

Strengthening Railways to Boost Economic Development

Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) Rail Study Tour

21 – 25 September 2026
Berlin | Germany



1. Background and Rationale

The expansion of cities, rising industrial activity and increasing demand for sustainable transport are creating substantial opportunities for railway development. This presents a unique opportunity for Europe and Germany to strengthen their partnerships, share their expertise and contribute to the development of transport networks in the Global South. Poor network condition, high capital costs, lack of harmonized standards, weak institutional frameworks, and limited local expertise are the main barriers for the development of railway networks.

BMZ is currently supporting the African Development Bank (AfDB) in identifying ways to strengthen training capacities that are essential for the planning, constructing and operating railway systems in Africa. Improved human capacity is expected to reduce implementation and operational risks associated with rail investments. The project is being implemented by GIZ.

Building on the unique global platform of the world's leading railway technology trade fair InnoTrans 2026, GIZ will bring together representatives from governments, railway authorities, development partners, and the European railway industry to explore opportunities for deeper cooperation, investment, and knowledge exchange in the railway sector.

2. Objectives of the Study Tour

The study tour will bring together high-level decision makers from government, railway authorities and operators, development partners, and technical experts from Africa, Europe, Latin America and Central Asia. The programme is designed to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and dialogue on pathways to strengthen railway systems as a key driver of sustainable economic development. It aims to identify cooperation opportunities, forge partnerships, and promote investment and knowledge exchange in the railway sector by enabling exchange with relevant industry stakeholders.

With the objective of translating insights into actionable measures, it will convene guided tours at the trade fair, site visits and targeted expert talks with Deutsche Bahn and other industry partners to connect participants with practitioners on topics such as digitalisation, maintenance, operation, interoperability and skills development. Specifically, the study tour will share German experience in technical and vocational education and training in the railway sector by visiting railway training centres and generating practical recommendations for the institutional setup of such centres, their governance, and sustainable operation.

Further, the study tour aims to facilitate an African-European Industry Dialogue at InnoTrans where participants could meet with leading German and European private sector to present and discuss opportunities for railway development in Africa. Further discussions with the EU, BMZ and development banks give an opportunity to align strategies and discuss funding opportunities.

3. Target Group

The Study Tour targets decision-makers from ministries of transport, railway authorities and operators in selected African countries as well as delegations from Latin America and Central Asia. Participants are expected to include representatives from national railway authorities, and corridor authorities. We encourage the participation of female professionals in this field, as their contributions are invaluable to shaping the future of sustainable rail transport on the continent. The working language of the Study Tour will be English.

4. Agenda

The Study Tour will take place from Monday 21 to Friday 25 September 2026, with activities in Berlin and its surrounding. The programme opens on Monday with the participation at the TUMI Conference, organised by the Transforming Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI). This year's conference will focus on People, Cities and Corridors: Integrating Transport for Sustainable and Resilient Regions. Tuesday and Wednesday will be dedicated to visit the [InnoTrans](#), the leading international trade fair for transport technology, which takes place every two years in Berlin. A key highlight will be the African European Industry Dialogue, where industry players from both continents will convene to explore opportunities for deeper cooperation, investment, and knowledge exchange in the rail sector.

Following the conference, participants will engage in expert discussions on critical topics shaping the future of railways such as digitalisation, financing, and training and skills development. These sessions will be complemented by technical site visits to railway infrastructure, operations and maintenance facilities as well as vocational training centres. These visits will offer direct insight into how efficient railway systems are built, run and sustained.

5. Participation and Costs

The GIZ will agree on travel logistics and coverage of travel expenses and accommodation costs with each participant. During the study tour, GIZ will organise and cover local transport from 21 to 25 September required for the participation in the agenda, registration for TUMI Conference and InnoTrans as well as selected meals. All other cost will be at the participant's expense. GIZ will be responsible for the overall organisation of the Study Tour, including programme development, coordination of site visits, and logistical arrangements such as local transport.

About TUMI

TUMI (Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative) is the leading global implementation initiative on sustainable mobility formed through the union of 11 prestigious partners. We are united in one goal: changing mobility for the benefit of people and the environment, with a view to the future.

With TUMI, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is supporting climate-friendly, inclusive, safe and affordable Mobility in cities. TUMI is funded by BMZ and implemented by GIZ in collaboration with all TUMI partners.