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A new era of long-distance train travel?

Research finds Europeans back dramatic growth of train travel, with short-haul flights expected to stagnate

- Hitachi Rail commissioned survey of 11,000 people in North America and Europe, including France, Spain, Italy and Germany, finds almost half expect to increase long-distance train travel in next five years
- Two-thirds of Europeans also back banning short haul flights where high speed rail alternatives exist
- Globally, over seven in ten would use public transport more if it were better connected, and over half would still use a better connected system more, even if it cost more.

A significant [new study](#), published by Hitachi Rail, has found that citizens around Europe and North America anticipate train travel to soar in the coming years at the expense of flying. Almost two-thirds also back legislation to enforce this change, supporting a ban on short-haul flights where high speed rail alternatives exist.

The survey, carried out by SavantaComres, collected the opinions of over 11,000 people spread across a mixture of countries – the US, UK, France, Italy, Germany and Spain – and key global cities – Washington DC, Toronto, London, Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen and Dubai. This is the third year in a row that Hitachi Rail has commissioned such research.

While rail currently accounts for around one-third (29%) of long-distance journeys – judged as 2.5 hours or more – one-third of people also expect to travel *more* by train in the next 12 months, increasing to between 40% (across countries) and 49% (across cities) in the next five years. By contrast, plane travel is set to stagnate, with only net 2% expecting to fly more in this time period. Respondents also anticipate their car travel growing but 50% less than rail.

The expectation to use train travel more in the future, is also complemented by a clear majority (62%) backing legislation to ban short-haul flights where high speed alternatives exist. In Europe, where there are an increasing number of high speed rail routes, support rises to 67%. Such legislation has already been introduced in France, and is anticipated in Spain, and is popular in both countries with over twice as many respondents supporting it as opposing it. Those surveyed in both countries would even support stronger additional legislation (63% in Spain and 56% in France).

Across every place surveyed, more people also backed funding new rail infrastructure with increased air or road taxes, than those that opposed them.

Edoardo La Ficara, Group Chief Markets Officer, Hitachi Rail, said: “The findings of this research are strikingly clear. Those surveyed expect to increase their rail usage more than any other form of transport in the next five years and they support Government action to enable this. We, as an industry, have a crucial opportunity to meet this public demand by delivering a great sustainable mobility transition.”

The research also explored how to grow public transport usage, with

passengers identifying crowding, affordability and convenience as the biggest challenges. Across all countries, over seven in ten said they would use public transport more if it were better connected, and this remained at over half even if it cost more.

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The report can be downloaded here: [What Motivates Global Travel Decisions | Hitachi Rail](#)

For the full survey data, please contact Ed Brown at ed.brown@hitachirail.com

About Hitachi Rail

Hitachi Rail is committed to driving the sustainable mobility transition and has a clear focus on partnering with customers to rethink mobility. Its mission is to help every passenger, customer and community enjoy the benefits of more connected, seamless and sustainable transport.

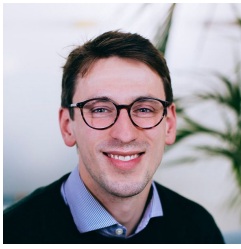
With revenues of over €7bn and 24,000 employees across more than 50 countries, Hitachi Rail is a trusted partner to the world's best transport organisations. The company's reach is global, but the business is local - with success built on developing local talent and investing in people and communities.✕

Its international capabilities and expertise span every part of the urban, mainline and freight rail ecosystems – from high quality manufacturing and maintenance of rolling stock to secure digital signalling, smart operations and payment systems.

Hitachi Rail, famous for Japan's iconic high speed bullet train, draws on the digital and AI expertise of Hitachi Group companies to accelerate innovation and develop new technologies. Hitachi Group is present in 140 countries with over 270,000 employees and global revenues of €54.55bn / ¥8,564 bn.

For more information, visit hitachirail.com

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