

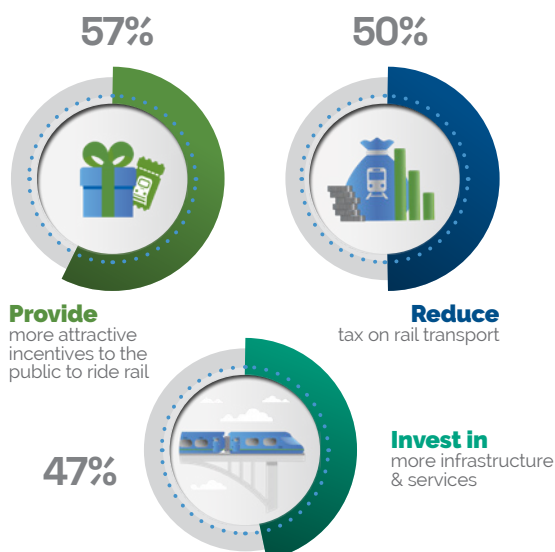
# Skills for the rail supply industry: adapting training and attracting talent

**21<sup>st</sup> century problems require 22<sup>nd</sup> century solutions.** As the world grapples with climate change and economic turbulence, the EU must provide young people and workers with the skills needed to reduce our societal dependence on fossil fuels and ensure Europe remains a global leader in rail during a period that demands sustainable transport technology. This critical endeavour will **require people from across Europe, of diverse backgrounds and heritages** – as well as the equal inclusion of women – to meet the rising demand for environmentally-sound mobility.

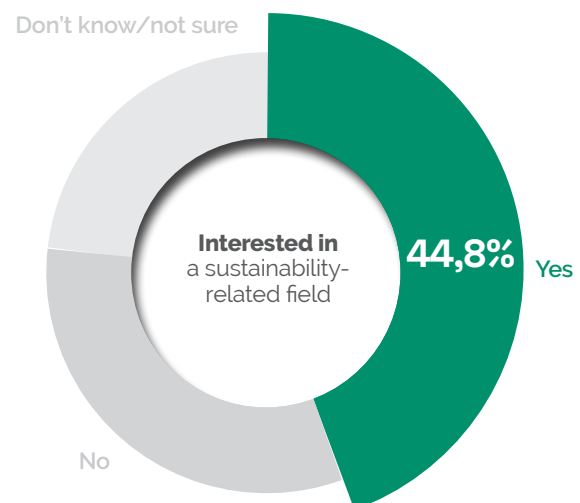
The European Year of Rail is an opportunity for our sector **to show job seekers the possibilities that work in transport can offer and inform our experienced colleagues the opportunities available for them to pursue.** Through initiatives such as STAFFER, the “Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills”

for Rail, the UNIFE-coordinated **“Hop On For Our Planet” campaign**, and our participation in the **Women in Transport platform**, our sector is working hard to ensure that Europe drives the global effort towards a green transition and that its workers are well-suited to the resulting economy.

**Gen Z urge public authorities to invest in sustainable rail transport.**



**About half of Gen Z want to hop on to careers and studies for the planet.**



\*European Rail Supply Industry

## STAFFER: creating long-term educational and training opportunities



@rail\_staffer



rail staffer

The 2019 European Commission *Study on the competitiveness of the Rail Supply Industry* identified the “promotion of the development of skills and safeguard of access to skilled labour” as one of the main action fields for maintaining ensuring Europe’s rail supply industry’s leadership. According to this study, “the supply of technical engineers may become a bottleneck in maintaining the competitive position of the EU rail supply industry”. It even states that “combined with a decreasing workforce due to ageing, perception of an unattractive sector, and changing skill requirements due to the digital transformation, it is expected that this skills shortage could increase in the near future”. **These mounting challenges necessitate action without further delay.**

The skills challenge was also extensively tackled within the *Final Report of the EC Expert Group on the Competitiveness of the EU Rail Supply Industry*, adopted in October 2019. **This Report confirms that “in view of the ageing population, a significant cohort of employees is expected to retire within the coming years.** At the same time, transformation related to digital and high-tech technologies creates mismatches between available and demanded skills. Already now, enterprises in many Member States are reporting difficulties to find railway engineers”.

**“The ageing of population combined with the lack of technical skills might thus become a bottleneck in maintaining the competitive position of the European rail supply industry over the long term”.**

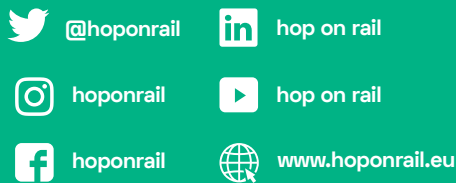
Finally, it points out that “the digital transformation of the supply industry will have a strong impact on production, processes and skills needed in the rail supply industry. In terms of skill changes, virtually all the job categories show an increase in the need for more information and communication technology (ICT) and (broad) technical skills”.

Therefore, in 2019, at the request of UNIFE and following these discussions held within the EC Expert Group on the Competitiveness of the EU Rail Supply Industry, the Commission shortlisted the rail industry as 1 of 6 sectors eligible for the creation of an **Erasmus+ Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills**.

The Blueprint is an EU-funded framework for strategic cooperation between key businesses, trade unions, education and vocational training stakeholders and public authorities. **The aim is to support an overall sectoral skills strategy and develop concrete actions to address short- and medium-term skills needs.** After several months of preparation, UNIFE and 31 other partners submitted their proposal for a European project in February 2020. The Commission announced during the summer 2020 that the project – Skill Training Alliance For the Future European Rail system (STAFFER) – had been approved to be the future Blueprint for our sector.

Coordinated by the University of Genoa (in cc), the project **officially started on 1 November and will last for 4 years.** Its objective is to help identify the main existing skill gaps and assess the future needs in our industry, Vocational & Education Training (VET) institutions and technical universities to propose adaptations to curricula, training and educational programmes so as to address new technological developments and trends.

## HOP ON FOR OUR PLANET: Europe's green future on the fast-track with rail



Hop On For Our Planet is a communications campaign initiated by the European rail supply industry to increase recruitment and address the current skills shortage.

Rail transport is fundamental to achieving Europe's **climate change and innovation commitments**. The industry – particularly, suppliers – have pledged to help make the EU's sustainability and competitiveness vision a reality, seeking to leverage tools ranging from research and innovation to capital investments to achieve these ambitious goals. Yet, some significant trends threaten to undermine the industry's ability to deliver the greener, safer and more sustainable transport solutions that we envisage. This includes a skills shortage exacerbated by significant age disparities within our sector. Unfortunately, rail also suffers from a considerable **gender gap** that makes the industry less attractive to talented potential female employees.

**Do Gen Z – aged 16 to 25 – in Europe want to ride rail because of its green credentials?** Are they interested, especially women, in the numerous green and technology jobs that the rail industry has to offer? How do they want lawmakers to integrate rail transport into the EU Green Deal?

**These and many more questions** are answered by a Europe-wide survey supported by the HOP ON FOR OUR PLANET campaign, the European rail supply industry's initiative to get Europe's green future on the fast-track with rail.

The big take away? **Gen Z wants to HOP ON to academic tracks and careers for the planet.** And the rail supply industry is ready to welcome them to the crew!



## Majority of Gen Z are willing to hop on to greener transport for the planet.

Those most willing to change their transportation habits to practice sustainability, include Gen Z who:



Have a  
**STEM**  
background



Are concerned  
about  
**climate change**

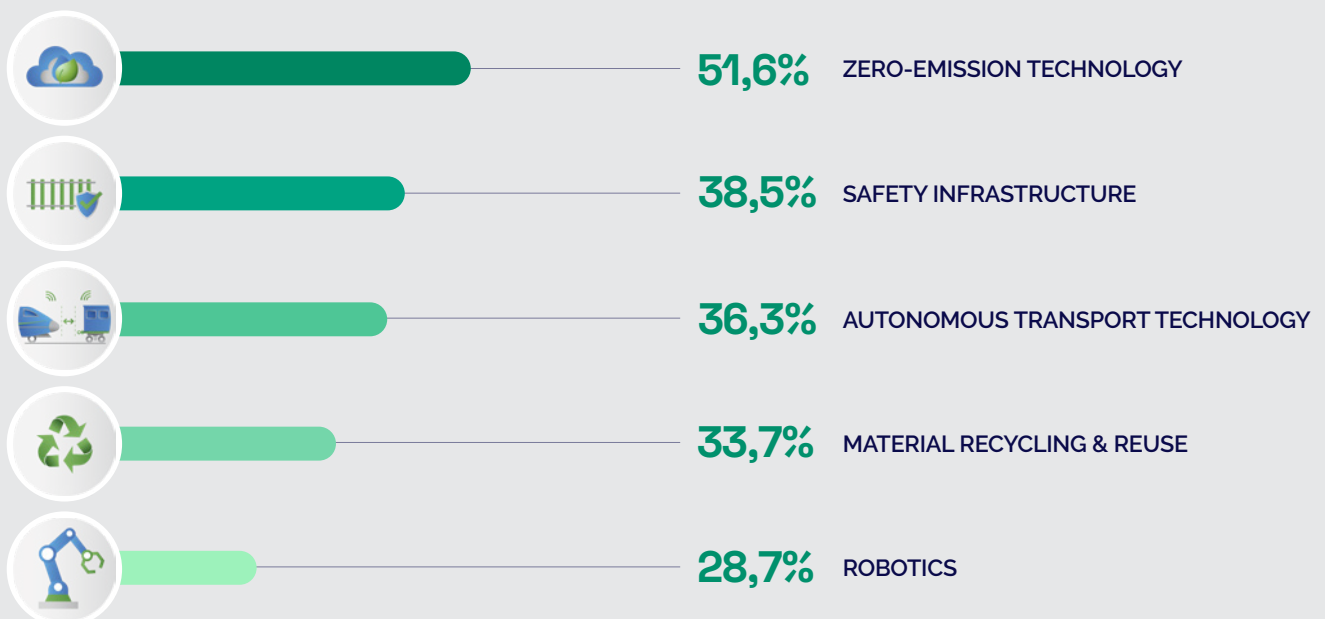


Regularly  
**ride rail**



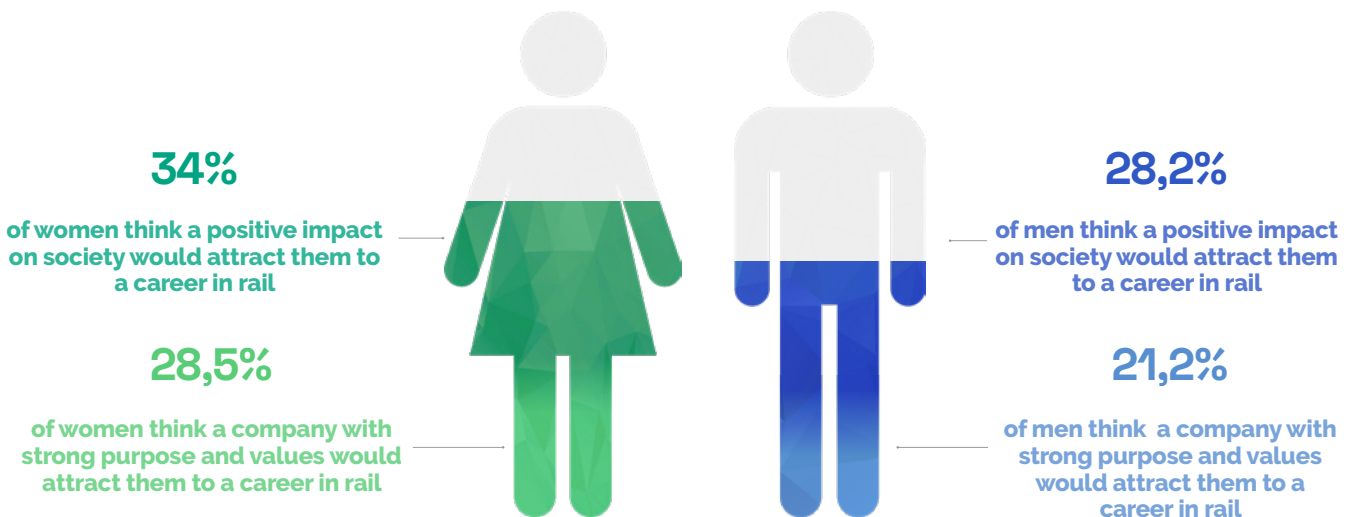
Follow climate  
change  
**related profiles**  
**on social media**

## Gen Z believe zero-emission technology is the innovation future for rail.



## Female Gen Z'ers in STEM value sustainable employers even more than men

Breakdown based on background and gender.



“Hop On for Our Planet was launched at a moment when the European Union is beginning to appreciate the rail sector’s potential contribution to its wider Green Deal goals.”



**Hop On for Our Planet is an important opportunity** for the rail supply industry to welcome in a new generation of innovators – both those entering the work force and those looking to use past experiences as they take on new challenges.

Hop On for Our Planet was launched at a moment when the European Union is beginning to appreciate the rail sector’s potential contribution to its wider Green Deal goals. This year, the Commission announced that 2021 would be a celebration of rail’s value **in future transport decarbonisation through the “European Year of Rail”**.

Hop On for Our Planet is reaching out to **young people and seasoned professionals** across Europe via social media, seminars, press engagement and more, in support of the European Year of Rail, to share with them the impactful climate action opportunities available to them in the European rail supply sector.

Hop on for Our Planet provides an unprecedented **opportunity to recruit new talent and communicate the rewarding possibilities** open to those that chose to work alongside the rail supply industry in building systems for a cleaner planet.