes, while ensuring improved enforcement of existing laws.<sup>100</sup>

ILO convention No 190 explicitly recognizes that “domestic violence can affect employment, productivity and health and safety, and that governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and labour market institutions can help, as part of other measures, to recognize, respond to and address the impacts of domestic violence”<sup>101</sup>. In this spirit, ITF is running several initiatives and has created guidance and toolkits to raise awareness about the impacts of gender-based and domestic violence on

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- 93 International Transport Workers' Federation (2023), *ILO Convention 190 on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of the Work: A Transport Workers' Toolkit*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [19-12-2025].
- 94 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2024), *Femicides in 2023: Global Estimates of Intimate Partner/Family Member Femicides*, United Nations publication, New York, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org> [26-01-2026].
- 95 World Health Organization (2019), *Intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Evidence brief*, WHO/RHR/19.16, available at: <https://www.who.int> [26-01-2026].
- 96 MacQuarrie, B. et al. (2019), 'Chapter 5: Understanding domestic violence as a workplace problem', in: Burke, R. J. and Richardsen, A. M. (eds.), *Increasing Occupational Health and Safety in Workplaces*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, pp. 93–114, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788118095.00013>.
- 97 Showalter, K. (2016), 'Women's employment and domestic violence: A review of the literature', *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, volume 31, pp. 37–47, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2016.06.017>.
- 98 Wathen, C. N. et al. (2015), 'The impact of domestic violence in the workplace: Results from a pan-Canadian survey', *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, volume 57(7), p. e65–e71, DOI: 10.1097/JOM.0000000000000499.
- 99 MacGregor, J.C.D. et al. (2021), 'Intimate partner violence and work: A scoping review of published research', *Trauma Violence & Abuse*, volume 22(4), pp. 717–727, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838019881746>.
- 100 Scott, K.; Webb, J.; Khanna, A. and MacQuarrie, B. (2025), *Impacts of Domestic Violence in Workplaces in Nepal*, ITF, London, and Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-02-2026].
- 101 International Labour Organization (2019), *C190 – Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)*, Geneva, 108th ILC session (21 Jun 2019), ILO, Geneva, available at: [https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx\\_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:1: \[28-11-2025\]](https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:1: [28-11-2025]).

transportation workers. For instance, the ITF *ILO C190: A Transport Workers' Toolkit*<sup>102</sup> includes a series of briefings on critical aspects of violence and harassment affecting transport workers and offers guidance on how to strengthen policy and how the provisions of C190 can be incorporated into workplace policies and agreements.

Finally, automation and digitalization play an increasingly important role in passenger transport employment, which, while providing some potential benefits, might even worsen the situation for women participating in road passenger transport in the future. For example, the share of women of the Curitiba (Brazil) bus service – who worked predominantly as ticket sellers – has fallen from 30% to 17% after automation was introduced.<sup>103</sup> This fact

raises worrying concerns about the future of women's jobs in the passenger transport industries as automation is scaled.<sup>104</sup> Digitalization, such as automated ticketing, cashless payment systems and real-time information services, has disproportionately impacted women by displacing many customer-facing roles and contributing to deteriorating wages and working conditions.<sup>105</sup> However, if automation is designed and implemented through inclusive dialogue with trade unions and meaningful participation of women, it holds the potential to promote more secure and equitable employment.<sup>106</sup> Unions play a pivotal role in protecting affected workers by negotiating redeployment pathways, securing training for new roles and ensuring stable, formal employment in emerging positions.<sup>107</sup>



A female aeronautical maintenance technician working, Iberia. © Alba Barrantes

102 International Transport Workers' Federation (2023), *ILO Convention 190 on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of the Work: A Transport Workers' Toolkit*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [19-12-2025].

103 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Equality in reverse: Women's work and automation in public transport*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [05-05-2025].

104 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Equality in reverse: Women's work and automation in public transport*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [05-05-2025].

105 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

106 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

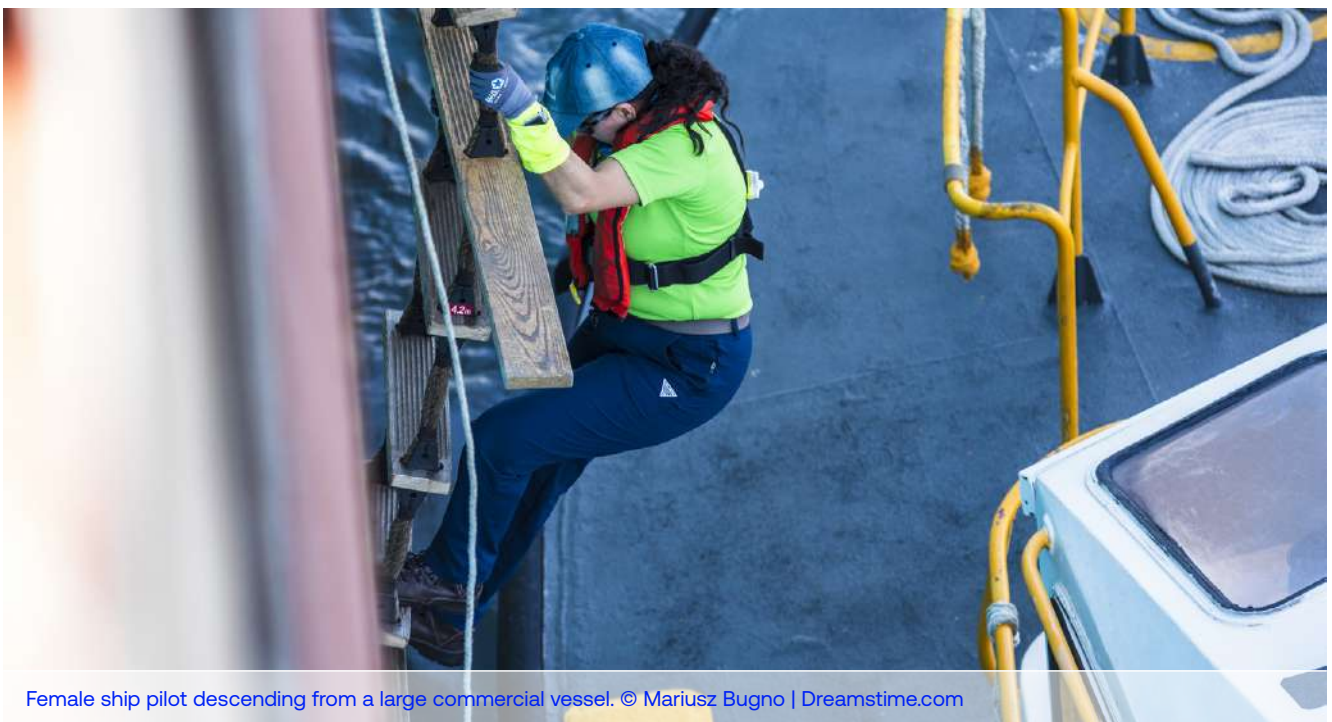
107 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

## 1.3 Conclusions

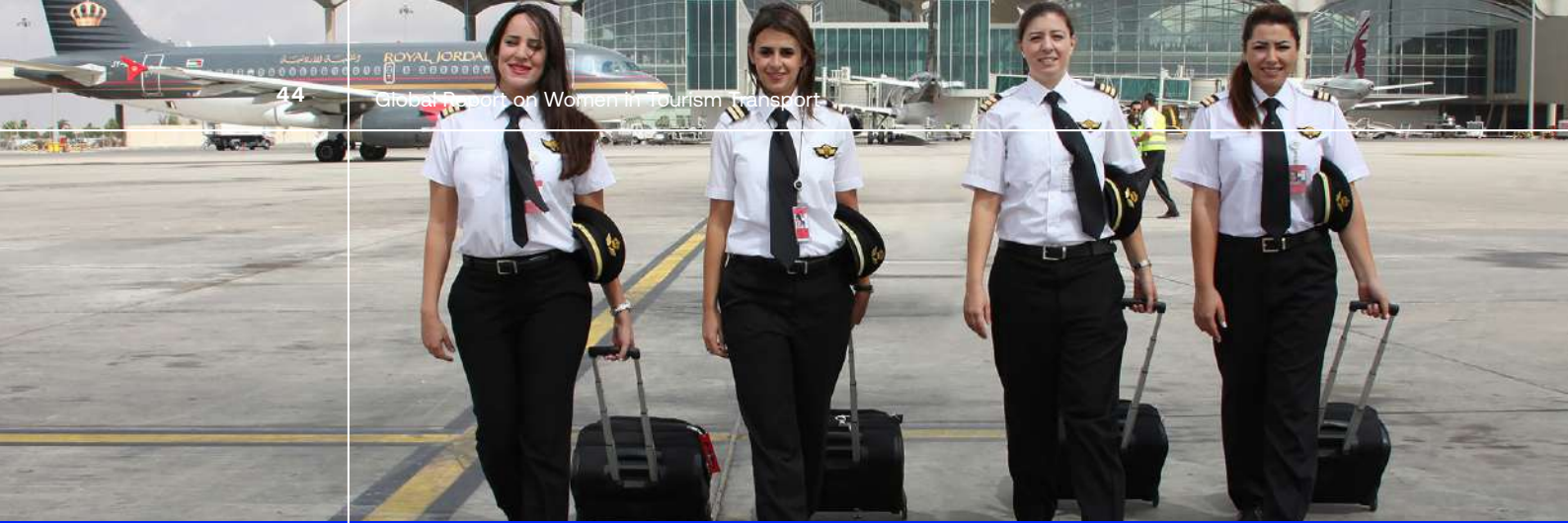
Women have an important role to play in global passenger transport, and there are some examples of progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment in passenger transport. However, the scarce data available and presented in this chapter shows that women's participation in the global and regional tourism transport workforce is unequal, especially in water and land transport. While air passenger transport shows the least discrepancy in gender equality, women continue to face significant barriers throughout the employment lifecycle. Barriers include regulatory restrictions to access certain roles, recruitment biases, wage gaps, limited career progression opportunities, health and safety concerns, gender-based violence and harassment, gender stereotypes, inadequate workplace infrastructure, and limited support for women's business ownership and entrepreneurship. The increasing digitalization of the passenger transport industries also introduces additional

risks for women workers. These challenges compound the gender gap in passenger transport, resulting in operational and economic inefficiencies, as well as talent misallocation.

The findings in this chapter highlight that addressing these challenges is vital for enabling women's ability to support their livelihoods, to meaningfully contribute to the passenger transport industries and to tackle persisting gender inequalities across global economies and society. National governments, businesses, trade unions, NGOs, funders and civil society actors have been shown to play an important role in enabling safe and gender-supportive working environments, offering training and career development, implementing relevant regulations and legislation, protecting women and implementing targeted finance initiatives for women in passenger transport.



Female ship pilot descending from a large commercial vessel. © Mariusz Bugno | Dreamstime.com



## 02. Air passenger transport

**Summary:** This chapter analyses women's participation and gender equality in air passenger transport employment, including statistics based on a sample of countries with available data, women's roles and leadership status, and highlighting initiatives that support gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in the industry.

**Key messages:**

- 36% of workers in air passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data.
- Air passenger transport accounts for 2% of tourism transport in countries and territories with available data.
- Globally, an estimated 6% of pilots are women, with men mainly occupying technical, flight deck and leadership roles, and women service-oriented onboard and ground-based roles.

**Key words:** Air passenger transport | civil aviation | women's employment | career progression | gender equality | gender segregation

# 2.1

## Data overview

Women's participation in air passenger transport<sup>108</sup> employment is the highest of all the different passenger transport industries in countries and territories with available data (36%), even though air passenger transport accounts for 2% of tourism transport in countries and territories with available data. The air passenger transport industry significantly supports the development of the tourism sector by facilitating global and regional transport networks. Previous research highlights that its economic role and multiplier effects are substantial, directly affecting 37.3 million tourism jobs and supporting 86.5 million jobs in total when factoring in its multiplier effect.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, the directly contribution to the global GDP from this industry is estimated at USD 1.1 trillion.<sup>110</sup>

### 2.1.1 Statistical overview

The data for air passenger transport shows that 36% of the workforce are women in countries with available data – the highest ratio of women in employment amongst the different passenger transport industries. This might be partly explained by civil aviation having the largest proportion of female union members (83%) when compared across all transport industries.<sup>111</sup>

### 2.1.2 Regional trends

The regional trends shown in figure 2.2 may reflect varying social, cultural, economic and institutional factors influencing women's participation in the air passenger transport workforce. For example, the low participation in some regions might be explained by limited support for women and girls to enter STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) for more technical roles in aviation and less role models for overcoming gender biases.<sup>112</sup>

108 Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

For further details see annex 1 Methodology.

109 International Civil Aviation Organization (2019), *Aviation benefits report 2019*, ICAO, Montréal, online available at: <https://www.icao.int> [08-04-2025]. International Civil Aviation Organization (2019), 'Aviation benefits report', online available at: <https://www.icao.int>

110 Air Transport Action Group (2024), *Aviation: Benefits beyond borders*, ATAG, Geneva, online available at: <https://aviationbenefits.org/> [12-02-2026]. ATAG (2024), *Aviation benefits beyond borders*, Geneva: Air Transport Action Group.

111 According to ITF member statistics.

112 Smith, W.E. et al. (2021), 'Reshaping gender in airline employment', *Annals of Tourism Research*, volume 89, July (103221), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2021.103221>.

Figure 2.1: **Proportion of people working in air passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

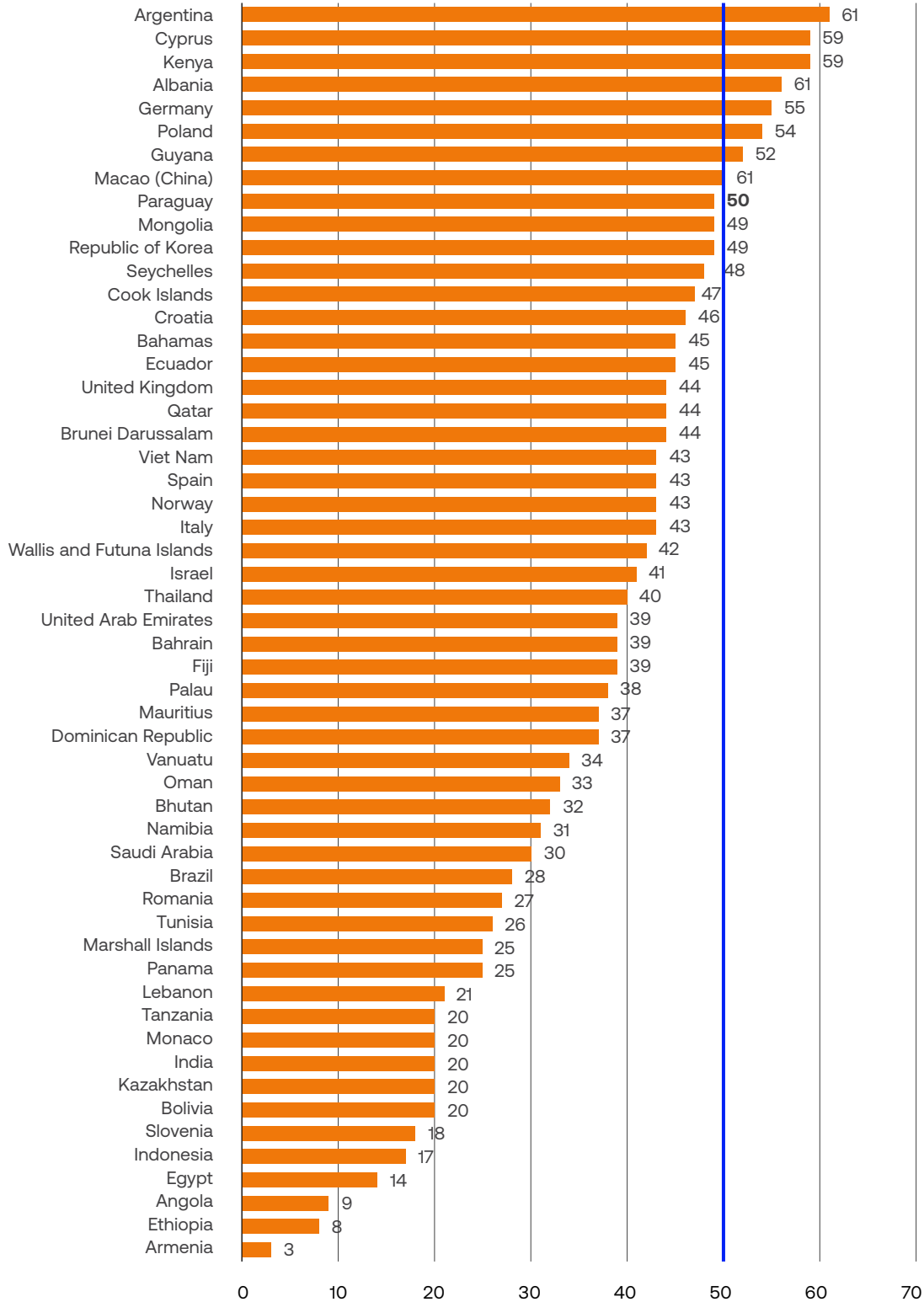


Figure 2.2: **Proportion of people working in air passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

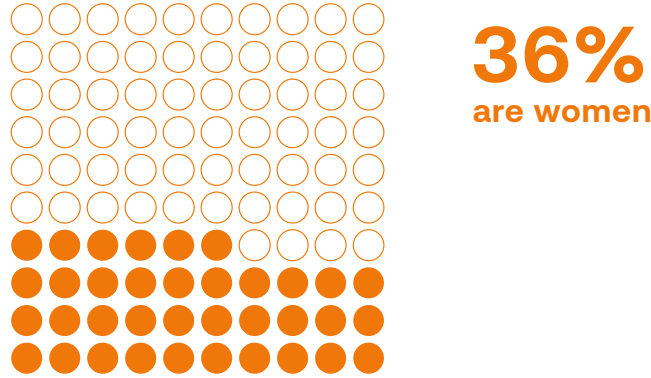
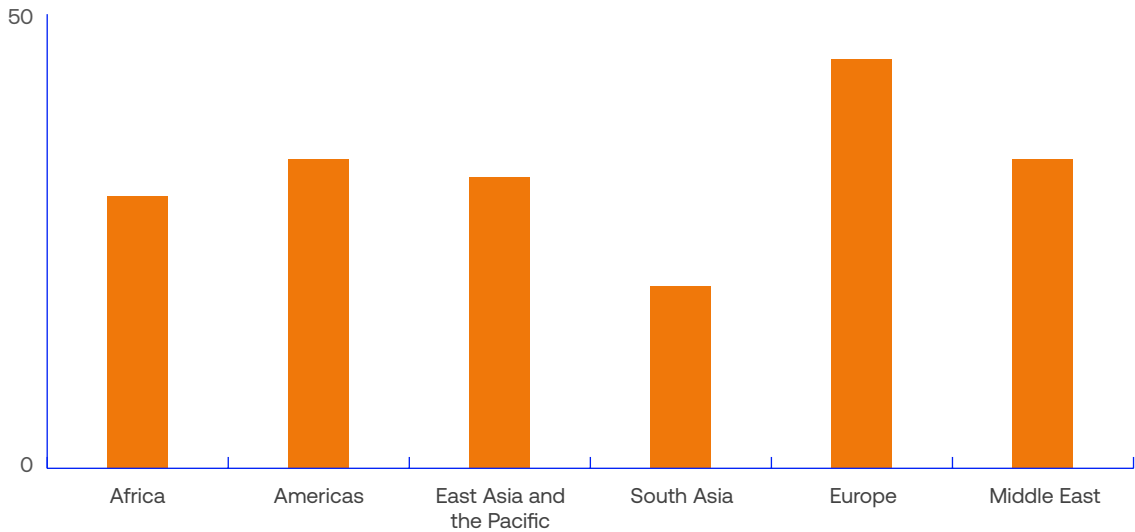


Figure 2.3: **Regional trends: Proportion of people working in air passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



Notes for figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3:

Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources for figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3:

World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

### 2.1.3 Working environment and career progression

Sex-disaggregated statistics on the role of women in air passenger transport are extremely limited, both in the responses to the National Questionnaire<sup>113</sup> and in the wider literature. The data available, however, confirms previous research findings, in that airlines tend to be gender segregated organizations, with men predominantly occupying technical, flight deck and leadership roles, whereas women mostly occupy service-oriented onboard and ground-based roles.<sup>114</sup> Globally, industry data indicates that 6% of pilots are women.<sup>115</sup>

Women remain underrepresented in senior leadership positions within airlines, accounting for just 4% of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), 13% of Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), and 6% of Chief Operating Officers (COOs), as of 2021.<sup>116</sup> In the United States of America, for instance, women represent only 6% of airline pilots,<sup>117</sup> and only an estimated 3.6% of airline captains.<sup>118</sup> This pattern persists across most of the industry and in most geographical regions. As an exception, an estimated 15% of pilots in India are women, nearly three times higher than the global average. Additionally, in 2023, women accounted for nearly 18% of the 1,622 of commercial pilot licenses issued in India – an increase of 22% compared to the previous year.<sup>119</sup> The progress of the country towards gender equality in the flight deck has been attributed to gender pay equality due to strong unionization in the

industry, and due to the continued need for qualified workforce resulting from the increase of commercial aviation.<sup>120</sup>

### 2.1.4 Business Survey

The air passenger transport industry showed the greatest interest in the Business Survey, conducted for this report, compared to rail, road and water.<sup>121</sup> A total of 14 air passenger transport companies participated in the survey, out of 29 overall. Among the participating air passenger transport companies, women accounted for approximately 32% of the total workforce, a slightly lower proportion than the global result of 36%. While companies of varying sizes are not directly comparable, their responses offer valuable insights into the employment patterns, roles and working conditions of women in the air passenger transport industry.

Concerning the distribution of women across different categories of occupations, the Business Survey data indicates that women predominantly work in clerical support, sales and traveller facing roles, whereas they are underrepresented in technical and professional roles. This reflects general observations of the air passenger transport industry, where women are mainly working in service-oriented roles, rather than technical, flight deck or leadership positions.

113 UN Tourism conducted a National questionnaire for Member-States of the United Nation from 29/04/2025 to 30/06/2025 as part of the research for this report. It was sent to 187 countries and territories, 28 valid responses were received, of which only 3 contained data on occupational roles: Georgia, Germany and Poland

114 Smith, W.E. (2022), *A feminist analysis of gender representation in airline organisations*, PhD thesis, University of Surrey, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15126/thesis.900594>.

115 International Air Transport Association (2024), *Gender in Aviation*, IATA, Geneva, available at: <https://www.iata.org/> [30-11-2025].

116 International Air Transport Association (2022), 'IATA Economics' Chart of the Week: Women are still under-represented in leading positions at airlines', IATA, Geneva, online available at: <https://www.iata.org/> [11-05-2025].

117 International Air Transport Association (2024), *Gender in Aviation*, IATA, Geneva, available at: <https://www.iata.org/> [30-11-2025].

118 Federal Aviation Administration (2022), *Breaking barriers for women in aviation: Flight plan for the future*, online available at: <https://www.faa.gov> [11-04-2025].

119 AERVIVA (2025), 'The Future of Gender Diversity in Aviation: Will 2025 Bring Industry-Wide Changes to the Job Market?', AERVIVA, Dubai, available at: <https://aerviva.com> or <https://aerviva.com/the-future-of-gender-diversity-in-aviation-will-2025-bring-industry-wide-changes-to-the-job-market/> [25-11-2025].

120 International Society of Women Airline Pilots (n.d.), *Media*, ISWAP, available at: <https://www.iswap.org> [29-01-2026].

121 UN Tourism conducted a Business Survey for passenger transport businesses from 29/04/2025 to 31/10/2025 as part of the research for this report. 29 valid responses were received from 20 different countries. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

Table 2.1: **Proportion of employees who are women in responding air passenger transport businesses (%)**

<b>Businesses</b>	<b>Country in which the business is registered in</b>	<b>Employees that are women (%)</b>
Solaris Broker Aereo	Spain	75.00
Japan Airlines	Japan	61.26
American Airlines – Sucursal Colombiana	Colombia	48.19
Jambojet	Kenya	47.40
Middle East Airlines	Lebanon	42.46
Iberia	Spain	38.03
Birmingham Airport	United Kingdom	36.45
Tirana International Airport	Albania	36.02
Malta International Airport	Malta	33.75
Kansai Airports	Japan	33.38
Istanbul Airport	Türkiye	30.04
Flynas	Saudi Arabia	28.01
Royal Jordanian Airlines	Jordan	22.31
ANA HOLDINGS INC.	Japan	N/A

Note: UN Tourism conducted a Business Survey for passenger transport businesses from 29/04/2025 to 31/10/2025 as part of the research for this report. 29 valid responses were received from 20 different countries. 14 air passenger transport businesses responded to the survey. All passenger transport businesses that responded to the survey are presented in this table, including cases where some information is incomplete. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), Business Survey, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

#### Snapshot 2.1: **Solaris Broker Aereo**

Solaris is a Spanish air broker specialized in searching and hiring aircrafts, including private jets, helicopters and commercial airplanes. As a micro business in the air passenger transport industry, three of the four team members are women, including their CEO, and they have implemented important practices on gender equality measurement and reporting. Initiatives include a range of family-related benefits, and procedures to deal with sexual harassment in the workplace, including active communication of zero tolerance for sexual harassment to suppliers and travellers and protocols against sexual harassment including reporting, investigation and disciplinary proceedings and reorganizational measures.

Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), Business Survey, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

#### Snapshot 2.2: **Gender diversity – Iberia**

Iberia aims for balancing gender diversity across its workforce. In 2023, women represented 38% of the total workforce, with 7% of these being pilots. The share of women in senior and middle management positions and specialist roles was 44%. Additionally, the International Airline Group Board of Directors – the corporate group that oversees Iberia’s strategy – includes five women out of eleven members, and three out of nine of the Iberia Board of Directors are women. Iberia’s objectives are to reach 50 % representation of women in management positions by 2030.

Source: Iberia (2024), *Sustainability Report two thousand and twenty-three*, Iberia, Madrid, available at: <https://grupo.iberia.com> [26-01-2026].

### Case study 2.1: **Royal Jordanian**

Royal Jordanian (RJ), the Jordan national air carrier, employed 4,071 persons and carried 3.7 million passengers on 32,834 flights in 2024. Royal Jordanian collects and maintains detailed employment data disaggregated by sex across all departments and job levels. According to data from the Business Survey, the airline informed for 2024 that:

- 18.18% of board members were women;
- 22.31% of employees were women.
- 32.52% of managers were women.

Royal Jordanian states that advancing gender equality is a strategic priority in its operations. Among the activities to improve gender equality, RJ declared they are implementing the following actions:

- Training for all staff on gender equality/diversity in the workplace;
- Formal mentoring activities that include junior and senior staff;
- Internal dialogue and consultations about gender equality in the workplace;
- Active communication to suppliers and travellers about zero tolerance for sexual harassment;
- Implemented protocol against sexual harassment including reporting, victim-centred care, investigation and monitoring;

- Provision of family-related benefits, including antenatal, childbirth and postnatal care, flexible working arrangements, paid time-off and health insurance; and
- Principle of “Equal pay for work of equal value” across its business operations.

Furthermore, Royal Jordanian actively promotes gender equality through impactful initiatives, such as:

1. Participation in the UN Tourism Centre Stage project, advocating gender balance in tourism;
2. Achieving the IATA 25by2025 target;<sup>a</sup>
3. The Shorouq campaign, in partnership with Etihad Bank, empowers women financially and supports their return to work after a career break;
4. The “Female only Campaign” boosts female cabin crew participation;
5. RJ joined the “We Empower Her to Work” initiative, engaging in HR workshops and expert collaborations to enhance gender inclusive policies.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2025), Business Survey, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

a) International Air Transport Association (2026), ‘Advancing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion with 25by2025’, IATA, Geneva, available at: <https://www.iata.org/en/about/our-commitment/25-by-2025/> [12-02-2025].

## 2.2

# Key findings and observations

The results presented in this chapter largely align with previous studies on women in air passenger transport. Data in our study shows that women make up 36% of the workforce in countries and territories with available data, less than the 40% found in previous studies.<sup>122</sup> While this is the highest participation rate amongst the passenger transport industries, gender equality is yet to be achieved – a closer examination reveals that women’s involvement is occupationally segregated<sup>123</sup> and a significant gender imbalance and underrepresentation of women persist in most segments of the aviation industry.

### 2.2.1 Gender imbalance in women’s representation

Overall, women comprise less than 20% in most technical and high-skilled roles, such as pilots, maintenance technicians or executive leadership positions.<sup>124</sup> Despite incremental gains in these areas, recent research on gender equity in aviation shows that progress has been

minimal.<sup>125</sup> Likewise, the piloting profession remains overwhelmingly dominated by men; the share of women increasing by under 0.5% per year<sup>126</sup> reflects the continued underrepresentation of women in key aviation occupations such as aerospace engineering, air traffic control and piloting.<sup>127</sup>

Women in air transport are predominantly employed in service-related roles such as flight attendants and travel agents,<sup>128</sup> as these roles are often perceived as a natural extension of femininity. Figure 2.3 below demonstrates clearly the fact that the occupation of flight attendant or technical professions are highly gendered and widely related to typical women’s or typical men’s work.<sup>129</sup> Assumptions about women’s inherent nurturing and caregiving abilities have contributed to categorizing some occupations as ‘women’s work’, thereby reinforcing their status as a service function or a continuation of domestic responsibilities.<sup>130</sup> Recent research on cabin feminization continues to associate flight attendants with femininity and domesticity, highlighting enduring gendered and

122 European Labour Authority (2025), *EURES Report on labour shortages and surpluses 2024: Sector analysis on air transport*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, available at: <https://www.ela.europa.eu> [12-02-2026].

123 Smith, W.E. (2022), *A feminist analysis of gender representation in airline organisations*, PhD thesis, University of Surrey, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15126/thesis.900594>.

124 Lutte, R.K. (2019), *Women in Aviation: A Workforce Report*, Aviation Institute Faculty Publications, University of Nebraska at Omaha, available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/aviationfacpub/6> [12-02-2026].

125 Leuenberger, D.Z. and Lutte, R. (2022), ‘Sustainability, Gender Equity, and Air Transport: Planning a Stronger Future’, *Public Works Management & Policy*, volume 27(3), p. 4, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087724X221075044>.

126 Leuenberger, D.Z. and Lutte, R. (2022), ‘Sustainability, Gender Equity, and Air Transport: Planning a Stronger Future’, *Public Works Management & Policy*, volume 27(3), p. 4, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087724X221075044>.

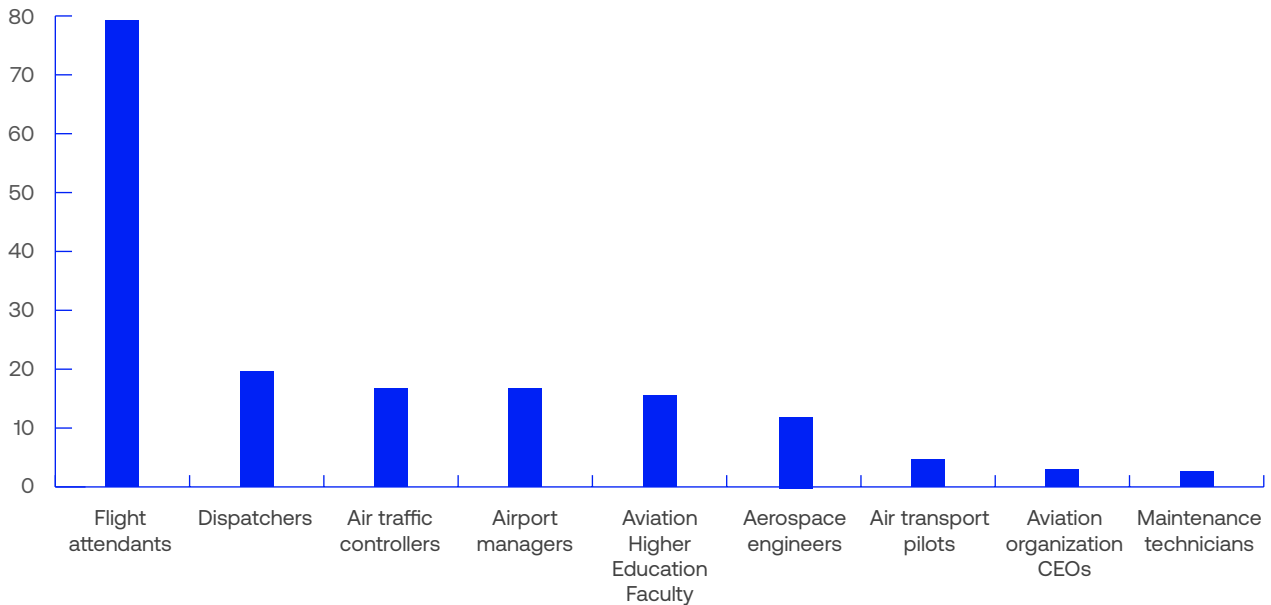
127 Coalition of Airline Pilots Association (2018), ‘Women airline pilots: A tiny percentage, and only growing slowly’, CAPA, Sydney, available at: <https://centreforaviation.com> [08-04-2025].

128 McCarthy, F.; Budd, L. and Ison, S. (2015), ‘Gender on the flightdeck: Experiences of women commercial airline pilots in the UK’, *Journal of Air Transport Management*, volume 47(C), pp. 32–38; DOI: 10.1016/j.jairtraman.2015.04.001.

Lutte, R.K. (2019), *Women in Aviation: A Workforce Report*, Aviation Institute Faculty Publications, University of Nebraska at Omaha, available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/aviationfacpub/6> [12-02-2026].

129 Smith, W.E. (2022), *A feminist analysis of gender representation in airline organisations*, PhD thesis, University of Surrey, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15126/thesis.900594>.

130 Lyth, P. (2009), ‘“Think of her as your mother”: Airline advertising and the stewardess in America, 1930–1980’, *The Journal of Transport History*, volume 30(1), pp. 1–21, DOI: DOI:10.7227/TJTH.30.1.3.

Figure 2.3: **Women in the global aviation workforce, 2019 (%)**

Note: The proportions indicated in the graph show the percentage of people working in each of the different occupations that are women.

Source: Lutte, R.K. (2021), *Women in Aviation: A Workforce Report. 2021 Edition*, Aviation Institute Faculty Publications, University of Nebraska at Omaha, available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357032586\\_Women\\_in\\_Aviation\\_A\\_Workforce\\_Report\\_2021\\_Edition](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357032586_Women_in_Aviation_A_Workforce_Report_2021_Edition) [22-04-2026].

hypersexualized perceptions.<sup>131</sup> Taken together, these figures embody gender stereotypes and reaffirm that there are certain standardized gendered roles and expectations in air passenger transport cultures.

In addition to gender stereotypes, women workers in air passenger transport continue to face significant challenges, including:

- Unacceptable levels of violence and harassment from third parties such as travellers;
- Absence of gender-responsive, staff-only sanitation facilities; and
- Lack of safe and reliable commuting options.<sup>132</sup>

Other reasons for the gender imbalance might be rooted in legislative or organizational barriers that prevent women working in the industry or in specific roles.

On a positive note, some encouraging initiatives in the air passenger transport sector towards improved gender equality exist: In 2019, Qatar Airways launched a symbolic initiative with their award-winning first all-female crew flight,<sup>133</sup> which attracted significant media coverage to combat gender stereotypes and highlighted women's technical and leadership skills. The proportion of women employees at Qatar Airways went up from 31% in 2021,<sup>134</sup> to 38% in 2023,<sup>135</sup> reflecting the positive impact of the company's initiatives to improve gender equality.

131 Ferguson, J. and Ayuttacorn, A. (2019), 'Air Male: Exploring Flight Attendant Masculinities in North America and Thailand', *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, volume 20(4), pp. 328–343, DOI: DOI:10.1080/14442213.2019.1634137.

132 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Make work safe: Eliminating violence and harassment against aviation workers*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [05-05-2025].

133 Qatar Airways (2019), 'Qatar Airways All-Female Flight Wins Praise From European Policymakers', press release, published 12 March 2019, Qatar Airways, online available at: <https://www.qatarairways.com> [25-11-2025].

134 Qatar Airways (2021), *Sustainability Report 2019–2021*, Qatar Airways, available at: <https://www.qatarairways.com/> [02-04-2026]

135 Qatar Airways (2024), *Group Sustainability Report 2023–2024*, Qatar Airways, available at: <https://www.qatarairways.com/> [02-04-2026]

### Case study 2.2: The IATA '25by2025' initiative

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for airlines, representing some 350 airlines and over 80% of air traffic worldwide. The IATA voluntary '25by2025' initiative is working across the aviation sector to measure diversity, equity and inclusion maturity of its members. The initiative calls for member organizations to increase female representation to a minimum of 25% or a 25% improvement from 2021 levels (reporting started after COVID) in senior roles or under-represented areas. Since its launch in 2019, more than 200 aviation-related organizations have signed up to the initiative, including airlines, airports, air navigation service providers, manufacturers, ground handlers, travel agencies and government bodies:

Table 2.2: IATA '25by2025' signatories by organization type, as of June 2025

Type of signatory	Number of signatories	Proportion of signatories (%)
Airline	173	80.1%
Service providers	15	6.9%
Associations/ Government	11	5.1%
ANSP	4	1.9%
Manufacturers	4	1.9%
Airports	3	1.4%
Ground handlers	3	1.4%
Travel Agencies	2	0.9%
Aircraft leasing companies	1	0.5%
<b>Total signatories</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sources: <https://www.iata.org/en/about/our-commitment/25-by-2025/> and <https://www.iata.org/>

International Air Transport Association (2025), *Gender in Aviation*, IATA, Geneva, available at: [https://www.iata.org/\[30-11-2025\]](https://www.iata.org/[30-11-2025]).

According to the 2025 IATA *Gender in Aviation* report, in 2024, **women accounted for around 40%–42% of the total workforce** among reporting signatories. Female representation varied significantly by region, ranging from 34% in Africa and the Middle East to approximately 48% in Asia and the Pacific, highlighting the importance of region-specific approaches to gender balance.

Progress in women representation is visible across occupational groups. Data for 2024 show that:

- Women held **31.4% of senior management roles** across reporting organisations;
- Female representation in **technical roles** reached around 23.3%; and
- **Flight deck roles** remain the least gender-balanced, with women representing **6.2% of pilots globally**, but with a growth of 34.8% between 2021 and 2024, underlining the continued need for targeted action.

The progress made through the IATA voluntary '25by2025' initiative is a great example of what can be achieved when key industry players come together to promote gender-equality and women empowerment in passenger transport.

Despite the progress made, these initiatives also show that the air passenger industry overall remains gender-segregated across roles and occupations, that regional differences exist and that some companies are still at the beginning of addressing gender-equality. Initiatives, such as that of IATA, represent valuable tools, but continued efforts are needed to drive progress.

## 2.3 Conclusion

The air passenger transport industry employs a higher share of women compared to other passenger transport industries, making up 36% of the overall passenger transport workforce. Although more women are employed, regional disparities are apparent. Also, women are underrepresented in pilot, technical and leadership roles and are exposed to feminized stigmas and harassment.

While still being a gender-segregated sector, the air passenger transport sector has implemented impactful and encouraging initiatives to improve gender equality and women's empowerment. The two campaigns shown in this chapter (the Qatar Airlines all-female crew flight and the IATA '25by25' initiative) highlight the rich ecosystems of women in aviation networks. The initiatives proactively bring the industry together to improve women participation and gender equality, which might be used to inspire collective action in other passenger transport industries.

However, the limited availability of sex-disaggregated data and socioculturally ingrained biases need to be addressed urgently to make real strides towards bringing women on an equal footing in air passenger transport. The industry also needs more targeted education and support to encourage women into STEM professions, as well as provision of financial resources and scholarships for women and, as outlined in chapter 1, gender-responsive laws, policies and initiatives that protect and promote gender equality in air passenger transport.

Finally, while some statistical data is available for women in the airline industry, there is a severe lack of published data from other segments of the air passenger industry which requires urgent attention. Detailed recommendations are outlined in section 5.2.



Female aircraft engineer. © Jambojet



## 03. Land passenger transport

**Summary:** This chapter analyses women's participation, gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in land passenger transport. It presents statistics based on available data, employment status and gender wage gaps, and highlights initiatives that support women in land passenger transport employment. Where data is available, results for rail and road passenger transport are presented separately. Results show that women are significantly under-represented in land passenger transport and that major barriers need to be addressed.

**Key messages:**

- Land passenger transport (road and rail) is by far the largest component industry of tourism transport in which women are significantly under-represented.
- 3% of people working in road passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data.
- 11% of people working in rail passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data.
- Severe barriers, such as gender stereotypes, inadequate sanitation facilities, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, limited work-family provisions, unequal training and progression opportunities, and legal restrictions require urgent action.

**Key words:** Land passenger transport | rail passenger transport | road passenger transport | gender stereotypes | workplace sanitation | non-gender-conducive working environments.

## 3.1 Data overview

Land passenger transport<sup>136</sup> is the dominant component of the overall tourism transport sector and plays a critical role in global employment, connectivity, passenger mobility, innovation and economic development.<sup>137</sup> Available data for this report shows that overall land passenger transport accounts for about 96% of the transport workforce in countries with available data, with road transport representing 92% of land passenger transport employment and rail about 4%.<sup>138</sup> Land transport is highly integrated with other transport modes and represents the majority of inland, short-, medium- and – increasingly – long-distance passenger transport journeys.<sup>139</sup> Previous data shows that women are significantly under-represented in the land transport industries, with over 30 men for every woman employee.<sup>140</sup>

### 3.1.1 Statistical overview

Based on available national data, men by far dominate land passenger transport employment, with only 3% of people working in land passenger transport being women in countries and territories with available data. This means, land transport represents the lowest proportion of women in the largest of the component industries of tourism transport. It is notable that Mauritius

with 43% of women workers is the only country from the UN Tourism survey that approaches equality in the land passenger transport industry.

### 3.1.2 Regional trends

Based on available national data, figure 3.2 shows different trends across regions, with Europe having the highest proportion of women workers and South Asia the lowest. These regional differences may be caused by social, cultural, economic and institutional factors influencing women's participation in the land passenger transport industries. As presented in section 1.1, institutional job restrictions for women, safety and health concerns, restrictive cultural norms and the provision of flexible working arrangements vary between regions. For example, gender attitudes in South Asian countries are some of the most conservative in the world, with 70% of the population opposing women working outside their home. Further, South Asian women's workforce participation drops by 12% once married, even before having children.<sup>141</sup>

The following sections detail the analysis of women's participation in railway and road passenger transport.

136 Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

For further details see annex 1 Methodology.

137 World Intellectual Property Association (n.d.), 'Introduction to land transportation', WIPO, Geneva, available at: <https://www.wipo.int/web-publications/wipo-technology-trends-technical-annex-the-future-of-transportation-on-land/en/introduction-to-land-transportation.html> [28-01-2026].

138 World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024 preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026]. World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

139 European Environment Agency (2024), 'Road transport', EEA, Copenhagen, available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/topics/in-depth/road-transport> [28-01-2026].

140 Ortega Hortelano, A. et al. (2021), 'Women in Transport Research and Innovation: A European Perspective', *Sustainability*, volume 13(12), 6796, special issue on Gender Issues in Transport and Mobility DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13126796>.

141 World Bank Group (2024), 'Clearing the Path for Women to Work Can Bring Prosperity to South Asia', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [30-01-2026].

Figure 3.1:  
**Proportion of people working in land passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

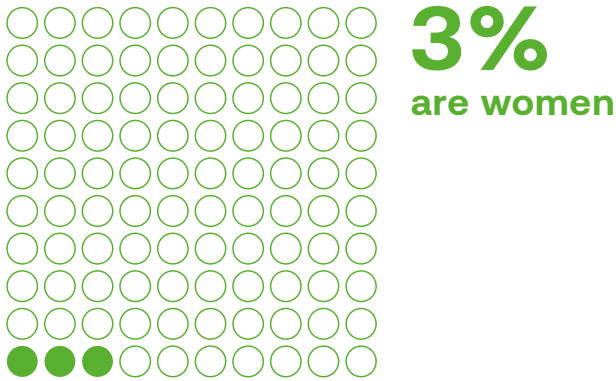
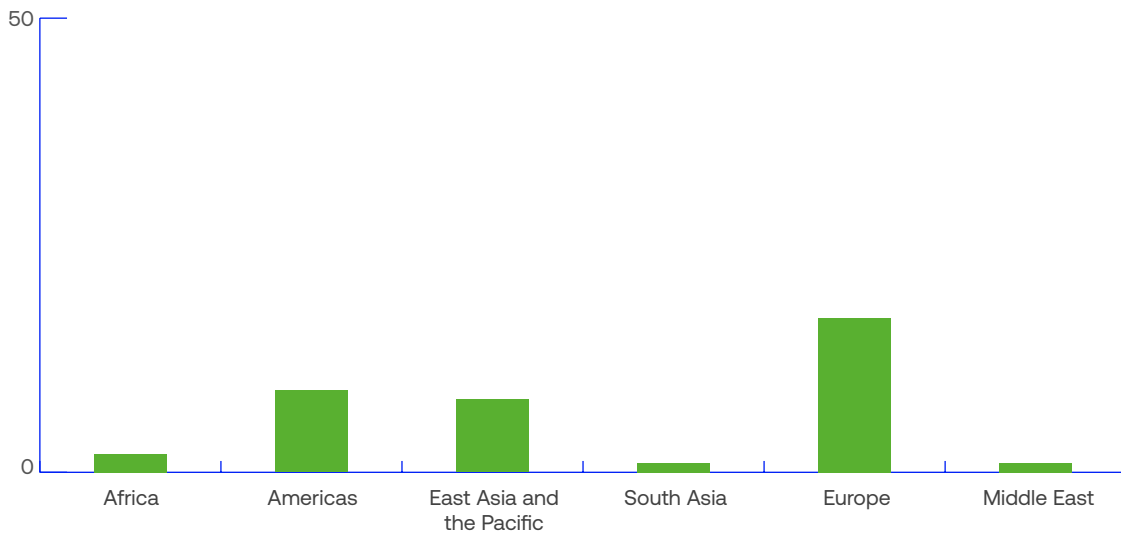


Figure 3.2: **Regional trends: Proportion of people working in land passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



Notes for figures 3.1 and 3.2:

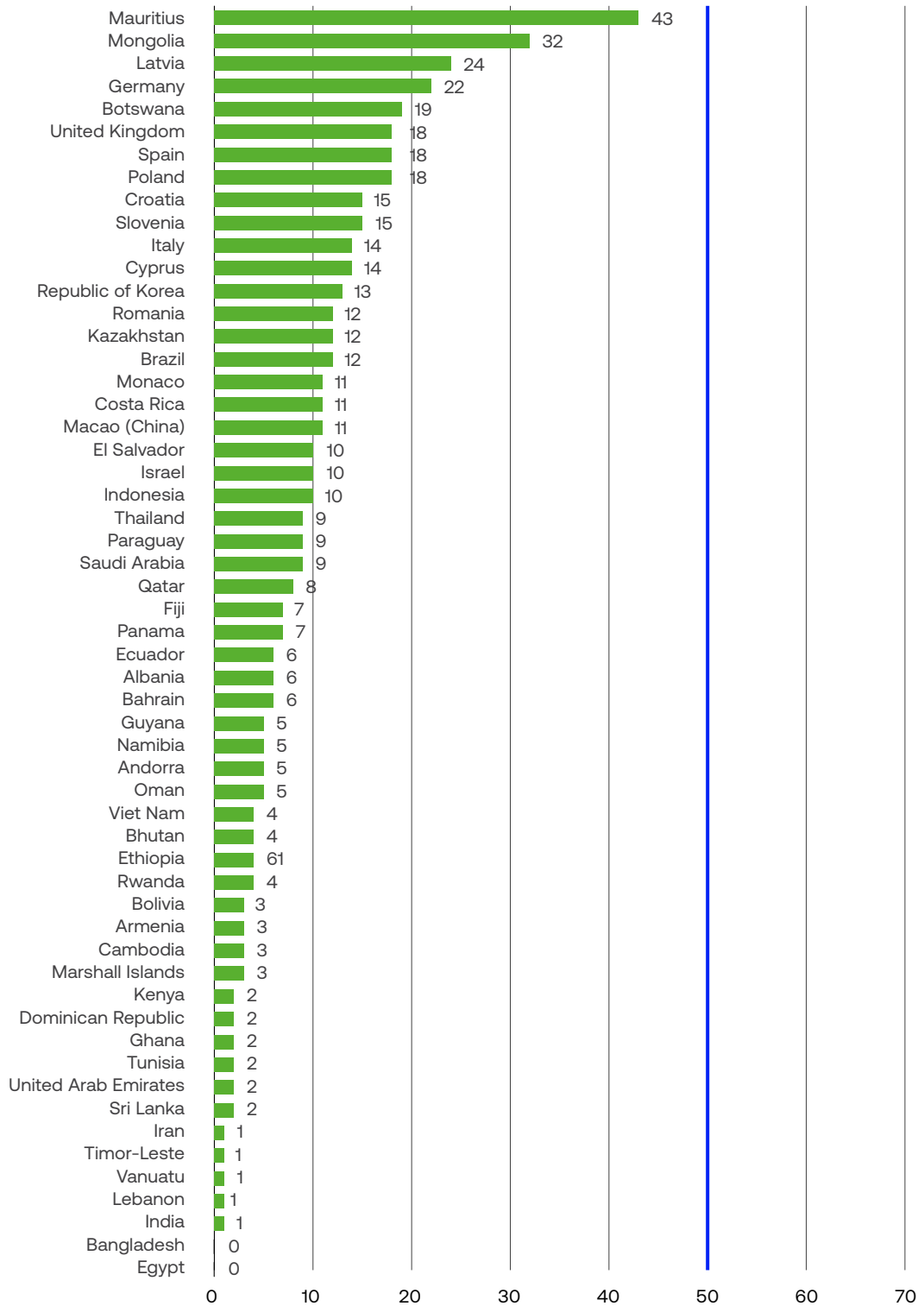
Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources for figures 3.1 and 3.2:

World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

Figure 3.3: **Proportion of people working in land passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Sources: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), *National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations*. Source data available in Annex 2.

## 3.2

# Railway passenger transport

Women's participation in railway passenger transport employment is the second lowest of all the different passenger transport industries in countries with available data (11%).<sup>142</sup> Primary data on women's employment status and gender-pay gap is limited, but previous research indicates women are facing major challenges and barriers, including male-dominated operational positions, limited STEM education for girls and women, lack of decent sanitation facilities and safety concerns.

### 3.2.1 Statistical overview

When looking at the representation of women in railway passenger transport in countries and territories with available data, the limited data available shows that women represent approximately 11% of railway passenger employees, compared to 3% in overall land transport.

### 3.2.2 Regional trends

The data available shows different regional trends between the proportion of women and men working in railway passenger transport in countries and territories with available data, with Africa having highest proportion of women workers and South-Asia the lowest. Factors that might influence women's overall low railway participation include attitudes regarding women in traditionally male-dominated operational positions, limited STEM education for girls and women, long and irregular shift patterns, insufficient work-family provisions, lack of safe and clean sanitation facilities, and lack of female leadership and role models.<sup>143</sup> Barriers also include limited awareness about job opportunities, particularly for high-skilled or technical roles like train conductors or drivers, and women's exclusion from professional networks where opportunities are disseminated.<sup>144</sup> More often though, positive efforts are made to increase access and participation of women into railway roles, for example through regional sectoral agreements and networking initiatives such as Women in Transport.<sup>145</sup>

142 World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in annex 2.

143 Mundy, R.A. and Rust, D.L. (2018), *Women in Railroad Operational Roles*, Institute for Transportation, Iowa State University, Ames, available at: <https://www.intrans.iastate.edu/> [12-02-2026].

144 World Bank Group (2025), *She Drives Change: A Toolkit for Redefining Opportunities for Women in Transport*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://shedriveschange.worldbank.org/> [11-02-2026].

145 Women in Transport (n.d.), homepage, available at: <https://www.womenintransport.com/> [04-05-2025].

Sameni, M.K. et. al. (2025), 'Analyzing Status of Female Workforce in the Railway Industry: A Case Study', *Transportation Research Procedia*, volume 82, pp. 3838–3848, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trpro.2024.12.011>.

Fraszczyk, A. and Piip, J. (2019), 'A review of transport organisations for female professionals and their impacts on the transport sector workforce', *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, volume 31, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rtbm.2019.100379>.

Figure 3.4:

**Proportion of people working in railway passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data**

**11%**  
are women

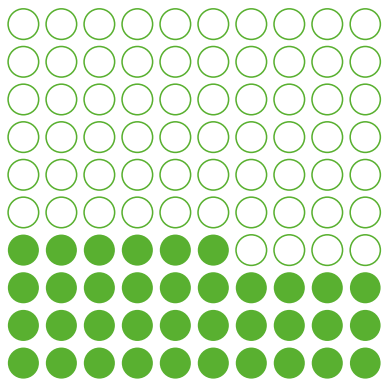


Figure 3.5:

**Proportion of people working in railway passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

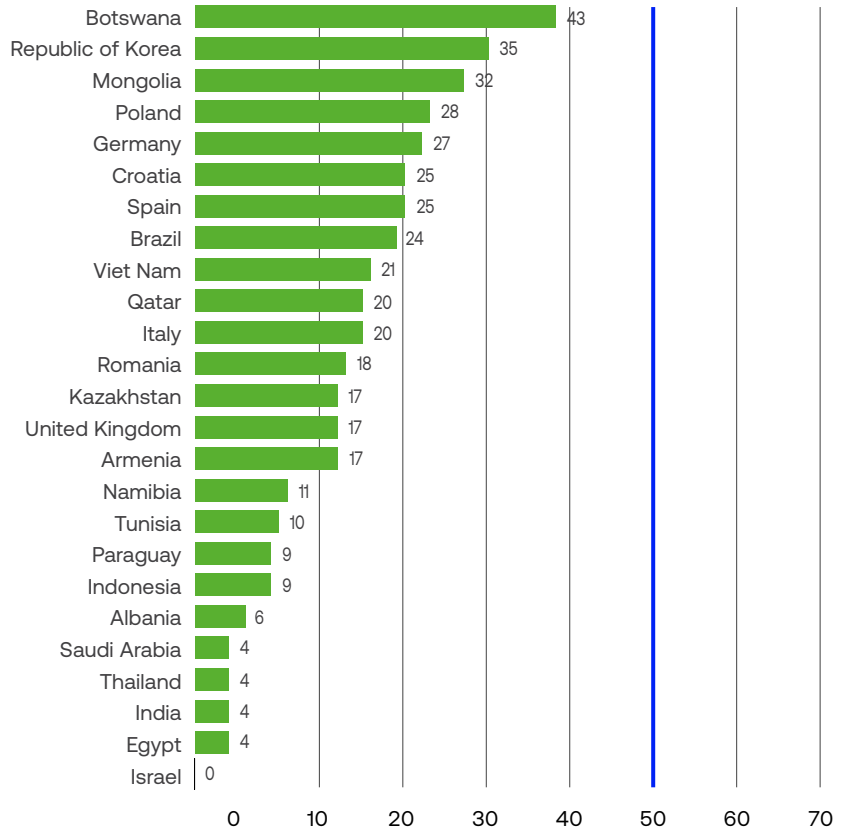
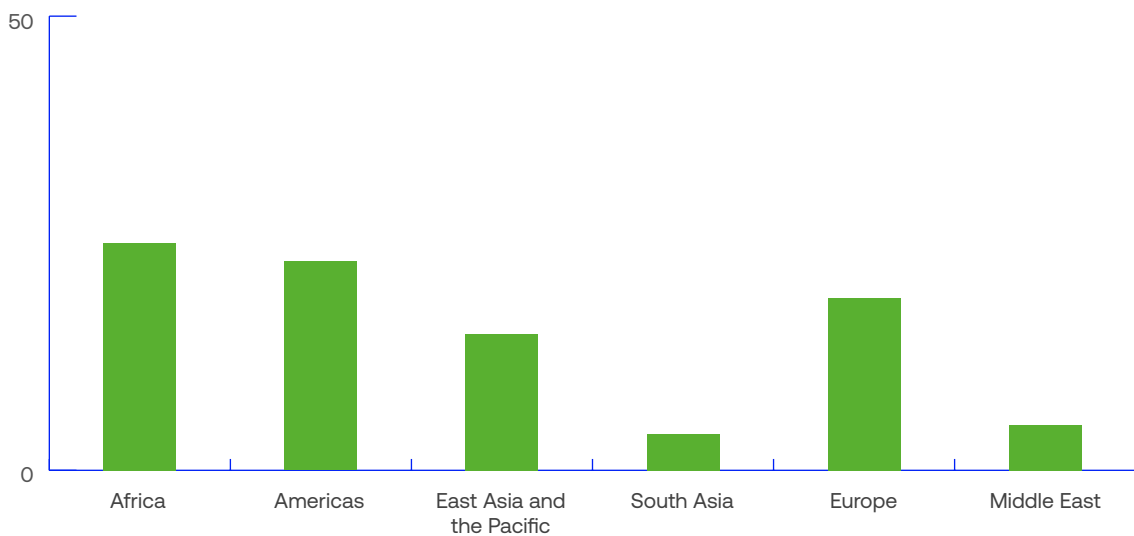


Figure 3.6: **Regional trends: Proportion of people working in railway passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



Notes for figures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Notes for figures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284427635 - Sunday, June 28, 2026 4:14:29 AM - IP Address: 62.74.10.176

### 3.2.3 Working environment and career progression

While the data received from the National Questionnaire did not allow for conclusions on women's working environments and career progression in rail passenger transport, the global 2023 *ITF Women Railway Workers Survey*, highlights that the railway sector remains highly gendered and that women face major barriers, including unequal pay, gender and union membership based discrimination, lack of training and progression opportunities, and health and safety issues, including sexual harassment, coercion and lack of sanitation facilities:<sup>146</sup>

- 44% of women reported insufficient staffing as a major issue at work;
- about 20% of women reported insufficient pay and benefits, low work-life balance, inadequate or absent sanitation and/or rest facilities, limited opportunities for career progression and promotion;
- 14% reported wage inequalities;
- 12% experienced gender-based discrimination; and
- 9% of respondents said they are discriminated based on their trade union membership.

Gendered job roles were identified as a key issue, where train driver and technical roles, as well as train control/signalling roles are predominantly occupied by men, whereas service and administrative roles are largely occupied by women. Results showed that:<sup>147</sup>

- Access to training or promotion opportunities, while equal in theory, are not equal in practice;
- Only 66% of respondents confirmed equal pay;

- 15% of the women reported their makeup and physical appearance being checked by managers at the start of their shifts, highlighting the gender discrimination and feminization of women's role in rail;
- Worryingly, 5% reported being victims of sexual coercion to keep their jobs or improve their working condition;
- About 25% of participants reported being aware of gender-based sexual harassment incidences of violence at work;
- 15% said they had experienced sexual harassment or violence at work themselves, with 87% of these cases more than once or frequently;
- About 25% of respondents flagged up that a lack of decent sanitation facilities poses a health and safety issue at work, and concerns were raised over access to drinking water; and
- Safety concerns extended to women's commute to and from work, with about 33% saying they felt unsafe as public transport was unavailable due to late or early shifts.

Combined, these results expose the various factors which can prevent women from joining rail transport work or stay in employment, and highlight the urgent action needed to improve gender equality and access to safe and decent work for women in rail.

<sup>146</sup> International Transport Workers' Federation (2023), *ITF Women Railway Workers Survey*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [19-12-2025].

The percentages included have been rounded to whole numbers.

<sup>147</sup> International Transport Workers' Federation (2023), *ITF Women Railway Workers Survey*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [19-12-2025].

The percentages included have been rounded to whole numbers.

### Case study 3.1 on cooperation and partnerships European Social Partner Agreement on Women in Rail

The *European Social Partner Agreement on Women in Rail* is a binding autonomous European agreement signed between the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), including almost 70 railway sector employers, their national associations, infrastructure managers, vehicle leasing companies and railway sector employees that are represented by the European Transport Workers Federation (ETF).

The agreement was signed in 2021 with the aim to attract and recruit more women to the rail sector and create the right framework and conditions to retain them in the companies and the sector by giving women more protection, eliminating gender discrimination and guaranteeing equal treatment in the workplace. Policies span across several areas, including gender equality, targets for gender balanced representation, reconciliation of working and private life, training, promotion, career development, gender wage gap, occupational health and safety, working environments, and prevention of gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

The agreement further includes guidance on implementation and reporting; and awards that recognize best practice towards these targets were introduced in 2025.

Source: Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (2021), 'European Social Partner Agreement on Women in Rail between BER & ETF', agreements and resolutions, CER, Brussels, available at: <https://www.cer.be/> [12-02-2026].

## 3.2.4 Business Survey

In the Business Survey for this report, out of 29 overall submissions a total of four companies operating in the rail passenger transport sector responded:

Table 3.1: **Proportion of employees who are women in responding railway passenger transport businesses (%)**

Companies	Country in which the business is registered in	Employees that are women (%)
Splendacious Corporation Private Limited	India	66.67
Museumstoomtram Hoorn-Medemblik	Netherlands	31.25
Grupo Renfe	Spain	21.96
East Japan Railway Company	Japan	19.25

Note: UN Tourism conducted a Business Survey for passenger transport businesses from 29/04/2025 to 31/10/2025 as part of the research for this report. 29 valid responses were received from 20 different countries. 4 railways passenger transport businesses responded to the survey. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3

Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), Business Survey, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

East Japan Railway Company is Japan's largest railway company headquartered in Tokyo. It transfers about 16 million passenger per day and employs 52,753 people as of March 2025. The ongoing efforts to improve women participation and gender equality in the company are reflected in the number of women in director positions which increased from zero women in 2016 to five women in 2025, representing 31.3% of directors.

Concerning the distribution of women within the different occupational categories in railway occupations, Grupo Renfe submitted the most complete information to the Business Survey. Their data indicates that women are mostly working in sales and customer support roles for travellers (58.18%), 42.19% in technical roles, and 30.10% of managerial roles are occupied by women.<sup>148</sup>

Most companies did not provide detailed information about women representation in different roles, again highlighting an urgent need to produce sex-disaggregated data for specific occupations.

### Case study 3.2: Deutsche Bahn

The Deutsche Bahn (DB) AG is owned by the Federal Republic of Germany and operates Europe's longest rail network. It has 225,560 employees and transports 2.429 billion annual passengers. DB reported having 26.2% women employees in 2024.

The FKi Diversity for Success Initiative (Germany) honours companies that demonstrate a special commitment to diversity and inclusion since 2012. Deutsche Bahn AG was awarded in 2023 the second consecutive award as the “the women-friendliest company of the year”, followed by food retailer REWE and Berlin Water.<sup>a</sup>

In 2024 DB reached its previous target of 30% women in leadership and is now targeting two new ambitious goals by 31 December 2035:

- 40% women in leadership positions; and
- Increasing the share of women in the overall workforce to 28%.

Recruitment, attractive working conditions and internal retention and development measures are aimed at increasing the share of women at all levels within the DB Group. Effective measures such as the DB International

Women's Month in March and recruiting days for female candidates with job offers on the day of the interview will be continued. One new development is that university and school partnerships are being used to explicitly address female students about entering STEM professions and technical jobs.

To enable more women to attain leadership positions, there are special formats within DB such as individual career advice, development programmes, mentoring and networking events. DB also advertises all positions with the option of part-time work. Employees can choose between higher pay, vacation or less working hours. Flexible working models also include the so-called “wherever you want jobs”, which allow mobile working throughout Germany. Finally, DB is increasingly offering job sharing for management positions.

The DB women's network “Women at the Railway” with several thousand female colleagues is also helping to shape Deutsche Bahn's corporate culture towards greater diversity and equality. The network has been offering different formats for network meetings for many years and is implementing projects such as the “Female ICE” that contribute to equal opportunities for women.

Sources: Deutsche Bahn (2024), *Integrated Report*, Deutsche Bahn, Berlin, available at: <https://deutschebahn.com> [12-02-2026].

a) FKi Inclusion for Excellence – Frauen-Karriere-Index (n.d.), available at: <https://fki-diversity.com/> [23-03-3026].

Deutsche Bahn (2023), ‘FKi honors DB as the women-friendliest company of the year’, press release, published March 2023, Deutsche Bahn, Berlin, available at: [https://www.deutschebahn.com/en/presse/press\\_releases](https://www.deutschebahn.com/en/presse/press_releases) [23-03-3026].

### Case study 3.3: **Renfe**

Renfe (Red Nacional de Ferrocarriles Españoles) is a state-owned Spanish railway company with 15,000 employees across the Spanish railway network. Of these, 9,666 employees work in passenger transport carrying 511 million annual passengers. Renfe has developed a professional equality plan; it collects sex-disaggregated data that allows for monitoring and reporting progress on gender equality. As of 2024, Renfe reported the following results:

- 21.96% of employees are women;
- 91.25% of women have permanent contracts;
- 30.10% of managers are women;
- 42.19% of technicians are women;
- 91.09% retention rate of women employees;
- 5.3% gender wage gap in managerial positions; and
- 2.49% gender wage gap non-managerial positions.

Among the activities to improve gender equality, Renfe is implementing:

- Training for all staff on gender equality/diversity in the workplace;
- Formal leadership training initiatives for women within the company;
- Formal mentoring activities that include junior and senior staff;
- Internal dialogue and consultations about gender equality in the workplace; and
- Counselling, services and workshops for women's health (such as reproductive health, menstrual and menopausal health).

Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), Business Survey, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

## 3.3

# Road passenger transport

Women's participation in road passenger transport employment is the lowest of all the different passenger transport industries in countries and territories with available data (3%),<sup>149</sup> even though road passenger transport employs by far more people than any other passenger transport industry. Primary data on employment status and gender-pay gap is limited, but research indicates women are facing major challenges and barriers, including a high prevalence of informal employment, limited women networks and low levels of unionization.

### 3.3.1 Statistical overview

The limited data available indicates that Mauritius (43%), Latvia (24%) and Germany (22%) show women employment rates above the average, whereas significant under-employment of women is apparent in countries such as Bangladesh, Egypt and Pakistan, who all reported close to 0% women participation in road passenger transport.

### 3.3.2 Regional trends

The data available shows different regional trends between the proportion of women and men working in road passenger transport across regions in countries with available data, with Europe having highest proportion of women workers and Middle East the lowest.

Similar to railway passenger transport, factors influencing the low participation of women in road passenger transport include regulatory constraints, gender biases and deeply ingrained male-dominated cultural norms, limited STEM education for girls and women, non-gender-conducive working environments, concerns over women's health and safety, and very limited female role models.<sup>150</sup> In addition to limiting factors<sup>151</sup> similar to other transport industries research found that “male identity and motor-mobility are deeply intertwined across much of the globe” and are more pronounced in African countries.<sup>152</sup> Further, road passenger transport jobs such as motorcycle taxis, are considered high-risk work, are often informal, and the industry is loosely regulated in many parts of the Global South,<sup>153</sup> indicating an urgent need to implement regulatory improvements.

149 World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in annex 2.

150 World Bank Group (2025), *She Drives Change: A Toolkit for Redefining Opportunities for Women in Transport*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://shedriveschange.worldbank.org/> [11-02-2026].

151 Turnbull, P. (2013), *Promoting the employment of women in the transport sector – Obstacles and policy options*, ILO, Geneva, p. 36, available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [23-04-2025].

152 Porter, G. and Omwega, N. (2022), 'Chapter 5: Experiences of Women Workers in the African Road Transport Sector', in: Wright, T.; Budd, L. and Ison, S. (eds.), *Women, Work and Transport*, Emerald, pp. 55–69, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/s2044-994120220000016005>.

153 Maina, E.F.N.; Onyango, G. and Magutu, J.M. (2025), 'Women as Motorcycle Taxi Operators in Kenya: Is the Public Transportation Sector in Africa becoming more gender-inclusive?', available through Research Square, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-6951210/v1>.

Figure 3.7:

**Proportion of people working in road passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

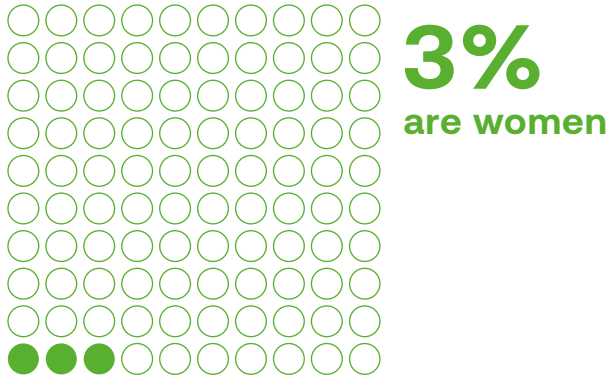
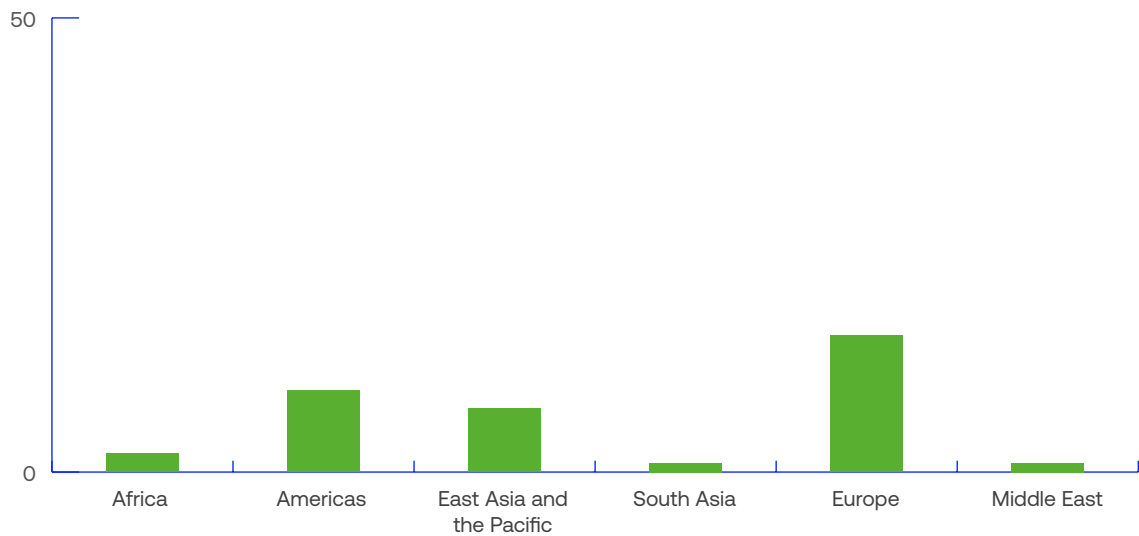


Figure 3.8: **Regional trends: Proportion of people working in road passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



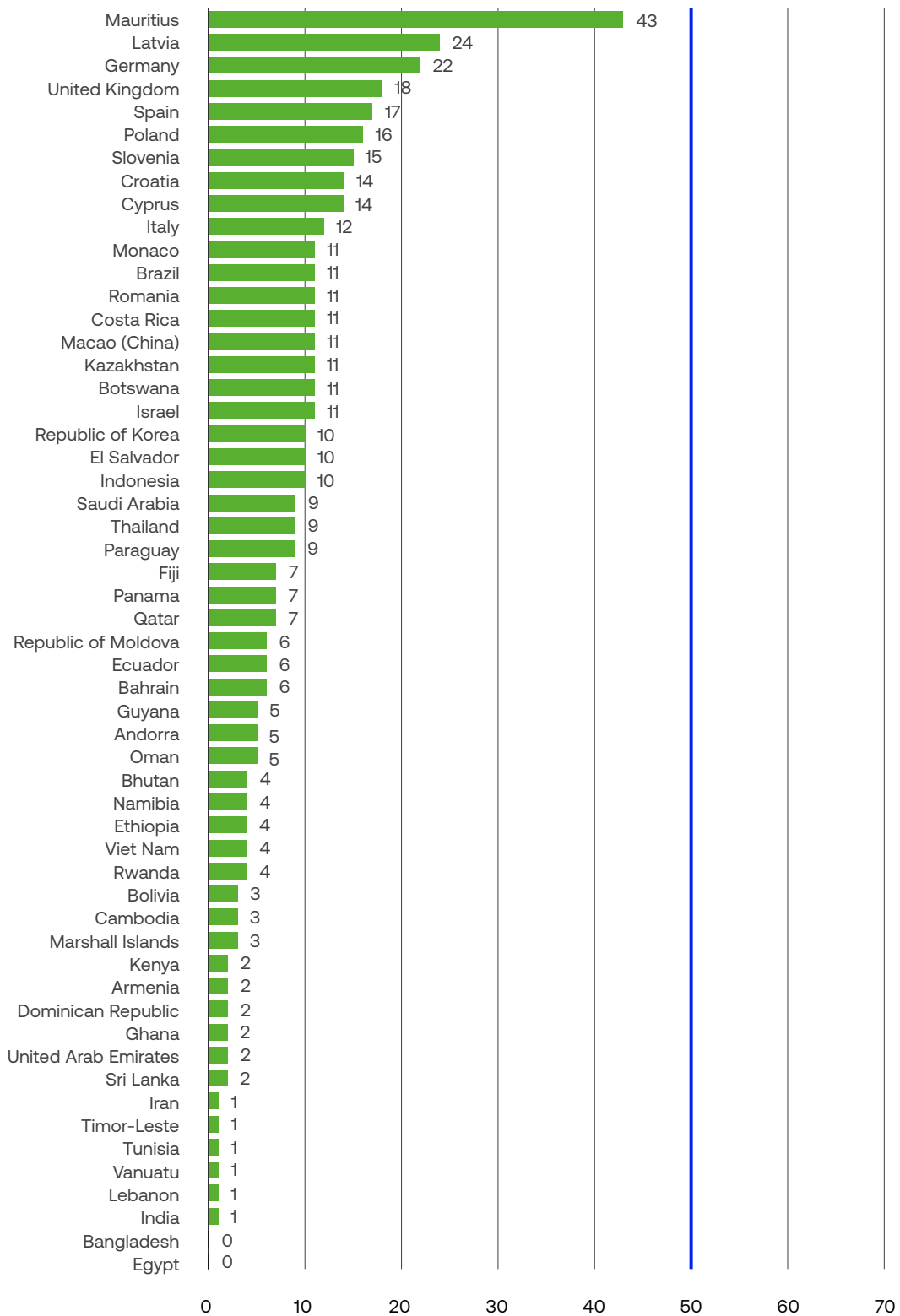
Notes for figures 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025) :

54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Notes for figures 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

Figure 3.9: **Proportion of people working in road passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



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### 3.3.3 Working environment and career progression

While primary data and specific research on road passenger transport is limited, previous studies indicate that road transport working environments are often challenging for women. The industry is a largely male dominated, where women are more likely to be confined to lower-paid, service or administrative roles rather than technical or driving positions.<sup>154</sup> Further, unfavourable workplace policies, lack of training and career advancement opportunities, family care and domestic responsibilities and gaps in retention and recruitment have been identified as critical barriers to women's employment in road transport globally.

Previous research on road transport has highlighted issues with poor workplace sanitation, unsafe conditions and inadequate facilities – which disproportionately affect women. For instance, the recent IRF publication on women and decent transport work in Ghana and Senegal, found:<sup>155</sup>

- 71.2% of respondents assuming that women experienced workplace harassment and violence;
- 76.9% reporting that they or a colleague had experienced violence and harassment at work;
- 60.4% reporting not having gender-responsive workplace facilities;
- a lack of mentorship, training and progression opportunities; and
- barriers in accessing formal working opportunities and limited access to finance that are driving women into informal work, exposing them to highly insecure and high-risk work environments.

Taken together, these issues influence women's career choices and opportunities, and impact job satisfaction, retention, economic empowerment and health and well-being for women in road passenger transport employment. In addition to workers' unions, several initiatives, such as 'She Drives Change' from the World Bank, are proactively working on improving gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment across the globe.

### 3.3.4 Business Survey

A total of 11 companies operating in the road passenger transport sector participated in the Business Survey, out of 29 submissions overall.

Among the road passenger transport companies that participated in the survey, women accounted for approximately 28% of the total workforce. While the data is not representative, and may reflect the fact that companies that participated in the Business Survey are more proactive in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment than the wider road passenger transport industry, it is nonetheless encouraging to see that some companies are taking active steps to advance gender equality in the sector.

154 World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

155 International Transport Workers' Federation (2025), *The Gender Divide in Transport: Understanding the barriers and impacts for women's exclusion from decent jobs in Ghana and Senegal*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [28-11-2025].

Table 3.2: Proportion of employees who are women in responding road passenger transport businesses (%)

Companies	Country in which the business is registered in	Employees that are women (%)
Desarrollos Turisticos (Fun and Tickets)	Spain	62.50
Anderson Coach and Travel	United States of America	51.21
RifVans	Uruguay	50.00
Nuestra Señora de la Asunción CISA	Paraguay	40.33
María Ofelia Somma Cal	Uruguay	37.50
Greenwave Transportation LLC	United States of America	35.29
Autolíneas Rubiocar S.L.	Spain	20.45
Fidex Car Hire and Safaris Ltd	Kenya	20.00
Hertz Rent a Car	Costa Rica	18.29
Transportes Automotores Plusmar S.A.	Argentina	2.86
Top Line KZ	Kazakhstan	N/A

Note: UN Tourism conducted a Business Survey for passenger transport businesses from 29/04/2025 to 31/10/2025 as part of the research for this report. 29 valid responses were received from 20 different countries. 4 railways passenger transport businesses responded to the survey. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3

Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), Business Survey, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

Only a quarter of countries (7 of 28) reported national data on women in managerial positions. The limited data reported indicates that significantly less women than men are in road passenger transport managerial positions. The lack of women leadership and role models has been identified as an important area for increasing women's participation in the passenger transport industries as a whole, but is particularly urgent in road passenger transport due to the huge under-representation of women.



Tourism tour bus employees and client. © Anderson Coach

### Case study 3.4: **Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (NSA), Paraguay**

Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (NSA) is a road passenger transport and logistics company from Paraguay. Its business strategic plan establishes advancing gender equality as a priority and a commitment to “equal pay for work of equal value”.

As of 2024, NSA reported the following results:

- 40.33% of employees are women;
- 33.33% of board members are women;
- 64.00% of managers are women;
- 25% of technicians are women; and
- 71.43% of sales and customer support workers are women.



Employee of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción at the bus terminal. © Nuestra Señora de la Asunción

For specific professional, administrative and commercial positions, priority is given to the selection of qualified women.

Among the activities to improve gender equality, NSA declared they are implementing:

- Training for all staff on gender equality/diversity in the workplace;
- Formal leadership training initiatives for women within the company;
- Participation in networks that give visibility to women in tourism;
- Active communication to suppliers and travellers about zero tolerance for sexual harassment;
- A protocol against sexual harassment including reporting, investigation and disciplinary proceedings and reorganizational measures;
- Reports on number of cases of sexual harassment: 3 cases in 2022. Social workers provide support during the reporting process and follow-up;
- Parental leave policies and a range of family-related benefits, including health insurance and educational support for children;
- Counselling and services for women’s health; and
- Semi-annual and annual vaccinations and free days for mammogram and Pap smear screenings.

## 3.4 Key findings and observations

### 3.4.1 Land passenger transport overall

This chapter identified that women are severely underrepresented in land passenger transport in countries and territories with available data (3%), and both in railway (11%) and road passenger transport (3%) respectively. In addition to the possible causes identified in the previous chapters of this report, reasons might include women's fear of victimization<sup>156</sup> and the public's negative stereotypes associated with women drivers and other more technical jobs.<sup>157</sup>

Aligned with the findings it was also shown that women:<sup>158</sup>

- Most likely are to be employed in lower-paid administrative and customer-facing roles in the land transport sector;
- More likely experience sexual harassment and gender-based violence;
- Have less access to training and progression opportunities;
- Have increased family and care responsibilities; and
- Experience unequal pay and gender stereotypes.

All these outcomes underscore the urgent need to address persistent employment barriers for women in land passenger transport.



Woman train driver working for an Indian railway company. © ITF

156 Chowdhury, S. and van Wee, B. (2020), 'Examining women's perception of safety during waiting times at public transport terminals', *Transport Policy*, volume 94, pp. 102–108, DOI: 10.1016/j.tranpol.2020.05.009.

157 Degraeve, B. et al. (2015), 'Social representations associated with men and women drivers among French adolescents and adults: Effects of the perceiver's age, sex, and socioeconomic status', *Transportation Research. Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, volume 34, pp.1–17, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2015.07.019>.

158 Wright, T. (2018), 'The impact of the future of work for women in public transport: Executive summary', ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org>.

### 3.4.2 Railway passenger transport

The scarce available data in this report found evident gender disparities in the rail passenger industry that continues to experience significant challenges in recruiting and retaining women employees.<sup>159</sup>

Findings align with previous studies from the railway sector in Europe (the world region with most available information):

- Women workers across 28 European rail businesses made up 23% in 2023 (up from 21% in 2018),<sup>160</sup> this is similar to national data – where available – with only 18.9% of the United Kingdom railway workforce being women in 2025 (up from 17.4% in 2024).<sup>161</sup>
- In the workforce, occupation disparities persist, with the lowest share of women reported among train (5%) and infrastructure maintenance (7%).<sup>162</sup>
- Professionals in the information technology sector (IT) (22%) and traffic management staff (25%) reported higher shares of women, and women among on-board personnel stands at 40%.<sup>163</sup>

- In regards to gender wage gap, women employed in railway companies earn approximately 10% less than men in countries such as Poland and Austria, with the wage gap reaching up to 30% in Lithuania.<sup>164</sup>
- This disparity is largely attributed to men working more ‘premium hours’ (e.g., overtime and night shifts) and the previously noted occupational segregation of women into specific roles.<sup>165</sup>

Among the other large concerns for women in rail are severe health and safety issues, including sexual harassment, coercion and lack of sanitation facilities. These trends highlight the critical importance of gender-responsive legislation, collective agreements, provision of training opportunities and job evaluation frameworks that uphold the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

159 World Bank Group (2025), *She Drives Change: A Toolkit for Redefining Opportunities for Women in Transport*, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://shedriveschange.worldbank.org/> [11-02-2026].

160 Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies; and European Transport Workers' Federation (2025), *New Women in Rail (WIR)-Report 2025, EVA – Europäische Akademie für umweltorientierten Verkehr*, Berlin, available at: <https://www.cer.be/publications/reports> [23-01-2026].

161 National Skills Academy for Rail (2026), 'Findings from the 2025 Workforce Survey,' NSAR, London, available at: <https://www.nsar.co.uk/2026/01/findings-from-the-2025-workforce-survey/> [23-01-2026].

162 Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies; and European Transport Workers' Federation (2025), *New Women in Rail (WIR)-Report 2025, EVA – Europäische Akademie für umweltorientierten Verkehr*, Berlin, available at: <https://www.cer.be/publications/reports> [23-01-2026].

163 Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies; and European Transport Workers' Federation (2025), *New Women in Rail (WIR)-Report 2025, EVA – Europäische Akademie für umweltorientierten Verkehr*, Berlin, available at: <https://www.cer.be/publications/reports> [23-01-2026].

164 Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies; and European Transport Workers' Federation (2005), 'Representation and better integration of women in the different professions of the railway sector', available at: <https://www.etf-europe.org> [10-05-2025].

165 Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies; and European Transport Workers' Federation (2005), 'Representation and better integration of women in the different professions of the railway sector', available at: <https://www.etf-europe.org> [10-05-2025].

### 3.4.3 Road passenger transport

Women are extremely under-represented in road passenger transport, with only 3% of the road passenger transport workforce being women. Results largely mirror previous studies on women road transport, even though existing studies are predominantly considering all public transport rather than tourism-focussed road transport specifically. For example, there are increased endeavours to close the gaps in both technical and leadership roles in public transport, as well as targeted recruitment and training to increase opportunities for women in driving, maintenance and operational support.<sup>166</sup>

In addition to previously identified barriers for women in land passenger transport, women in road passenger transport employment are faced with particular issues, such as lone working, high informal employment rates and insufficient regulation of the sector which poses increased risks for women, especially in parts of the Global South.<sup>167</sup>

For example, women's employment in urban road passenger transport is mainly 'informal', marked by a lack of written contracts, job security, social protection and fundamental rights, which disproportionately affects women who are overrepresented in the most precarious and low-paid service roles such as cleaning, vending

and catering.<sup>168</sup> In Africa, for example, the informal urban passenger transport sector in countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal or Uganda operates under a 'target system', where most drivers are informally employed by vehicle owners.<sup>169</sup> Women dependent on this type of tourism employment earn significantly less than men and face compounded challenges, especially migrant women, including exclusion from higher-paying roles like vehicle crew positions, male-dominated service areas and widespread sexual harassment from vehicle owners, coworkers and passengers.<sup>170</sup>

The gig economy<sup>171</sup> – characterized by temporary, short-term and often freelance work arranged through digital platforms like Uber, Lyft or Grab – offers flexible employment opportunities that can enhance women's economic empowerment in the transport sector.<sup>172</sup> While there is very limited data on driver demographics in the literature,<sup>173</sup> research shows that the gig economy is particularly appealing to women balancing paid work with disproportionate caregiving responsibilities.<sup>174</sup> In India, for instance, workers engaged in the gig economy are expected to grow to 23.5 million workers by 2030.<sup>175</sup> An International Finance Corporation's survey across six countries found that platform-based work has enabled more women to enter traditionally male-dominated roles such as taxi driving.<sup>176</sup> Ride-sharing platforms such as Grab in the Philippines and PickMe in Sri Lanka

166 International Association of Public Transport (2025), Global Employment in Urban Public Transport, UITP, Brussels, available at: <https://www.uitp.org> [11-07-2025].

167 Maina, E.F.N.; Onyango, G. and Magutu, J.M. (2025), 'Women as Motorcycle Taxi Operators in Kenya: Is the Public Transportation Sector in Africa becoming more gender-inclusive?', available through Research Square, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-6951210/v1>.

168 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, p. 18, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

169 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Understanding informal transport in Africa: Labour impact assessments as tools to improve workers' conditions*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

170 International Transport Workers' Federation (2024), *Understanding informal transport in Africa: Labour impact assessments as tools to improve workers' conditions*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

171 The United Nations does not have one single, universally recognized definition of gig economy. Gig economy generally refers to a labour market characterized by temporary, short-term and often freelance work arranged through digital platforms. Consult for details:

United Nations – Department for Economic and Social Affairs (2021), *UN/DESA Policy Brief #113: Digitally enabled new forms of work and policy implications for labour regulation frameworks and social protection systems*, UN DESA, New York, available at: <https://policy.desa.un.org> [12-02-2026].

172 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

173 Chen, M.K. et al. (2020), 'Suppliers and Demanders of Flexibility: The Demographics of Gig Work', available at: <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:215734914> [12-03-2026].

174 Wright, T. (2018), 'The impact of the future of work for women in public transport: Executive summary', ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org>.

175 Shah, S. and Khan, P.R (2024), 'How to increase the representation of women in the transport sector', blog, published on 25 March 2024, Asian Development Bank, online available at: <https://blogs.adb.org> [04-05-2025].

176 International Finance Corporation and Uber Technologies (2018), 'Driving toward equality: Women, ride-hailing, and the sharing economy', IFC, Washington D.C./San Francisco, online available at: <https://www.ifc.org> [08-05-2025].

are advancing women's participation in the transport workforce through targeted initiatives that create new pathways to economic empowerment.<sup>177</sup>

However, the gig economy often fails to deliver genuinely adaptable working conditions, and not all women benefit equally from the opportunities – with working class women gaining the least benefit, particularly those needing full time work.<sup>178</sup> Drivers may face penalties for rejecting rides and must work extended hours to earn a sustainable income.<sup>179</sup> Women face additional barriers, including unequal access to vehicle ownership, financing and digital tools. The demands of long, late shifts – often necessary for profitability – conflict with caregiving responsibilities and heighten the risks of violence and harassment. Algorithmic biases can also reinforce gender inequality, and digital platforms impose new forms of control that contribute to a stressful work environment. A study of Uber drivers in the United States of America found that male drivers earn, on average, 7% more than their women counterparts.<sup>180</sup>

While some regulations seek to address the structural challenges of gig work, such as the European Union Platform Workers Directive,<sup>181</sup> the impact of such measures has yet to become clear. To guide such efforts, ITF has proposed a set of employer principles targeting the root causes of precarity in the platform economy. These include:<sup>182</sup>

- Ensuring occupational health and safety – particularly protection from violence and harassment;
- Accurate classification of employment status to eliminate disguised employment;

- A guaranteed labour protection floor embedded into platform algorithms;
- Timely payment of living wages including full tips;
- Human oversight and accountability for software design and impacts;
- Fair and transparent digital contracts;
- Full rights over personal data;
- Gender-responsive algorithms to eliminate bias in pay and safety outcomes; and
- Universal access to social protections such as healthcare, pensions and insurance.

Despite the multiple barriers and challenges women experience, the present publication identified several initiatives to increase women participation in road passenger transport.

177 Shah, S. and Khan, P.R (2024), 'How to increase the representation of women in the transport sector', blog, published on 25 March 2024, Asian Development Bank, online available at: <https://blogs.adb.org> [04-05-2025].

178 Wright, T. (2018), 'The impact of the future of work for women in public transport: Executive summary', ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org>.

179 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

180 Cook, C. et al. (2018), 'The gender earnings gap in the gig economy: Evidence from over a million rideshare drivers', National Bureau of Economic Research, NBER, Cambridge, DOI: 10.3386/w24732.

181 European Parliament and European Council (2024), *Directive (EU) 2024/2831 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 on improving working conditions in platform work*, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/> [01-04-2026].

182 International Transport Workers' Federation (2021), 'The principles for the gig economy', ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [08-05-2025].

### Case study 3.5: **Uber initiatives and the ‘ITF/Uber Global Courier Charter on Safety and Health’**

Uber is a technology platform that offers users road passenger transport services. In Q4 2023, 6.8 million people used the service platform to earn globally. According to Uber, 15% of their drivers and delivery couriers worldwide are female; in the United States of America their number climbs to 18% of drivers, and 31% of drivers doing both ridesharing and delivery are female. (This information includes only locations where gender data is available.)

In terms of gender-equity engagement, according to the *Uber 2024 Environmental, Social and Governance Report*, the company is committed to **equal pay for equal work**, regularly reviews their pay practices, and commits to the principles of equal employment opportunity, inclusion, and respect. The company also declares a strong commitment to **safety** for both drivers and riders. In the United States of America the company is currently launching a Women Preferences product, designed to give women riders and drivers more choice and increase safety. Initially borne out of the Women Rider Preference in Saudi Arabia in 2019, which has since expanded into 40 countries, the initiative will see women drivers have the opportunity to request trips with women riders only, including during peak earning hours like evenings.

Uber’s recognition that social dialogue and trade unions play a key role in advancing working conditions and workers’ rights including safety and health as a fundamental right is particularly noteworthy.

As part of the commitment to increase gender-equality and safety in transport, Uber and ITF signed a Memorandum of Understanding, the *ITF–Uber Global Courier Charter on Safety and Health*, that outlines several core principles:

- Reducing risks;
- Listening to couriers;
- Partnering with experts;
- Promoting safe riding and driving;
- Mitigating fatigue;
- Interpersonal safety and well-being, including working free of unacceptable behaviours and practices such as discrimination, threats of physical harm, and gender-based violence and harassment;
- Post-incident support; and
- Recognition of industry standards.

Sources: Elsesser, K. (2025), ‘Uber to let female passengers and drivers opt for women-only rides’, published 24 July 2025, Forbes, available at: <https://www.forbes.com> [12-02-2026].

Uber (2024), *Uber 2024 Environmental, Social and Governance Report*, Uber, San Francisco, available at: <https://www.uber.com> [01-04-2026].

International Transport Workers’ Federation and Uber (2024), *ITF–Uber Global Charter on Courier Safety and Health*, ITF and Uber, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [02-05-2025].



Female motorcycle taxi driver, Uganda. © ITF

### Snapshot 3.1: **Getting more women into car passenger transport jobs**

#### **Linea Lila – Bolivia**

Linea Lila's 'Mujeres al volante' (Women at the steering wheel), based in Bolivia, is a women-led public transportation initiative that provides safety and independence for about 80 women working as taxi drivers. As many of these women have been subjected to abuse and violence, Linea Lila not only provides driving lessons, but also runs courses on women's rights and legal advice and supports women in coping with the psychological effects of abuse.

Source: Johnson, S. (2024), 'Women at the wheel: the female taxi services bringing safety and independence to Bolivian travel', published 3 December 2024, *The Guardian*, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com> [12-02-2026].

#### **O Taxi – Oman**

In 2022, O Taxi from Oman introduced O Female, a new taxi service exclusively for female drivers. The service has become a significant driver for women's employment by supporting women's financial independence. It quickly gained popularity amongst female passengers in the country's capital and major Omani cities.

Source: Times News Service (2024), 'O Female becomes a game changer for Omani women taxi drivers', published 28 October 2024, *Times of Oman*, online available at: <https://www.timesofoman.com> [12-02-2026].

#### **Ministry for Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Ministry of Tourism – Japan**

Since 2014, the Road Transport Bureau within Japan's Ministry for Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism has been working on bringing more women into the automobile transport industries, including taxi services and taxi certifications. In a response to rural economic revitalization needs, and country-wide de-population challenges and labour shortages, the Basic Plan for Transport Policy set out to double the number of women drivers from 6,700 in 2013 to 14,000 in 2020.

Source: World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations, prepared for the purpose of this publication. Further details available in annex 1 and annex 3.

## 3.5

# Conclusions

Women are severely under-represented in both the railway and road passenger transport industries, representing only 11% and 3% respectively, and 3%<sup>183</sup> in land passenger transport combined. Amongst other factors, obstacles for gaining equality include:

- Persistent gender stereotypes;
- Unsafe working environments and health concerns;
- Biased recruitment practices;
- Work and societal environments shaped by male-dominated cultures;
- Unequal pay;
- Insufficient consideration of women's needs in work scheduling;
- Inadequate access to sanitary facilities;
- Limited opportunities for training, education, and career advancement;
- Higher levels of job insecurity; and
- Automation of roles predominantly held by women.

In addition, in some countries, legal restrictions continue to constrain women's participation in land passenger transport employment. The extremely low share of women in road passenger transport (3%) might be partly explained by high informality and insufficient regulations in some global regions, but also because land transport is generally being perceived as a high-risk occupation and typically male-dominated occupation unsuitable for women.

While progress is slow, international and business specific initiatives exist that are examples of good practice and that might be worth considering in other passenger transport industries. These include the:

- 'Women in Rail' network;
- Ambitious targets and actions towards improving gender equality from Deutsche Bahn and Renfe;
- Union research and advocacy on women in transport;
- World Bank initiative 'She Drives Change'; as well as
- Uber activities to increase the safety of women drivers.

A major issue identified in all parts of this report, but specifically regarding data on women in land passenger transport, is the fragmented and limited availability of sex-disaggregated data. Such data is urgently needed for policymakers and businesses alike to develop informed, targeted and impactful programmes to increase the participation of women in land passenger transport. Land passenger transport industry stakeholders should collaborate to enable access to meaningful, safe, secure and fair work for women by designing working environments that are conducive to women's needs, as well as providing sufficient resources and support. Detailed recommendations are outlined in section 5.2.

<sup>183</sup> While there is a higher proportion of people working in rail passenger transport who are women than in road passenger transport in countries and territories with available data, this is not reflected in the combined (rail and road) proportion due to the huge majority of land passenger transport workers being situated in road passenger transport. All calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2



## 04. Water passenger transport

**Summary:** This chapter details the analysis of global and regional statistics, working environment and career progression, and highlights initiatives that support women in water passenger transport.

**Key messages:**

- Women make up 12% of the water passenger transport industry in countries and territories with available data.
- Only 3% of cruise captains are women, and women remain severely under-represented in operational, technical and managerial positions.
- A lack of role models, the often-remote locations, insufficient support and gender biases means women face disadvantages in recruitment, retention and career advancement.

**Key words:** Water passenger transport | global maritime workforce | cruise industry | entry barriers | non-gender aware facilities

# 4.1

## Data overview

### 4.1.1 Statistical overview

Water passenger transport<sup>184</sup> includes shipping tourists and holidaymakers through cruise ships, ferries, and inland waterways. In 2024, the cruise sector reached an all time high, generating approximately USD 40 billion in global revenue, predicted to surpass USD 50 billion USD by 2028.<sup>185</sup> The cruise industry alone supported 1.6 million jobs in 2023 globally,<sup>186</sup> and employs the largest share of women working in the wider maritime sector, with most of them working in the services domain on cruise and passenger ships.<sup>187</sup> However, women encounter major barriers in accessing, staying and progressing in the industry due to gender biases and insufficient structures to meet women's needs.

The available data indicates that women represent 12% of people working in the water passenger industry, making it the second largest proportion of women working between the different passenger transport industries. Notably, in some countries that have data

available, namely Argentina, Monaco, Poland and the United Kingdom, percentages of employed women approach or exceed equality in the water passenger transport, whereas in several countries women in water passenger transport are almost completely absent or data is not available.

Several barriers for women in water passenger transport might influence gender disparity across the industry. For example, cruise and ferry jobs often require specific maritime training, sea-time and placement opportunities. Additionally, ILO has identified discrimination against women seafarers in the selection process for cadets and other related entry barriers.<sup>188</sup> Bullying and harassment are identified as concern for women at sea. Moreover, gender-blind onboard policies and facilities act as barriers for women's recruitment and retention, including lack of appropriately fitting personal protective equipment (PPE) and uniforms, inadequate physical and mental health provisions, and weak maternity and pregnancy protections.<sup>189</sup>

184 Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

For further details see annex 1 Methodology.

185 Statista (2025), 'Cruise industry worldwide – statistics & facts', Statista, New York, available at: <https://www.statista.com> [26-11-2025].

186 Cruise Lines International Association (2025), *State of the Cruise Industry Report 2025*, CLIA, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://cruising.org> [29-01-2026].

187 Guo, J.-L. and Liang, G.-S. (2012), 'Sailing into rough seas: Taiwan's women seafarers' career development struggle', *Women's Studies International Forum*, volume 35(4), pp. 194–202, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2012.03.016>.

188 International Labour Organization (2019), *Sectoral Meeting on the Recruitment and Retention of Seafarers and the Promotion of Opportunities for Women Seafarers*, 25 February – 1 March 2019, ILO, Geneva, online available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [30-01-2026].

Note that although this ILO source refers to seafarers in general and not specifically to tourism or passenger transport, it is still relevant as it includes valuable sex-disaggregated data.

189 International Transport Workers' Federation (n.d.), 'Women's Health and Wellbeing', ITF, London, online available at: <https://www.itfseafarers.org/en> [01-04-2025].

Figure 4.1:

**Proportion of people working in tourism transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**

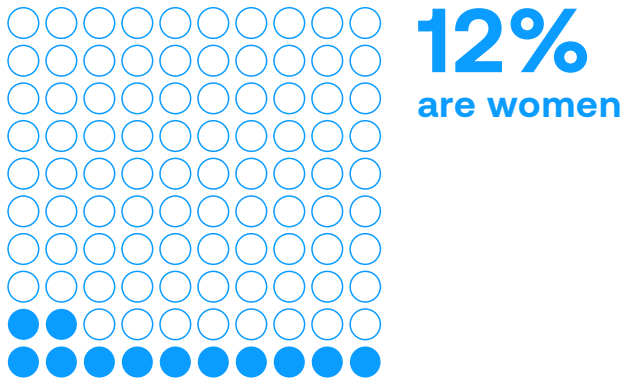
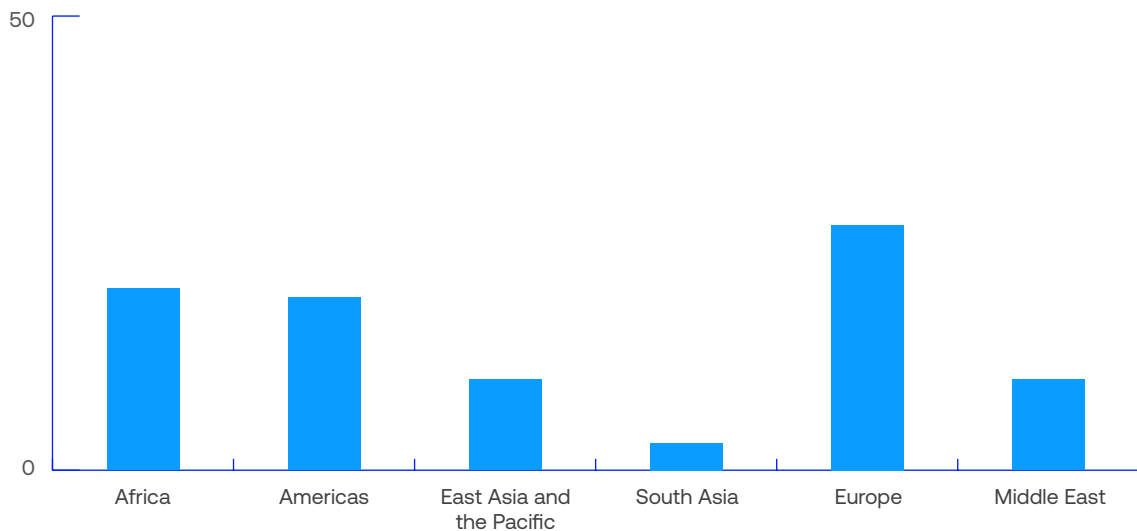


Figure 4.2: **Regional trends: Proportion of people working in water passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)**



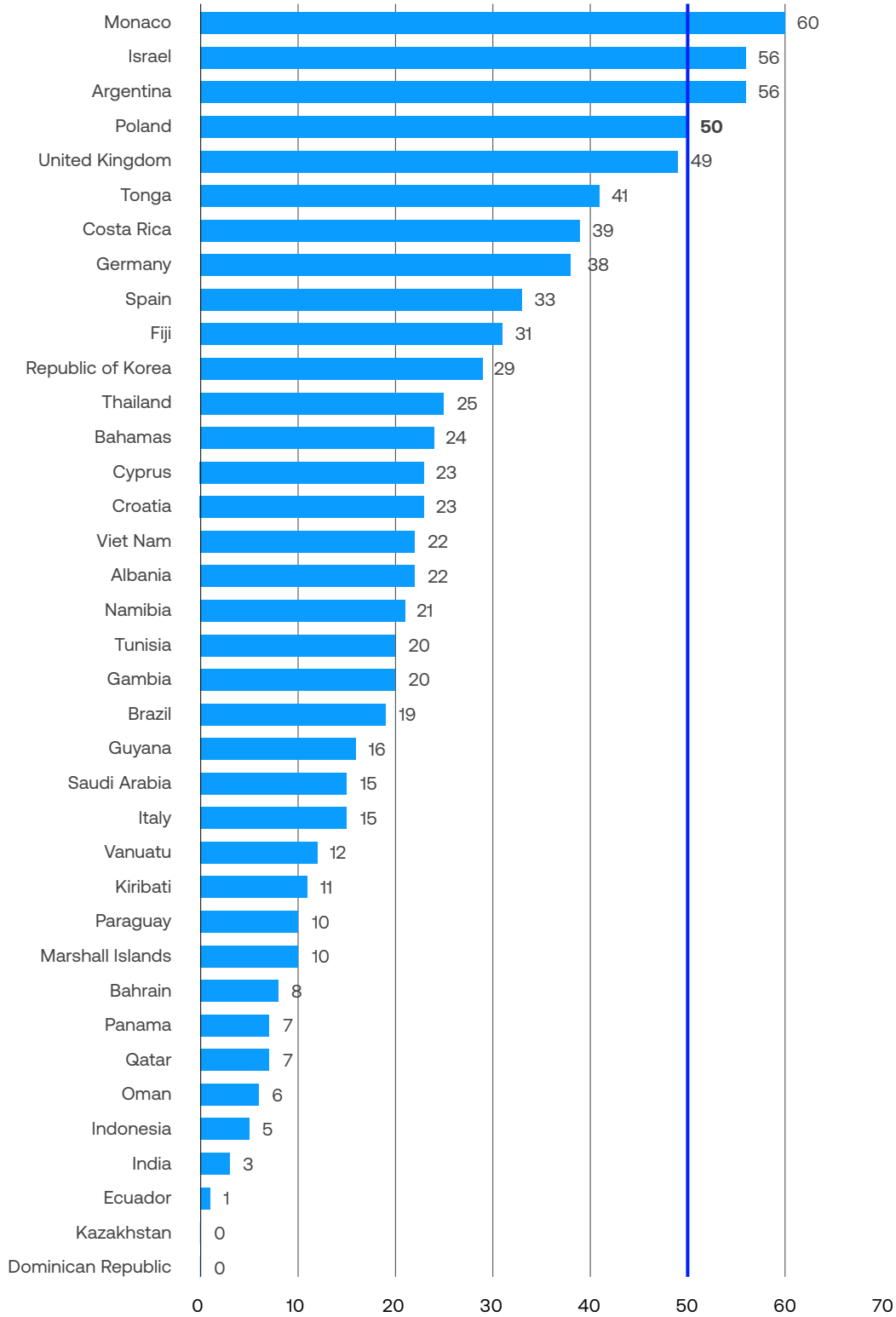
Notes for figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025) :

54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Notes for figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations. Source data available in Annex 2.

Figure 4.3: Proportion of people working in water passenger transport who are women, in countries and territories with available data (%)



https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284427635 - Sunday, June 28, 2026 4:14:29 AM - IP Address:62.74.10.176

## 4.1.2 Regional trends

Regional trends for countries and territories with available data show a wide variation in women participation in water passenger transport. While no regions show gender-parity in workforce, the European region has the highest proportion of women workers followed closely by the African region. East Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and the Middle East have similarly low amounts of women working in water passenger transport and in South Asia women are almost absent entirely from the industry

Research suggests that women's low participation might be rooted in gender stereotypes, the physical demands of seafaring roles, inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for women, non-gender aware onboard and harbour facilities and long shifts that often conflict with family and caring responsibilities. Additionally, limited role models and outreach to potential new female entrants limit awareness and recruitment.<sup>190</sup> These barriers are compounded by cultural norms, gender biases and constraints around women's participation in the workforce outside their domestic environment, which is pronounced in some regions of the Global South, in particular the countries of South Asia.<sup>191</sup>

## 4.1.3 Working environment and career progression

The scarce available data shows large discrepancies in the roles occupied by women. More women tend to work in administrative and support roles compared to technical and managerial positions. This picture mirrors the wider maritime sector, where organizational and societal expectations on the roles women should occupy, as well as limited mentoring and STEM education for technical roles hinder women from progressing.<sup>192</sup>

A recent survey by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA International) found that women remain significantly underrepresented in the wider global maritime workforce, accounting for an average of just 16%.<sup>193</sup> While the cruise sector continues to grow, survey data from 2024 shows that the share of women in the cruise sector dropped from 57% in 2021 to only 5% in 2024,<sup>194</sup> which is below the 12% of women found in all forms of water passenger transport based on the available national data analysed in this report.

Previous research shows that of the 314 cruise ship captains worldwide only 9 are women, making it just under 3%, similar to the percentage of airline captains. However, there are some notable exception: in the United Kingdom numbers stand out with 22% of sea-going cruise ship captains being women.<sup>195</sup> The percentage of women on cruise company boards stands at 21%, which is significantly below the overall maritime industry's average at 34%. Mid-management level positions are occupied by only 18% of women in the cruise industry, compared to 20% in maritime overall. Factors that might influence this include heightened scrutiny towards

190 World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

191 Kurshitashvili, N. (2025), *Addressing barriers to women's participation in transport: Global, ECA, and MENA perspectives*, Mobility and Transport Connectivity Series, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099010925132542721> [22-05-2025].

192 World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

193 El Achkar, S. (2024), *Beneath the surface: Analyzing the maritime workforce*, ILO, Geneva, available at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org> [14-05-2025].

194 <https://wistainternational.com/International> Maritime Organization and WISTA International (2024), *IMO-WISTA Women in Maritime Survey 2024*, IMO, London, available at: <https://www.imo.org/en> [12-02-2026].

195 Reyes, L. (n.d.) 'There are as many Female Cruise Ship Captains as Female Airline Captains!', news, WISTA UK, London, available at: <https://www.wista-uk.net/https://www.wista-uk.net/there-are-as-many-female-cruise-ship-captains-as-female-airline-captains/> [26-01-2026].

women's leadership abilities in maritime occupations and requirements for long deployment at sea to progress, that often conflict with family responsibilities<sup>196</sup>.

Other studies show a more positive picture but provide limited insight into the specific roles women occupy.

According to the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the cruise industry accounts for 94% of women seafarers, 50% of women in cruise hold mid-level

positions and almost 40% senior leadership roles in cruise are occupied by women.<sup>197</sup>

Data on women's employment in inland waterway transport is very limited. This is likely due to the structure of the sector, which is largely composed of small, often family-run businesses that may not consistently report workforce statistics, particularly disaggregated by gender.<sup>198</sup>

#### Snapshot 4.1: **Towards gender equality in water passenger transport – ferry operators**

##### **Viking Line: Women in management positions**

Viking Line is a ferry operator carrying 4,9 million ferry passengers in the Baltic Sea annually. It is the largest maritime employer in Finland with a total of 2,401 employees, of which:

- 41.7% of total employees are women; and
- 25.2% of management positions are held by women.

Source: Viking Line (2023), *Sustainability Report 2023*, Viking Line Abp, Åland, available at: <https://www.vikingline.com> [12-02-2026].

##### **Balearia: Promoting female talent**

Balearia is a Spanish based company with 43 vessels and 2,600 employees, ferrying 5,6 million passengers between mainland Spain and the Balearic and Canary Islands, Ceuta, and Melilla.

- 43% of total employees are women, but this rate drops to 16% in the fleet workforce; and
- 5% in bridge and engine room positions are women.

To counteract this trend, Balearia has introduced a plan to promote female talent with the aim to increase the percentage of women in bridge and engine room roles to 15 % by 2030. To achieve this goal, it has developed a programme aimed at female bridge and engine room students, a communication and dissemination plan, and is coordinating activities with organizations like WISTA International and the International Maritime Organization.

Source: Balearia (2026), *Sustainability Report 2025*, Balearia, Dénia, available at: <https://www.balearia.com> [01-04-2026].

196 World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

197 Cruise Lines International Association (n.d.), *An ocean of opportunities*, CLIA, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://europe.cruising.org/economy/> [01-04-2026].

198 European Commission: Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, ISI-Fraunhofer, ECORYS, PwC and Panteia (2019), *Business case to increase female employment in transport*, European Union, Luxembourg, DOI: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2832/93598>.

Case study 4.1: **Carnival Corporation & Plc – Supporting women careers at sea through networks and mentoring**

Carnival Corporation is a cruise company that carried approximately 13.5 million passengers across their fleet of over 90 ships in 2024. It has around 160,000 employees globally, of which:

- 19% of shipboard full-time employees are women;
- 30% of shipboard hotel department employees are women;
- 58% of shoreside full-time employees are women;
- 36% of shoreside employees are women in non-director senior management and company secretary roles; and
- 36.4% of board members are women.

According to its *2024 Sustainability Report*, Carnival Corporation invests in programmes focussed on breaking down barriers for female shipboard representation across all ranks and departments for women officers seeking a career at sea where they can grow and excel through the following initiatives:

- Carnival's Our Women Officer Network (W.O.N), launched in 2023, is a platform and resource for over 1,200 officers, providing mentoring opportunities, professional development resources and a supportive community where members can share experiences and navigate the unique challenges of building a maritime career;
- Through webinars, seminars and networking events, W.O.N. facilitates knowledge exchange and career advancement while creating visibility for women in leadership positions across our cruise lines;
- A formal mentoring programme launched in June 2024 has resulted in a group of 62 pairs of mentors and mentees; and
- W.O.N. received the Seatrade Cruise Award for Investment in People.

Source: Carnival Corporation & Plc (2025), *Doing Business Responsibly from Ship to Shore – 2024 Sustainability Report*, Carnival Corporation & Plc, Miami, available at: <https://www.carnivalcorp.com> [12-02-2026].

Snapshot 4.2: **Carol C. Makuwire and Wild Horizons, Zimbabwe**

Carol C. Makuwire works for Wild Horizons, a Zimbabwe-based tour operator that runs cruises along the Zambezi River. After entering the company in a more junior role, Carol sought the opportunity to become a boat captain and further her career. The business supported her ambition and provided training for her and all staff who wanted the chance, as part of their commitment to equal opportunities in their corporate-social responsibility (CSR) programme.

Carol reflects on how perception, not ability, was the real barrier: "It always seemed like a very serious job only old men can do."

She now advocates for proactive outreach, so girls can see these roles as genuine career options – not exceptions.

Her story proves that when organisations commit to inclusion through CSR and lifelong learning, women don't just participate in tourism, they have the chance to lead it.

Source: Interview conducted in May 2026 with Carol C. Makuwire, River Cruise Captain, Wild Horizons, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

## 4.2

# Key findings and observations

Findings from the very limited data for water passenger transport show significant gender equality gaps. Women only occupy 12% of the different roles of the industry in countries and territories with available data, largely in land-based and service positions, with severe gaps in managerial and technical roles. These findings echo wider concerns about gender equality in water passenger transport employment and highlight the urgent need for addressing persistent employment barriers for women.

That the cruise industry is missing out on talent also has wider business implications: the sector experiences an ongoing talent post-COVID crisis, with an estimated 20,000 vacancies unfilled in 2025, predicted to reach 75,000 open vacancies by 2036 to support growing cruise capacity.<sup>199</sup> This shortage of workers presents an opportunity for women wanting to begin careers in water passenger transport, but will require concerted efforts by the cruise industry to attract and retain female talent. In addition, if not addressed, the consequences of unfilled vacancies might include increased pressure on existing workers, decreased service quality and operational disruptions.

However, a recent World Bank report highlighted that women in water transport face specific barriers, including safety concerns due to remote port locations, inappropriate PPE, gender-based violence and harassment, increased scrutiny towards women's leadership and technical abilities, and working schedules and progression paths that can conflict with family responsibilities. Additionally, policy restrictions in some countries on occupying certain roles, limited access to networks and mentoring, and a lack of information and outreach efforts to recruit women exacerbate inequalities.<sup>200</sup>

Some encouraging initiatives of how the industry is addressing gender equality in water passenger transport are presented in the several case studies and snapshots within this chapter.

199 Navis Consulting (2025), 'The Cruise Industry's Fight For Talent: Can Staffing Keep Up With Demand?', Navis, Portsmouth, available at: <https://navis-consulting.com> [12-02-2026].

200 World Bank Group (2025), 'She Drives Change: Empowering Women in Transport', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., available at: <https://www.worldbank.org> [22-04-2025].

## Case study 4.2:

**WISTA International – Women in Maritime**

Women's networks and associations play a vital role in supporting female professionals and fostering greater gender inclusivity. Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA) is an international networking organization with about 5,200 members across 62 national associations around the world. Their mission is to attract and support women in the maritime, trading and logistics sectors. Its focus areas include:

- Professional development;
- Supporting women in leadership roles;
- Global network building;
- Enhancing women education, including scholarships; and
- Events and knowledge share.

A notable initiative is the Maritime Women's Leadership and Empowerment training course offered by IMO and WISTA International, along with the World Maritime University (WMU). The course is designed to promote gender equity, by addressing existing barriers and equipping participants with advanced strategic management skills. It aims to foster confidence, self-awareness and professional growth, while promoting knowledge-sharing, networking and collaboration among women in the industry.

Source: International Maritime Organization and WISTA International (2024), IMO-WISTA Women in Maritime Survey 2024, IMO, London, available at: <https://www.imo.org/en> [12-02-2026]. <https://wistainternational.com/>

## 4.3

# Conclusions

Women participation in water passenger transport is low, particular in managerial and technical positions. Only 12% of persons employed in water passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data, and they occupy less managerial and leadership positions than men. In addition to previously identified challenges that women face in tourism transport, the lack of women's participation and inequality in water passenger transport is exaggerated due to industry specific challenges, endemic gender biases and weak or absent policies to protect and support women in forging careers in the industry, especially in seafaring and senior roles. Nonetheless, examples of progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment, including expanded women's networks, and education, mentoring and leadership initiatives exist, demonstrating that change towards achieving gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment is possible.

Based on the findings and the overall limited sex-disaggregated data identified throughout this report, actionable recommendations are presented in chapter 5.2 of this report.



# 05. Conclusions and recommendations

## Key findings:

- Women are under-represented in all of tourism transport's component passenger transport industries.
- The smallest passenger transport industry (air) has the highest proportion of women in the workforce, whereas the largest passenger transport industry (land) has the lowest participation:
  - **36%** of persons working in air passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data. While this is the largest fraction of women working among the passenger transport industries, air transport accounts for only 2% of tourism transport employment in countries and territories with available data.
  - **3%** of persons working in land passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data. This is by far the lowest fraction of women working among the passenger transport industries, yet land transport accounts for 96% of tourism transport employment in countries and territories with available data.
  - **12%** of persons working in water passenger transport are women in countries and territories with available data. Water transport accounts for 2% of tourism transport employment in countries and territories with available data.
- Women face significant challenges and barriers in the realization of gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in tourism transport employment that require urgent action across the following key thematic areas (see recommendations in section 6.2):
  - Gender-responsive laws, corporate policies and social protection;
  - Health, safety and working environments;
  - Education, training, career progression and leadership;
  - Measuring, monitoring and reporting; and
  - Collaborations and partnerships.

# 5.1

## Conclusions

This report highlights that women are underrepresented in all tourism transport industries,<sup>201</sup> progress is uneven, and major challenges to achieve gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment in the tourism transport sector persist. Poor working conditions prevail, and women are continually disadvantaged by insufficient workplace arrangements, gender biases, gender-based violence and harassment, a lack of training and educational initiatives to achieve gender equality in tourism transport, and insufficient organizational structures and regulatory provisions. All of these contribute to low attraction, recruitment and retention and limited career progression for women. Addressing these issues is a shared responsibility of all tourism transport stakeholders and will produce benefits for the wider tourism workforce, businesses and governments alike.

A key finding from this report is that **sex-disaggregated and standardized data is critically important** for the development of evidence-based policies and programmes to strengthen the contribution of the tourism sector to the achievement of gender equality, women's empowerment and decent work as envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For businesses, there is enough evidence that shows that reliable sex-disaggregated data is needed to informed decision-making, and that gender equality makes business sense.

To **address existing inequalities** and accelerate progress toward gender equality, decent and dignified work and women's empowerment, national governments, businesses, unions and other key stakeholders are

urged to make more and concerted efforts to create the conditions for women in tourism transport to thrive.

Based on the findings within this report, a set of recommendations have been developed (see section 5.2) to encourage and support tourism transport stakeholders to strengthen women's employment and equal opportunities and promote decent, safe and dignified work in the passenger transport sectors globally.

The recommendations are in-line with the objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and are designed to contribute towards the achievement of the following Sustainable Development Goals:



**Good health and well-being.**



**Gender equality**



**Decent work and economic growth**



**Reduced inequalities**



**Peace, justice and strong institutions**



**Partnerships for the goals**

<sup>201</sup> Tourism transport in this report refers to the following ISIC Rev. 4 tourism industry categories: Railway passenger transport (4911), Road passenger transport (4922), Water passenger transport (5011, 5021) and Air passenger transport (5110) as defined in: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

For further details see annex 1 Methodology.

Offering courses and formal learning with experts in the field is critical for women to understand how to tackle issues they face in the workplace.<sup>202</sup> Given that safe access to decent sanitation facilities is the most frequently reported issue women workers face in the transport sector, the ITF has developed a Transport Workers' Sanitation Charter,<sup>203</sup> which provides guidance on action that employers and governments should consider to ensure safe access to decent toilets and sanitation for transport workers.<sup>204</sup>



Chief Pilot Elizabeth Vavashe and her colleagues from the Zambezi Helicopter Company, Zimbabwe. © UN Tourism

#### Snapshot 5.1:

#### Collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) ITF Kenya

ITF Women Representatives in Africa, the Kenya Hotels and Allied Workers' Union (KHAWU) and the Affiliate National Coordinating Committee (NCC), successfully negotiated and signed CBAs supporting gender equality with several tourism companies (e.g., Atua Engop Africa Ltd, Mahali Mzuri Management Ltd and Basecamp Explorer Ltd).

Key impacts from the extended provisions for maternity leave, stillbirth leave, and breastfeeding time provisions show that family-friendly labour provisions have delivered both social and economic benefits, with positive results for workers, trade unions and employers alike, such as:

- Improved health and well-being of mothers and infants, due to better maternity protection and breastfeeding support;
- Enhanced gender equality, equity and empowerment of women in the workplace, strengthening their rights and participation;
- Reduced absenteeism and staff turnover among female employees, contributing to workforce stability;
- Increased employee morale, loyalty and productivity, as workers feel more supported and protected;
- Strengthened trust and relationships between workers, the Trade Union, and management; and
- Positive business outcomes, with companies and hotel owners reportedly experiencing higher profits as a result of improved workforce motivation and retention.

Source: Interview conducted with Morriner Mangoja, KHAWU, Kenya and ITF Women Transport Workers' Committee Member.

202 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

203 For more information, consult: International Transport Workers' Federation (2019), *Transport Workers' Sanitation Charter*, ITF, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/resources/itf-sanitation-charter> [18-03-2026].

204 International Transport Workers' Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

**Barriers could also be effectively addressed through trade unions** who play a critical role in implementing gender equality and decent work in tourism employment.<sup>205</sup> Their involvement can include social impact assessments, implementation of ILO conventions, advocacy and training for gender-equality assessments, women networks and alliances, the development and systematic use of sex-disaggregated data,<sup>206</sup> and negotiation of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) to ensure the needs of women transport workers are met.<sup>207</sup>

### Harnessing opportunities for achieving gender-equality and decent work in tourism transport employment

In accordance with its commitment to SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and SDG 8 (economic growth and decent work), UN Tourism collaborates with the public and private sectors, civil society and trade unions to address the challenges women and people working in the tourism sector face, also in the transport industry.<sup>208</sup> In this regard, mainstreaming gender, namely the “process of assessing

the implications for women and men of any planned action, in all areas and at all levels”, with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality is critical.<sup>209</sup> To achieve this, UN Tourism has developed guidelines to assist both the public sector and businesses in better addressing the needs of women by integrating gender mainstreaming in all programmatic internal decisions and operations.<sup>210</sup> Specifically, UN Tourism seeks to bring gender equality to the forefront of the transport sector, promoting women’s empowerment and encouraging member states to mainstream gender issues in their respective transport policies. UN Tourism has collaborated with other organizations in the development of several statistic standards for measuring tourism:

- The *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008* (IRTS 2008),<sup>211</sup>
- The *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008* (TSA:RMF 2008);<sup>212</sup> and
- The *Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism* (SF-MST),<sup>213</sup> which has recently agreed an extended set of employment indicators.

205 <https://www.itfglobal.org/Winchenbach>, A.; Zientara, P. and Adamska, J. (2025), *Unions as agents for institutionalisation of labour-centred social sustainability in tourism*, preprint (version 1), SocArXiv. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/356nb\\_v1](https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/356nb_v1).

206 International Transport Workers’ Federation and the International Union of Food, Agriculture, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations (2024), *WHY THE S IN ESG MATTERS: SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM*, ITF/IUF, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [04-05-2025].

207 International Transport Workers’ Federation (2022), *Women in public transport – Policy*, ITF, London, available at <https://www.itfglobal.org> [11-05-2025].

208 World Tourism Organization (n.d.), ‘Women’s empowerment and tourism’, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int> [22-05-2025].

209 World Tourism Organization (2022), *Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for the Public Sector in Tourism*, UN Tourism, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284423248>.

210 World Tourism Organization (2022), *Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for the Public Sector in Tourism*, UN Tourism, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284423248>.

World Tourism Organization (2022), *Gender-inclusive Strategy for Tourism Businesses*, UN Tourism, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284423262>.

211 United Nations (2010), *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*, UN, New York, available at: [www.e-unwto.org](http://www.e-unwto.org) [11-02-2026]

212 United Nations; Commission of the European Communities; Eurostat; World Tourism Organization and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010), *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008*, UN, New York, available at: [www.e-unwto.org](http://www.e-unwto.org) [11-02-2026].

213 World Tourism Organization (n.d.), ‘Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST)’, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/> [18-07-2025].

Each of these standards recommends producing sex-disaggregated statistics on employment in the different component industries of the tourism sector. Further, UN Tourism is currently developing an ESG Framework for Tourism Businesses, aiming to harmonize how tourism businesses measure and report their ESG impacts, including gender equality and decent work.<sup>214</sup> This project can act as a catalyst for increasing transparency in measuring and reporting, and for closing the corporate data gaps on women in tourism transport, which will be an important step towards improving women's participation and working conditions in tourism transport.

#### Snapshot 5.2: **ITF Tourism Services Section Committee**

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Tourism Services Section Committee is a formal governance mechanism comprised of ITF affiliates, which oversees the implementation of the agreed ITF Tourism Services Section work programme guided by the six ITF demands for change.

Under the demand 'Equality for all transport workers' the Committee prioritizes the realization of equality at all levels, including women, through advocacy for progressive equality rights legislation, global standard-setting, organizing, campaigning, collective bargaining, legal action, inclusive and democratic decision-making, representative leadership and ensuring meaningful integration of equality issues into the workplan priorities and representation within governance structures.

The globally representative structure of the Committee aims to ensure that women's perspectives are embedded in all elements of programme implementation and external representation. By embedding gender considerations within its governance framework, the Committee contributes to more inclusive decision-making and supports the development of gender-responsive strategies across tourism transport at national, regional and global levels.

As of December 2025, the composition of the Committee was as follows:

- Chair: Antigua and Barbuda Workers' Union, Antigua and Barbuda
- Co Vice-Chair: Japan Federation of Service and Tourism Industries Workers' Union, Japan
- Co Vice-Chair: General Workers' Union State Federation of Services, Mobility and Consumption, Spain
- Women Transport Workers' Representative: All India Railwaymen's Federation, India

Ordinary members include:

- Africa: Hotel Catering Tourism and Allied Workers Union of Zambia, Zambia;
- Arab World: Tourism, Hotel, Restaurant Workers Union, Morocco;
- Asia and the Pacific: National Union of Hospitality, Catering and Tourism Industries Employees, Fiji;
- Latin America: Dominican Tourist Taxi Drivers' Confederation Inc, Dominican Republic; and
- North America and the Caribbean: Unifor, Canada; St Lucia Seamen, Waterfront and General Workers' Trade Union, St Lucia; Seafarers' International Union, United States of America.

<sup>214</sup> World Tourism Organization (n.d.), 'ESG Framework for Tourism Businesses', UN Tourism, online available at: <https://www.untourism.int/> [13-02-2026].

## 5.2

# Recommendations and action points

This section provides a set of recommendations and action points that have been derived from this seminal study for advancing gender equality in passenger transport. In developing these recommendations specific to women in passenger transport, the report acknowledges and expands on the thematic structures of previous initiatives, frameworks and policies that address gender equality in transport, including:

- The ITF/International Association of Public Transport (UITP) *Positive Employer Gender Policy*,<sup>215</sup>
- The European Social Partners WISE project,<sup>216</sup>
- The ILO framework of women's career cycle in the transport sector; and<sup>217</sup>
- The Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST)<sup>218</sup> and the Women's Empowerment Principles by UN Women.<sup>219</sup>

Industry is called upon to take proactive measures to make gender equality and decent and dignified work in tourism transport a reality, including establishing quantifiable goals and statistics, implementing gender-conducive corporate and national laws and policies, healthy working environments, investing in training and educational programmes, incentivising and supporting businesses and holding them accountable, support research and knowledge share ,and creating strong partnerships.

Tourism can fully realize its potential for sustainable growth and innovation through gender equality, women's empowerment and decent work, but this requires global efforts, effective partnerships and collaboration. Structured by thematic areas and associated goals, key actions and responsibilities, the measures and recommendations shown in the table below could help overcome the significant barriers and achieve gender equality in the passenger transport and the wider tourism sector.

215 International Transport Workers' Federation and International Association of Public Transport (2019), *Positive employer gender policy*, ITF and UITP, London, available at: <https://www.itfglobal.org> [02-05-2025].

216 European Transport Workers' Federation and International Association of Public Transport (2011), *European comparative study on women's employment in urban public transport (WISE I)*, ETF, available at: <https://www.etf-europe.org/resource/european-comparative-study-on-womens-employment-in-urban-public-transport-wise-i/> [23-01-2026].

217 International Labour Organization (2013), *Women in the transport sector*, Transport Policy Brief 2013, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/> [30-11-2025].

218 World Tourism Organization (n.d.), 'UN Standards for Measuring Tourism', UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/> [18-07-2025].

219 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (n.d.), *Women's Empowerment Principles*, UN Women, New York, available at: <https://www.weeps.org> [04-05-2025].

# Linkages of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), shared prosperity and tourism

## Thematic area 1

### Gender-responsive laws, corporate policies and social protection

**Goal:** Gender-responsive laws, gendered corporate policies and social protection measures create institutional mechanisms for the advancement of gender equality, decent work and women’s empowerment in tourism transport employment.



Gender equality



Decent work and economic growth



Reduced inequalities



Peace, justice and strong institutions

## Actions

Adhere to international conventions, policies and frameworks relating gender equality and decent work, including ILO Conventions 100, 111, 156, 183, 190 and the UN Tourism Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics.

## Actors

- National governments
- Unions

Recognize the right for freedom of association, collective bargaining and engage in social dialogue.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Unions

Remove all legal restrictions on a woman’s ability to work in certain jobs in passenger transport or at specific times.

- National governments

Strengthen gender equality measures in corporate policy and governance in the passenger transport industries

- Private sector
- Unions

Engage with and enter collective bargaining agreements (CBA) and/or Memorandums of Understandings with unions.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Unions

Ensure universal access to social protections such as healthcare, pensions and insurance.

- National governments
- Private sector

https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284427635 - Sunday, June 28, 2026 4:14:29 AM - IP Address:62.74.10.176

## Thematic area 2

### Health, safety and working environments

**Goal:** Women having safe and healthy working environments helps to attract and retain female talent in tourism transport by ensuring that their needs are met, they feel safe and supported at work, are free of fear and harassment and have access to sanitary facilities and effective support services.



Health and well-being



Gender equality



Decent work

### Actions

Implement comprehensive policies that clearly define, prevent, address and prohibit gender-based violence and harassment in the passenger transport industries, including survivor-centred support and compensation measures.

Ensure safe access to decent sanitary facilities, sanitation systems and the ability to use them when needed.

Design working environments with women's safety in mind, including safety commuting to/from work, public transport access, lighting, emergency buttons, etc.

Ensure that health and safety reporting mechanisms are responsive, simple and include guarantees of confidentiality from retribution.

Provide incentives for businesses to make advancements in gender-equality and offer non-monetary benefits such as flexibility in working schedules, support for caring responsibilities and support for survivors of domestic violence.

### Actors

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Unions

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Unions

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Unions

- Private sector
- NGOs
- Unions

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities

**Thematic area 3**

**Education, training, career progression and leadership**

**Goal:** Education, training and awareness-raising help to attract future talent, support women’s career development and enable access to leadership positions in tourism transport.



Quality education)



Gender equality



Decent work

**Actions**

Increase girls’ and women’s access to education and training needed to enter the passenger transport sector, including STEM education.

**Actors**

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Educational institutions
- NGOs
- Unions

Strengthen outreach efforts and initiatives to attract women and girls to careers in passenger in transport, including from a young age.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Educational institutions
- Unions

Provide lifelong learning measures such as technical training, mentorship programmes and targeted support to enable women’s progression into more senior and higher paying roles.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Educational institutions
- Training providers
- Women’s networks
- Unions

Develop and implement initiatives that enable, and support women-led businesses, ownership and women’s entrepreneurship, for example through training and education, financial capital and grants and/or incentives and tax benefits.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Educational institutions
- Training providers
- Women’s networks
- Financial institutions
- Funding bodies

Adopt hiring practices to increase diversity, both by promoting gender equality with neutral job descriptions and by constituting diverse interview panels.

- Private sector
- Unions

Provide resources for gender-equality educational and awareness-raising programmes. Incentivize participation of men and boys.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Civil stakeholders
- Educational institutions
- Training providers
- Women’s networks
- Unions

https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284427635 - Sunday, June 28, 2026 4:14:29 AM - IP Address:62.74.10.176

## Thematic area 4

### Measuring, monitoring and reporting

**Goal:** Measuring, monitoring and reporting data on tourism transport are critically important to track performance, ensure compliance, manage risks and facilitate research that informs decision-making for improving gender equality, decent work and women's empowerment.



Quality education



Gender equality



Decent work



Reduced inequalities



Peace, justice and strong institutions



Partnerships for the goals

### Actions

Systematically produce and publish data that is disaggregated by sex on employment and use in the passenger transport industries in-line with the Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST).

Regularly report data disaggregated by sex on employment and use in the passenger transport industries to UN Tourism.

Monitor improvements on gender equality, decent work and operational health and safety by passenger transport businesses.

Implement social auditing mechanisms, including worker-led and third-party auditing.

Provide support and financing for research and knowledge share partnerships that can help to boost women's participation in passenger transport.

Increase visibility, communication and dissemination of research and examples of good practice for knowledge share and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.

### Actors

- National statistics authorities
- National transport authorities
- National tourism administrations
- Private sector
- Unions

- National statistics authorities
- National transport authorities
- National tourism administrations

- National governments

- National governments
- Private sector
- Unions

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Educational institutions
- NGOs
- Unions
- Financial institutions

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Educational institutions
- Training providers
- NGOs
- Unions

**Thematic area 5**

**Collaboration and partnerships**

**Goal:** Strong collaborations and partnerships enable the creation of inclusive, safe and sustainable work environments for women by fostering systemic change, enhancing resource efficiency and accelerating progress toward gender equality, decent work and women’s empowerment in tourism transport.



Gender equality



Decent work



Reduced inequalities



Peace, justice and strong institutions



Partnerships for the goals

**Actions**

Promote and engage in stakeholder collaboration and partnerships across the public sector, private sector and civil society, including with women’s networks.

**Actors**

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Unions

Collaborate with women’s organizations to establish a culture of corporate and government accountability and transparency, and advance gender equality initiatives and support.

- National governments
- Local and regional authorities
- Private sector
- Training providers
- NGOs
- Unions

Increase collaboration between different public bodies to improve the information available for formulating public policies that promote equality and equity in passenger transport.

- National tourism administrations
- National transport authorities
- National gender mechanisms
- Local and regional authorities

Address structural challenges of gig work and workplace automation through public-private partnerships, including gender-responsive algorithms to eliminate bias in recruitment, pay and safety outcomes.

- National governments
- Private sector
- Unions

# Annexes

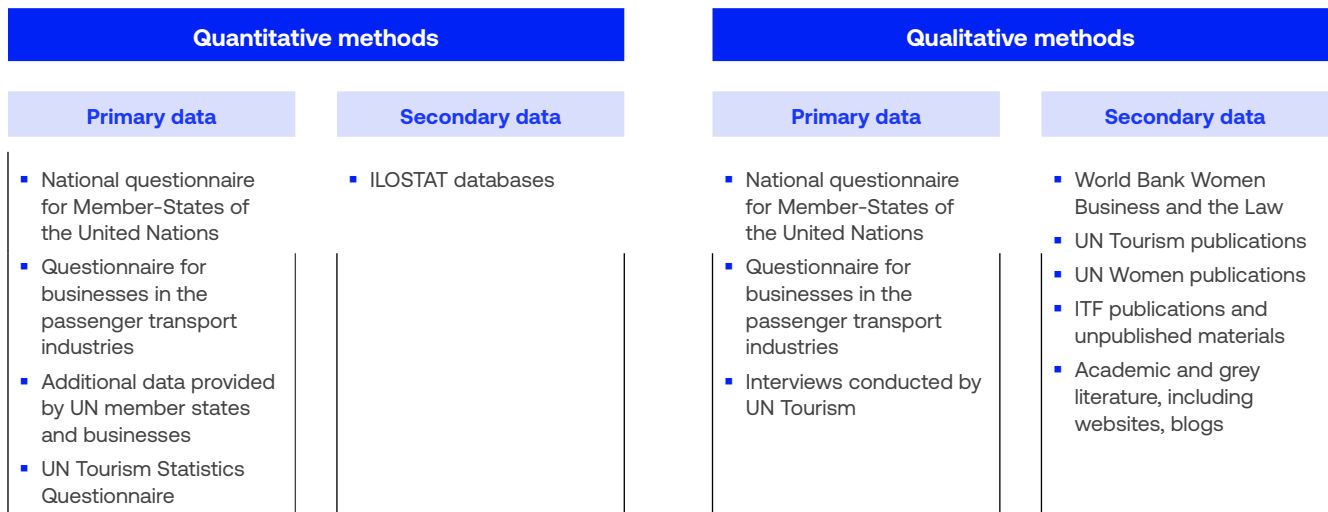
## Annex 1 – Methodology

This Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport is a mixed-methods report consisting of primary quantitative and qualitative data based on two surveys that were conducted by UN Tourism. Statistical country-level data is based on the latest UN Tourism dataset complemented with secondary data sources where gaps existed. The analysis was enhanced with information and a collection of case studies and examples of good practices from UN Tourism and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) members, as well as from a review of academic and grey literature, as well as corporate reports. The methodological processes and data sources for this global report are depicted in figure A1.1.

### A1.1 Definitions

UN Tourism has five official regions: Africa, Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Middle East. The Asia and the Pacific region is divided into two sub-regions: East Asia and the Pacific, and South Asia. Due to the differences in the levels of women's employment in tourism transport between the two sub-regions, they are displayed separately throughout this report in order to highlight the differences in women's participation in tourism transport between the sub-regions.

Figure A1.1: **Methodological process and data sources for the report**



## Statistical references and definitions of the component industries of the tourism sector

### Tourism industries

The *tourism industries* (combined) include the following industries:

1. Accommodation for visitors;
2. Food and beverage serving activities;
3. Railway passenger transport;
4. Road passenger transport;
5. Water passenger transport;
6. Air passenger transport;
7. Transport equipment rental;
8. Travel agencies and other reservation services;
9. Cultural activities;
10. Sports and recreational activities;

Note: The categories 1 to 10 comprise the core for international comparison (IRTS 2008 paragraphs 5.25 to 5.30). The two additional categories 11 and 12 are not considered internationally comparable because they are country specific. See\_ for category 11: IRTS 2008, paragraphs 5.34 and 5.41; and for category 12: IRTS 2008, paragraph 5.34.

Source: United Nations (2010), chapter 6, chapter 7 and annex 3, *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*, UN, New York, available at: [www.e-unwto.org](http://www.e-unwto.org) [11-02-2026].

### Tourism transport

*Tourism transport* for the statistical elements in this report is defined by using the 2-digit level of the *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* (ISIC Rev4) industry categories, including the following categories:

1. Land transport, consisting of two categories: railway passenger transport and road passenger transport;
2. Water passenger transport, including sea and coastal passenger water transport, and inland water passenger transport; and
3. Air passenger transport.

Reference in this report to tourism transport generally refers to all passenger transport categories combined. In the *qualitative* work in this report, we refer to *tourism*

*transport* more broadly. Please see details in table A1.1 below.

Table A1.1: **Statistical references according to ISIC Rev4**

Tourism industry	ISIC Rev4
Tourism	5510, 5520, 5590, 6810, 6820, 5610, 5629, 5630, 4911, 4922, 5011, 5021, 5110, 7710, 7911, 7912, 7990, 9000, 9102, 9103, 7721, 9200, 9311, 9319, 9321, 9329
Passenger	4911, 4922, 5011, 5021, 5110
3. Railway passenger transport	4911 Passenger rail transport, interurban
4. Road passenger transport	4922 Other passenger land transport
5. Water passenger transport	5011 Sea and coastal passenger water transport
6. Air passenger transport	5110 Passenger air transport

Source: United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

### ISIC Rev4 definitions of passenger transport industries

*Railway passenger transport* (4911) includes rail transportation of passengers using railroad rolling stock on mainline networks, usually spread over an extensive geographic area.<sup>220</sup>

*Road passenger transport* (4922) includes scheduled long-distance bus services charters, excursions and other occasional coach services, taxi operation, airport shuttles, operation of telfers (téléphériques), funiculars, ski and cable lifts if not part of urban or suburban transit systems. This class also includes other renting of private cars with driver [...] passenger transport by man- or animal-drawn vehicles.<sup>221</sup>

*Water passenger transport* (5011 + 5021): Sea and coastal passenger transport is defined as “transport of passengers over seas and coastal waters, whether scheduled or not, including operation of excursion,

220 United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

221 United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

cruise or sightseeing boats and operation of ferries, water taxis etc. This class also includes renting of pleasure boats with crew for sea and coastal water transport”.<sup>222</sup>

*Inland water passenger transport* is defined as “all boats and vessels, of any nature whatsoever, whether publicly- or privately-owned, which are engaged in the transport of passengers on lakes, rivers, canals and estuaries.”<sup>223</sup>

*Air passenger transport* (5110) “includes transport of passengers by air over regular routes and on regular schedules, charter flights for passengers scenic and sightseeing flights, renting of air-transport equipment with operator for the purpose of passenger transportation, general aviation activities, such as: transport of passengers by aero clubs for instruction or pleasure.”<sup>224</sup>

## A1.2 Quantitative data

Quantitative data was collected through the regular UN Tourism Statistics Questionnaire and two ad-hoc surveys that were both developed by UN Tourism based on the data requirements of the Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST). The surveys were then refined with input relevant to women in passenger transport from the ITF and the expert team leading this research: The National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations was conducted from 29/04/2025 to 30/06/2025 and the Business Survey for the passenger transport industries was conducted from 29/04/2025 to 31/10/2025.

The surveys were distributed via email to 187 global tourism ministries and to passenger transport businesses respectively, requesting information on women’s employment situation and participation in passenger transport (air, land and water transport). Written consent

to use the information provided in the survey was formally obtained from each respondent, thereby upholding transparency and ethical integrity throughout the research. Both questionnaires are available in annex 3.

### 1. National Questionnaire for Member-States of the United Nations

A series of questions was developed to understand the status of women employees in the tourism transport. The survey recorded a total of 28 valid submissions, a response rate of 15%. The data submitted was based on the most recent availability, covering a range from 2009 to 2024, with the majority of data being post 2020.

Table A1.2 Number of submissions, by region

Regions according to UN Tourism classification	Number of submissions
Europe	8
Americas	7
Asia and the Pacific	7
Middle East	5
Africa	1

The following 28 of countries and territories submitted a valid response: Andorra, Bahrain, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, El Salvador, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Macao (China), Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Slovenia and Venezuela.

In the responses received, significant data gaps were apparent. A total of 21 submissions included some quantitative data (questions 1–8), although the amount of data provided varied hugely between different respondents and none were able to answer all questions in full. More countries provided data for question 1 regarding the number of women/men employed, than any other question. Very limited data was provided on the

222 United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

223 International Labour Organization (2023), *The ILO’s work in the inland waterways sector – Compendium (1947–2022)*, ILO, Geneva, online available at: <https://www.ilo.org> [26-01-2026].

224 United Nations (2008), *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities – Revision 4*, UN, New York, available at: <https://unstats.un.org> [26-01-2026].

gender wage gap, number of women/men in managerial positions and business ownership and occupational health and safety. UN Tourism sourced additional national data from Guatemala and Saudi Arabia, who did not participate in the member state survey.

## 2. UN Tourism Statistics questionnaire

As per the article 13 of the agreement between the United Nations and UN Tourism (Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 23 December 2003), UN Tourism is mandated by the United Nations to collect, analyse, publish, standardize and improve the statistics of tourism, and to promote the integration of these statistics within the sphere of the United Nations system.

Due to the limited amount of sex-disaggregated passenger transport data collected in the ad hoc questionnaire, this report relied on the data regularly collected in the UN Tourism statistics questionnaire, focusing on the most recent data available.<sup>225</sup> Data from the regular questionnaire was prioritized where sex-disaggregated data was available in the passenger transport industries, and supplemented with data from the ad hoc questionnaire where it was not. A total of 99 countries, covering all regions in the world, were included in the report (see annex 2). This allowed for wider geographical coverage and the calculation of average figures on the percentage of women employed in tourism transport.

## 3. Business Survey for the passenger transport industries

To analyse the status of women's employment in the tourism transport, data was collected from businesses operating in the air, rail, road and water passenger transport industries. UN Tourism received a total of 38 submissions to the Business Survey from tour operators, passenger transport companies and private

entities. Following a careful review of the responses, 29 submissions by passenger transport industries from 20 countries were deemed valid and were included in the analysis. Europe emerged as the most active region, followed by the Americas and Asia and the Pacific.

Table A1.3 Number of submissions from businesses, by region

Regions according to UN Tourism classification	Number of submissions
Europe	11
Americas	8
Asia and the Pacific	5
Middle East	3
Africa	2

The survey reported responses from the following company categories: 16 large companies; 4 medium-sized companies; 5 small-sized companies; and 4 micro companies.<sup>226</sup> Large companies, particularly those operating in air passenger transport, demonstrated a higher response rate to the survey, likely due to the comprehensive data and information they already have at their disposal.

Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, standard deviation, total, minimum, maximum, and comparisons of means.

The data collected through the Business Survey were compiled, cleaned and analysed through spreadsheets. The analysis was limited to descriptive statistics to summarize and present the main characteristics of the dataset. Frequencies, percentages and mean values were calculated to describe response patterns and key trends. Due to the limited data, no inferential or advanced statistical analyses were conducted.

225 World Tourism Organization (2026). 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008–2024', preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database. UN Tourism Statistics Database, Madrid. Data updated on 12 March 2026. Available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment> [18-03-2026].

226 Business size was classified as follows, based on ILO definition: Micro-enterprises: 2 to 9 employees, Small enterprises: 10 to 49 employees, Medium-sized enterprises: 50 to 249 employees, Large enterprises: 250 or more employees.

Table A1.4: Responding companies by country, size and industry

Name of the business	Country in which the business is registered in	Type of tourism industry
<b>Large businesses</b>		
American Airlines Inc. Sucursal Colombiana	Colombia	Air passenger transport
ANA Holdings Inc.	Japan	Air passenger transport
Birmingham Airport Limited	United Kingdom	Air passenger transport
East Japan Railway Company	Japan	Railway passenger transport
Flynas	Saudi Arabia	Air passenger transport
Grupo Renfe	Spain	Railway passenger transport
Iberia	Spain	Air passenger transport
iGA Istanbul Airport	Türkiye	Air passenger transport
Jambojet	Kenya	Air passenger transport
Japan Airlines	Japan	Air passenger transport
Kansai Airports	Japan	Air passenger transport
Malta International Airport Plc	Malta	Air passenger transport
Middle East Airlines–Airliban S.A.L	Lebanon	Air passenger transport
Nuestra Señora de la Asunción CISA	Paraguay	Road passenger transport
Royal Jordanian Airlines	Jordan	Air passenger transport
Tirana International Airport	Albania	Air passenger transport
<b>Medium-sized businesses</b>		
Autolineas Rubiocar S.L.	Spain	Road passenger transport
Desarrollos Turísticos (Fun And Tickets)	Spain	Road passenger transport
Hertz Rent a Car	Costa Rica	Road passenger transport
Transportes Automotores Plusmar S.A.	Argentina	Road passenger transport
<b>Small businesses</b>		
Anderson Coach and Travel	United States	Road passenger transport
Greenwave Transportation LLC	United States	Road passenger transport
Maria Ofelia Somma Cal	Uruguay	Road passenger transport
Museumstoomtram Hoorn-Medemblik	Netherlands	Railway passenger transport
Splendacious Corporation Private Limited	India	Railway passenger transport
<b>Micro businesses</b>		
Fidex Car Hire and Safaris Ltd	Kenya	Road passenger transport
RifVans	Uruguay	Road passenger transport
Solaris Broker Aereo, S.L.	Spain	Air passenger transport
Top Line KZ	Kazakhstan	Road passenger transport

## A1.3 Qualitative data

Both surveys contained qualitative questions on regulations, policies and initiatives aimed at increasing women's participation in the tourism transport employment (see annex 3). The length and completeness of the information provided varied, and primary data was complemented by secondary qualitative data from UN Tourism and the ITF, published academic and grey literature, corporate reports, and media reports on women in tourism transport. Combined, the data informed the case studies and snapshots presented in this report.

## A1.4 Limitations

While every effort has been made to use the primary data collected for this report to its full potential, the main limitation is that the response rate for both surveys was not as high as had been hoped and there remains a considerable lack of quantitative data available regarding women's participation in tourism transport employment.

Feedback from tourism ministries of UN member states suggests the following factors influenced the low-response rate:

- Data being requested does not exist;
- The need to consult with different ministries/ authorities adding complexity; and
- The survey was the third one distributed by UN Tourism in a short space of time.

These reasons might have limited the number of tourism ministries and businesses able or willing to respond. Considerable effort was undertaken to follow up with UN member states, territories and businesses, yielding additional responses and case study data.

It should be noted though that national sex-disaggregated quantitative data on employment in the passenger transport industries (land, water and air), remains very limited, which leads to a strong recommendation to produce more statistical data in these areas.

The Business Survey was available publicly on the UN Tourism website. It was distributed by UN Tourism on social media (LinkedIn), by ITF and through direct approaches to passenger transport businesses, trade bodies and trade unions, some of whom are Affiliate Members of UN Tourism or committed to the UN Tourism Global Code of Ethics. Despite several direct approaches to senior leaders in businesses, no survey responses for water passenger transport were received.

## Annex 2

### Data used for calculated figures

Table A2.1: **Proportion of people working in the different passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data**

	Total number of women working	Total number of people working	Proportion of people working (%)	Proportion women (%)
Land passenger transport	737700	25327190	96	3
Air passenger transport	231922	645225	2	36
Water passenger transport	48752	412905	2	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1018374</b>	<b>26385321</b>		

Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Source: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008 - 2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment>, and; World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations.



Woman train conductor in Morocco. © ITF

Table A2.2: Proportion of people working in the different passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data, full data set

Country/ territory	UN Tourism region	People working in rail passenger transport			People working in road passenger transport			People working in water passenger transport			People working in air passenger transport						
		Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion of women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion of women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion of women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion of women (%)
Albania	Europe	2024	1101	17516	6%	2023	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	328	1520	22%	2024	819	1463	56%
Andorra <sup>b</sup>	Europe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	24	471	5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Angola	Africa	2022	n/a	5108	n/a	2022	n/a	21513	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2022	474	5434	9%
Argentina	Americas	2024	n/a	18215	n/a	2024	n/a	535	n/a	2024	1291	2324	56%	2024	5638	9315	61%
Armenia	Europe	2023	339	2006	17%	2023	540	26193	2%	2023	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	69	2636	3%
Australia	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	n/a	23900	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	n/a	32500	n/a
Bahamas	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	n/a	540	n/a	2019	411	1707	24%	2019	735	1617	45%
Bahrain	Middle East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2022	211	3657	6%	2022	316	3725	8%	2022	1315	3358	39%
Bangladesh	South Asia	2023	n/a	17049	n/a	2023	11272	3329368	0%	2023	n/a	88866	n/a	2023	n/a	4125	n/a
Barbados	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	469	n/a	2023	n/a	103	n/a	2023	n/a	353	n/a
Bhutan	South Asia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	276	6984	4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	178	563	32%
Bolivia	Americas	2023	n/a	1067	n/a	2023	9336	272859	3%	2023	n/a	1024	n/a	2023	432	2183	20%
Botswana	Africa	2021	1782	4125	43%	2023	1302	12072	11%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	n/a	1003	n/a
Brazil	Americas	2024	6821	28526	24%	2024	132970	1176082	11%	2024	9362	48525	19%	2024	10770	38860	28%
Brunei Darussalam	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	343	n/a	2023	n/a	799	n/a	2023	708	1609	44%
Cambodia	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	5	166	3%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chile	Americas	2024	n/a	87726	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Colombia	Americas	2024	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	n/a	108226	n/a	2024	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Cook Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	n/a	47	n/a	2019	n/a	76	n/a	2019	77	164	47%
Costa Rica	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	6083	54449	11%	2024	264	678	39%	2024	n/a	601	n/a
Croatia <sup>a</sup>	Europe	2024	400	1600	25%	2024	1800	12800	14%	2024	1100	4800	23%	n/a	600	1300	46%
Cyprus	Europe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	481	3503	14%	2024	123	531	23%	2024	727	1227	59%
Dominican Republic	Americas	2024	0	494	n/a	2024	953	49530	2%	2024	0	149	0%	2024	2077	5594	37%
Ecuador	Americas	2022	n/a	31	n/a	2024	14056	222376	6%	2024	47	4082	1%	2024	722	1611	45%
Egypt	Middle East	2023	2324	54174	4%	2023	2461	1683286	0%	2023	n/a	8825	n/a	2023	1980	14396	14%
El Salvador	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	3402	32499	10%	2022	n/a	938	n/a	2023	n/a	1875	n/a
Eswatini	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	3777	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Country/ territory	UN Tourism region	People working in rail passenger transport			People working in road passenger transport			People working in water passenger transport			People working in air passenger transport						
		Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Ethiopia	Africa	2021	n/a	1,133	n/a	2021	3532	93144	4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	564	6861	8%
Fiji	East Asia and the Pacific		n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	258	3455	7%	2021	88	286	31%	2021	421	1093	39%
Finland	Europe	2022	n/a	3600	n/a	2022	n/a	19200	n/a	2022	n/a	5400	n/a	2022	n/a	3700	n/a
Gambia	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	7633	n/a	2023	90	461	20%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Germany <sup>e</sup>	Europe	2024	9000	33000	27%	2024	91000	421000	22%	2024	3000	8000	38%	2024	32000	58000	55%
Ghana	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2017	4855	289927	2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grenada	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	127	n/a	2021	n/a	193	n/a	2021	n/a	327	n/a
Guinea-Bissau	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2018	n/a	271	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Guyana	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	507	9905	5%	2019	90	564	16%	2019	556	1065	52%
Honduras	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	n/a	53486	n/a	2024	n/a	12797	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
India	South Asia	2023	20635	469508	4%	2023	64704	12641829	1%	2023	4117	122944	3%	2023	13396	65788	20%
Indonesia <sup>b</sup>	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2839	33317	9%	2023	6905	68437	10%	2023	6528	122156	5%	2023	9683	56112	17%
Iran	South Asia	2022	n/a	11614	n/a	2022	10872	782536	1%	2022	n/a	3474	n/a	2022	n/a	5605	n/a
Iraq	Middle East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	n/a	516111	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Israel	Europe	2024	0	6344	0%	2024	11382	107886	11%	2024	1118	1988	56%	2024	2893	7131	41%
Italy	Europe	2024	13522	67908	20%	2024	17640	148392	12%	2024	4134	28023	15%	2024	11392	26592	43%
Kazakhstan	Europe	2023	3417	19837	17%	2023	10966	100404	11%	2023	2	527	0%	2023	1855	9368	20%
Kenya	Africa	2022	n/a	9713	n/a	2022	12061	550866	2%	2022	n/a	5019	n/a	2019	6129	10432	59%
Kiribati	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	105	n/a	2023	50	441	11%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lao People's Democratic Republic	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2022	n/a	10389	n/a	2010	n/a	2264	n/a	2010	n/a	1234	n/a
Latvia	Europe	2023	n/a	1900	n/a	2024	2400	10200	24%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	n/a	2500	n/a
Lebanon	Middle East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	516	51556	1%	2019	n/a	158	n/a	2019	764	3640	21%
Lithuania	Europe	2023	n/a	436	n/a	2023	n/a	5844	n/a	2023	n/a	7	n/a	2023	n/a	1023	n/a
Macao (China)	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	500	4500	11%	2023	n/a	400	n/a	2024	700	1400	50%
Madagascar	Africa	2022	n/a	452	n/a	2022	n/a	52401	n/a	2022	n/a	12117	n/a	2022	n/a	1624	n/a
Malta	Europe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	n/a	5437	n/a	2024	n/a	954	n/a	2024	n/a	2023	n/a
Marshall Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	5	195	3%	2021	9	93	10%	2021	12	48	25%
Mauritius	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	125	293	43%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	652	1752	37%

Country/ territory	UN Tourism region	People working in rail passenger transport			People working in road passenger transport			People working in water passenger transport			People working in air passenger transport						
		Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)				
Monaco	Europe	2024	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	65	571	11%	2024	70	117	60%	2024	23	113	20%
Mongolia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2818	8794	32%	2023	n/a	13823	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	2133	4385	49%
Myanmar	East Asia and the Pacific	2020	n/a	43385	n/a	2020	n/a	235215	n/a	2020	n/a	61369	n/a	2019	n/a	2945	n/a
Namibia	Africa	2023	51	456	11%	2023	88	2262	4%	2023	35	168	21%	2023	72	231	31%
Nauru	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	n/a	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nepal	South Asia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2017	n/a	134136	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2017	n/a	5728	n/a
Nigeria	Africa	2022	n/a	28612	n/a	2023	n/a	1196203	n/a	2022	n/a	19643	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Norway	Europe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	3000	7000	43%
Oman <sup>a</sup>	Middle East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2025	65	1222	5%	2025	2	36	6%	2025	1166	3482	33%
Palau	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2020	n/a	0	n/a	2020	n/a	24	n/a	2020	5	13	38%
Panama	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	3307	49968	7%	2024	117	1725	7%	2024	1582	6342	25%
Paraguay <sup>b</sup>	Americas	2025	6	69	9%	2025	377	4239	9%	2025	52	498	10%	2025	63	128	49%
Poland <sup>c</sup>	Europe	2022	2300	8300	28%	2022	10700	65800	16%	2022	1000	2000	50%	2022	1900	3500	54%
Qatar <sup>d</sup>	Middle East	2023	200	1000	20%	2023	700	10000	7%	2023	100	1500	7%	2023	5500	12500	44%
Republic of Korea	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2251	6409	35%	2023	5714	54580	10%	2023	1738	6080	29%	2023	11061	22802	49%
Romania	Europe	2022	4635	26369	18%	2022	15269	136275	11%	2022	n/a	1080	n/a	2022	1972	7246	27%
Rwanda	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	1151	32498	4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2021	n/a	1818	n/a
Samoa	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2022	n/a	1161	n/a	2022	n/a	180	n/a	2022	n/a	56	n/a
Saudi Arabia	Middle East	2024	191	4297	4%	2024	2946	31046	9%	2024	245	1590	15%	2024	6210	20699	30%
Senegal	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	n/a	72477	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Seychelles	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2020	n/a	580	n/a	2020	n/a	115	n/a	2020	306	641	48%
Slovakia	Europe	2022	n/a	24726	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Slovenia	Europe	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	613	4175	15%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2024	57	317	18%
Solomon Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2013	n/a	828	n/a	2013	n/a	1035	n/a	2013	n/a	166	n/a
Spain	Europe	2024	7056	28794	25%	2024	41471	246895	17%	2024	2937	8927	33%	2024	24550	66731	43%
Sri Lanka	South Asia	2022	n/a	5665	n/a	2022	3731	246049	2%	2016	n/a	947	n/a	2022	n/a	1559	n/a
Sudan	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2022	n/a	119793	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Suriname	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2016	n/a	1907	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Country/ territory	UN Tourism region	People working in rail passenger transport			People working in road passenger transport			People working in water passenger transport			People working in air passenger transport						
		Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Sweden	Europe	2023	n/a	6300	n/a	2023	n/a	25800	n/a	2023	n/a	6000	n/a	2023	n/a	3800	n/a
Taiwan Province of China	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	n/a	30446	n/a	2024	n/a	29638	n/a	2024	n/a	8555	n/a	2024	n/a	25419	n/a
Tanzania	Africa	2014	n/a	3345	n/a	2020	n/a	56615	n/a	2020	n/a	880	n/a	2020	532	2607	20%
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	617	13995	4%	2024	48143	531048	9%	2024	2665	10513	25%	2024	5256	13180	40%
Timor-Leste	East Asia and the Pacific	2022	n/a	42	n/a	2022	25	2132	1%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Tonga	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	78	n/a	2023	84	204	41%	2023	n/a	99	n/a
Tunisia	Africa	2019	425	4283	10%	2019	801	71589	1%	2019	260	1305	20%	2019	2725	10580	26%
Tuvalu	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2022	n/a	34	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Uganda	Africa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	520092	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
United Kingdom	Europe	2021	19068	112813	17%	2021	64102	352268	18%	2021	2807	5692	49%	2021	22529	50885	44%
United Arab Emirates	Middle East	2023	n/a	1557	n/a	2023	1340	86641	2%	2023	n/a	3183	n/a	2023	22102	56162	39%
Uruguay	Americas	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	n/a	18073	n/a	2023	n/a	3241	n/a	2023	n/a	776	n/a
Vanuatu	East Asia and the Pacific	2020	n/a	204	n/a	2020	6	576	1%	2020	37	321	12%	2020	91	264	34%
Viet Nam	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2259	10782	21%	2023	9626	261823	4%	2023	4134	18704	22%	2023	10737	24781	43%
Wallis and Futuna Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2019	n/a	13	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2023	11	26	42%
Zambia	Africa	2023	n/a	2669	n/a	2023	n/a	32145	n/a	2021	n/a	2401	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008 - 2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment>, and; World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations.

Footnote a: 3 (of 99) countries had no gender-disaggregated data available for employment in the passenger transport industries in the source dataset. The data displayed was submitted to UN Tourism by the National Tourism Administration to the National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations, questionnaire available in annex 3.

Footnote b: 5 (of 99) countries had no data available for employment in the passenger transport industries in the source dataset. The data displayed was submitted to UN Tourism by the National Tourism Administration to the National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations, questionnaire available in annex 3.

Table A2.3: Proportion of people working in the air passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data

Country/territory	UN Tourism region	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Albania	Europe	2024	819	1463	56%
Angola	Africa	2022	474	5434	9%
Argentina	Americas	2024	5638	9315	61%
Armenia	Europe	2023	69	2636	3%
Bahamas	Americas	2019	735	1617	45%
Bahrain	Middle East	2022	1315	3358	39%
Bhutan	South Asia	2024	178	563	32%
Bolivia	Americas	2023	432	2183	20%
Brazil	Americas	2024	10770	38860	28%
Brunei Darussalam	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	708	1609	44%
Cook Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	2019	77	164	47%
Cyprus	Europe	2024	727	1227	59%
Croatia	Europe	n/a	600	1300	46%
Dominican Republic	Americas	2024	2077	5594	37%
Ecuador	Americas	2024	722	1611	45%
Egypt	Middle East	2023	1980	14396	14%
Ethiopia	Africa	2021	564	6861	8%
Fiji	East Asia and the Pacific	2021	421	1093	39%
Germany	Europe	2024	32000	58000	55%
Guyana	Americas	2019	556	1065	52%
India	South Asia	2023	13396	65788	20%
Indonesia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	9683	56112	17%
Israel	Europe	2024	2893	7131	41%
Italy	Europe	2024	11392	26592	43%
Kazakhstan	Europe	2023	1855	9368	20%
Kenya	Africa	2019	6129	10432	59%
Lebanon	Middle East	2019	764	3640	21%
Macao (China)	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	700	1400	50%
Marshall Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	2021	12	48	25%
Mauritius	Africa	2024	652	1752	37%
Monaco	Europe	2024	23	113	20%
Mongolia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2133	4385	49%
Namibia	Africa	2023	72	231	31%
Norway	Europe	2024	3000	7000	43%
Oman	Middle East	2025	1166	3482	33%
Palau	East Asia and the Pacific	2020	5	13	38%
Panama	Americas	2024	1582	6342	25%
Paraguay	Americas	2025	63	128	49%
Poland	Europe	2022	1900	3500	54%
Qatar	Middle East	2023	5500	12500	44%
Republic of Korea	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	11061	22802	49%
Romania	Europe	2022	1972	7246	27%
Saudi Arabia	Middle East	2024	6210	20699	30%
Seychelles	Africa	2020	306	641	48%
Slovenia	Europe	2024	57	317	18%
Spain	Europe	2024	24550	56731	43%
Tanzania	Africa	2020	532	2607	20%
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	5256	13180	40%
Tunisia	Africa	2019	2725	10580	26%
United Kingdom	Europe	2021	22529	50885	44%
United Arab Emirates	Middle East	2023	22102	56162	39%
Vanuatu	East Asia and the Pacific	2020	91	264	34%
Viet Nam	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	10737	24781	43%
Wallis and Futuna Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	11	26	42%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>231922</b>	<b>645225</b>	<b>36%</b>

Table A2.4: Proportion of people working in the land passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data

Country/territory	UN Tourism region	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Albania	Europe	1101	17516	6%
Andorra	Europe	24	471	5%
Armenia	Europe	879	28200	3%
Bahrain	Middle East	211	3657	6%
Bangladesh	South Asia	11272	3329368	0%
Bhutan	South Asia	276	6984	4%
Bolivia	Americas	9336	272859	3%
Botswana	Africa	3084	16197	19%
Brazil	Americas	139791	1204608	12%
Cambodia	East Asia and the Pacific	5	166	3%
Costa Rica	Americas	6083	54449	11%
Croatia	Europe	2200	14400	15%
Cyprus	Europe	481	3503	14%
Dominican Republic	Americas	953	50024	2%
Ecuador	Americas	14056	222376	6%
Egypt	Middle East	4784	1737459	0%
El Salvador	Americas	3402	32499	10%
Ethiopia	Africa	3532	93144	4%
Fiji	East Asia and the Pacific	258	3455	7%
Germany	Europe	100000	454000	22%
Ghana	Africa	4855	289927	2%
Guyana	Americas	507	9905	5%
India	South Asia	85339	13111337	1%
Indonesia	East Asia and the Pacific	9744	101754	10%
Iran	South Asia	10872	782536	1%
Israel	Europe	11382	114230	10%
Italy	Europe	31161	216300	14%
Kazakhstan	Europe	14383	120241	12%
Kenya	Africa	12061	550866	2%
Latvia	Europe	2400	10200	24%
Lebanon	Middle East	516	51556	1%
Macao (China)	East Asia and the Pacific	500	4500	11%
Marshall Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	5	195	3%
Mauritius	Africa	125	293	43%
Monaco	Europe	65	571	11%
Mongolia	East Asia and the Pacific	2818	8794	32%
Namibia	Africa	139	2718	5%
Oman	Middle East	65	1222	5%
Panama	Americas	3307	49968	7%
Paraguay	Americas	383	4308	9%
Poland	Europe	13000	74100	18%
Qatar	Middle East	900	11000	8%
Republic of Korea	East Asia and the Pacific	7965	60989	13%
Romania	Europe	19904	162644	12%
Rwanda	Africa	1151	32498	4%
Saudi Arabia	Middle East	3137	35343	9%
Slovenia	Europe	613	4175	15%
Spain	Europe	48527	275689	18%
Sri Lanka	South Asia	3731	246049	2%
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	48760	545043	9%
Timor-Leste	East Asia and the Pacific	25	2132	1%
Tunisia	Africa	1227	75872	2%
United Kingdom	Europe	83170	465081	18%
United Arab Emirates	Middle East	1340	86641	2%
Vanuatu	East Asia and the Pacific	6	576	1%
Viet Nam	East Asia and the Pacific	11886	272605	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>737700</b>	<b>25327190</b>	<b>3%</b>

Table A2.5: Proportion of people working in the rail passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data

Country/territory	UN Tourism region	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Albania	Europe	2024	1101	17516	6%
Armenia	Europe	2023	339	2006	17%
Botswana	Africa	2021	1782	4125	43%
Brazil	Americas	2024	6821	28526	24%
Croatia	Europe	2024	400	1600	25%
Dominican Republic	Americas	2024	0	494	0.0
Egypt	Middle East	2023	2324	54174	4%
Germany	Europe	2024	9000	33000	27%
India	South Asia	2023	20635	469508	4%
Indonesia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2839	33317	9%
Israel	Europe	2024	0	6344	0%
Italy	Europe	2024	13522	67908	20%
Kazakhstan	Europe	2023	3417	19837	17%
Mongolia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2818	8794	32%
Namibia	Africa	2023	51	456	11%
Paraguay	Americas	2025	6	69	9%
Poland	Europe	2022	2300	8300	28%
Qatar	Middle East	2023	200	1000	20%
Republic of Korea	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2251	6409	35%
Romania	Europe	2022	4635	26369	18%
Saudi Arabia	Middle East	2024	191	4297	4%
Spain	Europe	2024	7056	28794	25%
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	617	13995	4%
Tunisia	Africa	2019	425	4283	10%
United Kingdom	Europe	2021	19068	112813	17%
Viet Nam	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	2259	10782	21%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>104058</b>	<b>964716</b>	<b>11%</b>

Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Source: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008 - 2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment>, and; World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations.

Table A2.6: Proportion of people working in the road passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data

Country/territory	UN Tourism region	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Andorra	Europe	2024	24	471	5%
Armenia	Europe	2023	540	26193	2%
Bahrain	Middle East	2022	211	3657	6%
Bangladesh	South Asia	2023	11272	3329368	0%
Bhutan	South Asia	2024	276	6984	4%
Bolivia	Americas	2023	9336	272859	3%
Botswana	Africa	2023	1302	12072	11%
Brazil	Americas	2024	132970	1176082	11%
Cambodia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	5	166	3%
Costa Rica	Americas	2024	6083	54449	11%
Cyprus	Europe	2024	481	3503	14%
Croatia	Europe	2024	1800	12800	14%
Dominican Republic	Americas	2024	953	49530	2%
Ecuador	Americas	2024	14056	222376	6%
Egypt	Middle East	2023	2461	1683286	0%
El Salvador	Americas	2023	3402	32499	10%
Ethiopia	Africa	2021	3532	93144	4%
Fiji	East Asia and the Pacific	2021	258	3455	7%
Germany	Europe	2024	91000	421000	22%
Ghana	Africa	2017	4855	289927	2%
Guyana	Americas	2019	507	9905	5%
India	South Asia	2023	64704	12641829	1%
Indonesia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	6905	68437	10%
Iran	South Asia	2022	10872	782536	1%
Israel	Europe	2024	11382	107886	11%
Italy	Europe	2024	17640	148392	12%
Kazakhstan	Europe	2023	10966	100404	11%
Kenya	Africa	2022	12061	550866	2%
Latvia	Europe	2024	2400	10200	24%
Lebanon	Middle East	2019	516	51556	1%
Macao (China)	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	500	4500	11%
Marshall Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	2021	5	195	3%
Mauritius	Africa	2024	125	293	43%
Monaco	Europe	2024	65	571	11%
Namibia	Africa	2023	88	2262	4%
Oman	Middle East	2025	65	1222	5%
Panama	Americas	2024	3307	49968	7%
Paraguay	Americas	2025	377	4239	9%
Poland	Europe	2022	10700	65800	16%
Qatar	Middle East	2023	700	10000	7%
Republic of Korea	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	5714	54580	10%
Romania	Europe	2022	15269	136275	11%
Rwanda	Africa	2021	1151	32498	4%
Saudi Arabia	Middle East	2024	2946	31046	9%
Slovenia	Europe	2024	613	4175	15%
Spain	Europe	2024	41471	246895	17%
Sri Lanka	South Asia	2022	3731	246049	2%
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	48143	531048	9%
Timor-Leste	East Asia and the Pacific	2022	25	2132	1%
Tunisia	Africa	2019	801	71589	1%
United Kingdom	Europe	2021	64102	352268	18%
United Arab Emirates	Middle East	2023	1340	86641	2%
Vanuatu	East Asia and the Pacific	2020	6	576	1%
Viet Nam	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	9626	261823	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>633641</b>	<b>24362475</b>	<b>3%</b>

Table A2.7: Proportion of people working in the water passenger transport industries who are women, in countries and territories with available data

Country/territory	UN Tourism region	Year	Number of women	Total number of people	Proportion women (%)
Albania	Europe	2024	328	1520	22%
Argentina	Americas	2024	1291	2324	56%
Bahamas	Americas	2019	411	1707	24%
Bahrain	Middle East	2022	316	3725	8%
Brazil	Americas	2024	9362	48525	19%
Croatia	Europe	2024	1100	4800	23%
Costa Rica	Americas	2024	264	678	39%
Cyprus	Europe	2024	123	531	23%
Dominican Republic	Americas	2024	0	149	0%
Ecuador	Americas	2024	47	4082	1%
Fiji	East Asia and the Pacific	2021	88	286	31%
Gambia	Africa	2023	90	461	20%
Germany	Europe	2024	3000	8000	38%
Guyana	Americas	2019	90	564	16%
India	South Asia	2023	4117	122944	3%
Indonesia	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	6528	122156	5%
Israel	Europe	2024	1118	1988	56%
Italy	Europe	2024	4134	28023	15%
Kazakhstan	Europe	2023	2	527	0%
Kiribati	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	50	441	11%
Marshall Islands	East Asia and the Pacific	2021	9	93	10%
Monaco	Europe	2024	70	117	60%
Namibia	Africa	2023	35	168	21%
Oman	Middle East	2025	2	36	6%
Panama	Americas	2024	117	1725	7%
Paraguay	Americas	2025	52	498	10%
Poland	Europe	2022	1000	2000	50%
Qatar	Middle East	2023	100	1500	7%
Republic of Korea	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	1738	6080	29%
Saudi Arabia	Middle East	2024	245	1590	15%
Spain	Europe	2024	2937	8927	33%
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	2024	2665	10513	25%
Tonga	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	84	204	41%
Tunisia	Africa	2019	260	1305	20%
United Kingdom	Europe	2021	2807	5692	49%
Vanuatu	East Asia and the Pacific	2020	37	321	12%
Viet Nam	East Asia and the Pacific	2023	4134	18704	22%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>48752</b>	<b>412905</b>	<b>12%</b>

Note: Calculated figures are based on national data across 99 countries and territories, based on the most recent year available (2014–2025): 54 countries and territories (air), 54 countries and territories (road), 26 countries (railway) and 37 countries and territories (water). Only countries and territories with gender disaggregated data are included in the calculations, source data available in annex 2.

Source: World Tourism Organization (2026), 'Employed persons in the tourism industries (SDG indicator 8.9.2), 2008 - 2024, preliminary version in preparation for submission to the SDG Indicators Global Database', UN Tourism Statistics Database updated on 12 March 2026, UN Tourism, Madrid, available at: <https://www.untourism.int/tourism-statistics/tourism-data-employment>, and; World Tourism Organization (2025), National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations.

## Annex 3

# Survey templates

### National Questionnaire for Member States of the United Nations

Name:

Position and organization:

The National Tourism Authority represented:

Gender:

Email:

#### Section 1: Data on employment in tourism and the passenger transport industries

Q.1. Kindly provide data on employed persons in the tourism industries and the passenger transport industries (railway passenger transport, road passenger transport, water passenger transport and air passenger transport) for the year 2024 (or the most recent year available), disaggregated by sex (male or female) and status in employment (self-employed or employee).

Statistical Reference: *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* (ISIC Rev4).

Q.2. What is the percentage gender wage gap (female/male) in the tourism industries and the passenger transport industries at national level? (percentage and year)

Q.3. How many women are there in managerial positions in the tourism industries and the passenger transport industries at a national level? (number and year)

Q.4. How many men are there in managerial positions in the tourism industries and the passenger transport industries at a national level? (number and year)

Q.5. Is sex-disaggregated data available for Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in the tourism industries and the passenger transport industries?

Yes  No

If yes, please include all of the sex-disaggregated tourism OSH data for the most recent year available.

Q.6. What is the percentage of owners by sex and business size (number of employees) for registered tourism businesses (tourism industries combined)?

Q.7. What is the percentage of owners by sex and business size (number of employees) for registered passenger transport businesses (total passenger transport industries)?

Q.8. Additional Data: Would you like to include any additional sex disaggregated data?

#### Section 2: Information on gender equality in tourism businesses

Q.9. Are there specific public bodies responsible for promoting equal opportunities?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.10. Is there any legislation or public policies that limit women's employment in passenger transport?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.11. Are there incentives for tourism businesses to increase the number of women employed?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.12 Is there a legal requirement for tourism businesses to submit a professional equality plan?

Yes  No

If yes, please give the reference to the law or policy

Q.13 Are there legal requirements for tourism businesses to provide family-related benefits? (such as family-related leave, antenatal care, childbirth care, postnatal care, flexible working arrangements, etc.)

Yes  No

If yes, please provide details

Q.14. Are there legal requirements for tourism businesses to have a policy to combat sexual harassment?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.15. Are there public policies for the provision of support to victims of sexual harassment and gender-based violence?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.16. Are there incentives for tourism businesses to provide gender-equality training?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.17. Are there any other public programmes or initiative(s) focussed on women in passenger transport?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details

Q.18 Additional Comments:

Full questionnaire available at:

<https://www.unwto.org/form/global-report-on-women-in-tourism%3A-the-transport-industries>

## Business Survey – Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport

Respondent details

Basic information

Name of the business: Country registered:

Operational countries:

Size:  Micro  Small  Medium  Large

Tourism industry:  Railway  Road  Water

Air

Name, gender, job title and contact details of the person filling in the questionnaire:

### Who in your business is responsible for working on gender equality and diversity?

- An allocated focal person
- An official team/department
- Everyone
- No one
- Other (specify):

### Data

1. Is sex-disaggregated employment data available for your business? Yes/No. If yes, specify.
2. Total number of employees:
3. Women:
4. Total Part-time employees:
5. Women:
6. Total Permanent contracts:
7. Women:
8. Total Fixed-term contracts:
9. Women:

10. Total Number of people who are employed in these different occupations in your business?
  - ISCO classification
  - Managers
  - Professionals
  - Technicians
  - Clerical Sales and Customer Support
  - Craft and Trade
  - Machine Operators/Drivers
  - Elementary
  - Others (specify):

11. Total number of women in ISCO occupations:

12. Total number of people on the Board:

13. Number of women on the board:

14. Does your business have data about retention rate of employees within the last 5 years?

Yes  No

If yes, please provide data about:

- Retention rate last 5 yrs (Total)
- Retention rate last 5 yrs (Women)

### Policies

16. Does your business have a professional equality plan?

Yes  No

If yes, specify

17. Does your business do any of the following to promote gender equality in its operations?

- Board promotion in HR strategy
- Strategic plan to promote gender equality
- Gender-neutral job postings
- Sex-disaggregated data collection
- Gender-inclusive communication
- None

18. Does your business offer any of the following activities on gender equality:

- Staff training
- Leadership training for women
- Mentoring
- Consultation about gender equality
- Others

19. What procedures does your business have in place to deal with sexual harassment in the workplace?

- All staff training
- Management training
- Zero tolerance for harassment
- Risk assessment
- Advisory systems
- Reporting protocol
- Victim support
- Monitoring
- None
- Others

20. Data on gender-based violence/harassment:

- Yes  No

If yes, provide data for the past 5 years.

21. Does your business have reporting mechanisms for gender-based violence?

- Yes  No

If yes, specify

- Whistleblowing
- Anonymous hotlines
- Other

22. Does your business provide victim support?

- Yes  No

If yes, specify:

23. Does your business provide paid maternity leave?

- Yes  No

If yes, for how long?

24. Does your business provide paid paternity leave?

- Yes  No

If yes, for how long?

25. Other parental leave:

- Yes  No

If yes, specify.

26. Care leave policy:

- Yes  No

If yes, specify.

27. Family-related benefits:

- Yes  No

If yes, specify:

- Leave
- Antenatal/postnatal care
- Flexible working arrangements
- Flexible breaks
- Remote work
- Paid time-off
- Health insurance
- None
- Other

28. Women's health counselling/services:

- Yes  No

If yes, specify:

#### Gender equality

29. Wage gap in managerial positions (%):

30. Wage gap in non-managerial positions (%):

31. Total promoted in the last year:

32. Women promoted in the last year:

33. Has your business formally implemented the principle of "equal pay for work of equal value"?

- Yes  No

If yes, please select the measures implemented:

- Pay transparency
- Certification
- Objective evaluation
- Labour inspection
- Other:

34. Additional comments:

Full questionnaire available at:

<https://www.untourism.int/form/global-report-on-women-in-tourism>

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https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284427635 - Sunday, June 28, 2026 4:14:29 AM - IP Address: 62.74.10.176

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### **Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport**

ISBN, printed version: 978-92-844-2762-8  
ISBN, electronic version: 978-92-844-2763-5  
DOI: 10.18111/9789284427635

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First published: 2026  
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**Design:** UN Tourism.

**Layout:** Impacto Creativo de Comunicación, Spain.

#### **Suggested citation:**

World Tourism Organization and International Transport Workers' Federation (2026), *Global Report on Women in Tourism Transport*, UN Tourism, Madrid, Spain, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284427635>.

https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284427635 - Sunday, June 28, 2026 4:14:29 AM - IP Address:62.74.10.176

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The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate-led federation recognized as the world's leading transport authority. We fight passionately to improve workers' lives, connecting more than 730 affiliated trade unions from over 150 countries to secure rights, equality and justice for workers globally. We are the voice for more than 16.5 million transport workers across the world.

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