



Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires  
Zwischenstaatliche Organisation für den internationalen Eisenbahnverkehr  
Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

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**Secrétaire général**  
**Generalsekretär**  
**Secretary General**

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## **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

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Head of the Legal Department in the OTIF Secretariat

## **Background information about OTIF**

The Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail ([OTIF](#)) is based in Berne, Switzerland. The aim of the Organisation is to promote, improve and facilitate, in all respects, international traffic by rail. The Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail ([COTIF](#)) is OTIF's basic text. The appendices to COTIF constitute uniform railway law for international railway transport among OTIF's members in the following areas: railway contract law, transport of dangerous goods and technical interoperability. At its 16<sup>th</sup> session, the General Assembly adopted the '[OTIF Long-term Strategy](#)' to guide the Organisation.

OTIF currently has fifty-one Member States, one regional economic integration organisation and one Associate Member (see [OTIF membership and application of Appendices to COTIF](#)).

The Organisation has 20 members of staff and has the following structural units: Legal Department, Dangerous Goods Department, Technical Interoperability Department, Administration and Finance Department, Translation Department and Communication Department.

## **Background information about the Legal Department**

The Legal Department is responsible for legal and administrative matters relating to COTIF itself and Appendices A (CIV UR), B (CIM UR), D (CUV UR) and E (CUI UR). In particular, it:

- provides legal advice mainly in the fields of transport law and private law, but also public international law and EU law;
- provides legal advice and assistance on the implementation and application of the Convention;
- provides legal advice and assistance on the procedure for accession to OTIF;
- exercises most of the depositary functions;
- provides substantive secretariat functions for the General Assembly (partially), the Revision Committee (partially) and the ad hoc Committee on Legal Affairs and International Cooperation;
- prepares and reviews proposals to amend the Convention, in particular with regard to the development of railway law;
- represents OTIF in various meetings (mostly in English), particularly in other international organisations and associations;
- promotes and disseminates information (mostly in English) on OTIF law in seminars, conferences and other events and by means of articles and reports.

For a more comprehensive understanding of the work of the Legal Department, please consult the information on OTIF's website on [Legal Affairs and International Cooperation](#), the [Work Programme](#) and the [Annual Report](#).

## **Organisational setting and working hours**

The post of Head of the Legal Department is a full-time post (Assistant Counsellor in accordance with the Staff Regulations) in the OTIF Secretariat. The Head of the Legal Department is directly accountable to the Secretary General.

## **Duties of the Head of the Legal Department**

The main duties of the Head of the Legal Department are as follows:

### **1. Leadership and Management**

- organising and managing the Legal Department;
- leading the independent review and strategic development of OTIF law to ensure its relevance, coherence, and effectiveness in the international rail transport sector;
- providing legal support and strategic advice to the Secretary General on matters related to the interpretation and application of OTIF law, governance, international cooperation and institutional affairs.

### **2. Legal Advice and Legislative Work**

- independent review and development of OTIF law;
- providing legal research, expertise and advice in the fields of public international law, private law, transport law and OTIF law;
- drafting working documents, legal opinions, legislative proposals and meeting reports;
- supporting the implementation and application of OTIF law;
- contributing to the monitoring and assessment of the implementation and application of OTIF's legal instruments.

### **3. Representation and Coordination**

- representing the OTIF Secretariat at international meetings;
- organising, preparing and coordinating meetings of OTIF's organs and other international meetings.

### **4. Communication and Dissemination**

- preparing legal documents to enhance understanding and application of OTIF law;
- giving presentations and holding training sessions on OTIF law at seminars, conferences and other international events;
- engaging with OTIF members and stakeholders to promote awareness and understanding of OTIF's legal framework;
- drafting articles for OTIF's Bulletin of International Carriage by Rail.

### **5. Additional Responsibilities**

- performing other duties as required.

## **Terms and conditions of employment:**

The conditions of employment are those laid down in the Staff Regulations. The post holder will receive a fixed-term contract of up to five years' duration with a probation period of three months, renewable once for three months. The annual salary is set at the grade of Assistant Counsellor, step 1, i.e. CHF 143,454 (tax-free in Switzerland) on a full time basis (40 hours/week). The post holder will be subject to the Staff Regulations in force.

Other components of the remuneration according to the Staff Regulations include allowance for spouse, child allowance, education grant for child, contribution from the Organisation to health insurance and to a pension fund and paid leave of 2.5 days per month worked.

Teleworking in accordance with the internal rules may be possible after successful completion of a probation period.

### **Required profile and requirements**

Applicants must comply with the requirements set out below by the deadline for applications.

#### *Nationality*

Applicants must be nationals of an [OTIF Member State](#).

#### *Age*

Applicants must be under the statutory retirement age of 65 for the entire duration of the contract (see Article 47 of the [Staff Regulations](#)).

#### *Education*

A first-level university law degree (i.e. bachelor's degree or equivalent) that is a recognised qualification in order to practise as a lawyer in an OTIF Member State is mandatory.

In addition to a first-level law degree, an advanced university law degree (i.e. master's or doctoral degrees, or equivalent as referred to above) will be considered an advantage.

Degrees must be awarded by educational institutions accredited by the competent authority in the country where the issuing institution is based. In the case of an equivalent degree, an explanation should be provided.

#### *Work Experience*

At least six years post-qualification professional legal experience, including at least two years in railway law and three years in a managerial and/or leadership role. The professional experience must include legal analysis, research and writing, with a focus on interpreting, applying, and advising on complex legal matters.

Experience in legislative and regulatory policy would be considered an advantage.

#### *Languages*

Knowledge of English and at least one of OTIF's other working languages (French or German). Very good knowledge is required for one language and good knowledge is required for the other language.

#### *Core competencies*

Professionalism: good knowledge of international railway law (COTIF and others), private law and public international law. Ability to apply legal knowledge to analyse complex legal issues and to develop creative solutions. Strong analytical and research skills, ability to work independently and to exercise initiative. Negotiating ability in order to reach understanding and resolve points of difference. Demonstrate persistence and integrity when faced with difficult problems. General knowledge of how rail transport operates.

Accountability: work in compliance with the Organisation's rules, assume responsibility and honour commitments.

Teamwork: ability to work collaboratively as part of a team in an international multicultural context.

Communication: networking ability to build and maintain relations, proven sensitivity to diplomatic concerns.

Planning and organising: ability to allocate appropriate amount of time and resources to complete tasks within set deadlines. Capacity to multitask and to work under pressure to tight deadlines. Ability to set and adjust plans and actions as necessary. Willingness to travel.

### **Submission of applications**

Candidates for this post are invited to send their applications by email only to [join-otif@otif.org](mailto:join-otif@otif.org), by **2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025** for the attention of the Secretary General.

Applications must contain:

- a one-page cover letter with a concise statement explaining why the candidate is applying and how he/she is qualified for the post. Candidates should also include their vision for the post and what they personally will bring to the team and wider organisation;
- a curriculum vitae;
- an annexed application form requiring the candidate to provide specific information on their compliance with the required profile.

### **Assessment of applications**

It is intended that the assessment of applications will consist of the following stages:

1. **Pre-selection screening.** Applications will be reviewed to ensure compliance with formal eligibility criteria.
2. **Selection of candidates for remote written assessment.** Candidates will be selected for the next stage of the assessment process based on their skills, competencies, professional experience, and vision for the post submitted as part of the initial application.
3. **Remote written assessment.** Candidates will be asked to complete a written assessment remotely within a one-week timeframe. The assessment will typically be based on case studies and will be in English. Candidates should preferably respond in English; however, responses in one of OTIF's other working languages (French or German) will also be accepted.
4. **Psychometric tests.** Candidates may be invited to complete a psychometric test.
5. **Competency-based in-person interview and written test.** Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a competency-based interview in person. That interview will be conducted mainly in English and will consist of:
  - a brief presentation by applicants, focusing on the reasons for applying and how their experience and skills are relevant to the post, and in particular how they will add value to the post and what their vision for it will be;

- general questions on core competencies, including requests for relevant examples of academic and professional experience;
- specific questions on legal competencies in international railway law (COTIF and others), private law and public international law.

Candidates selected for interview who attend in-person may be asked to complete an additional written test at OTIF's offices on the same day as the interview.

6. **Final evaluation of candidates.** Based on interview performance and overall assessment, the best-performing candidates will be shortlisted for a final evaluation. This stage may involve:
  - an assessment of the candidates' vision for the post and leadership potential within OTIF;
  - obtaining references and carrying out background checks;
  - as far as possible, the equitable geographical distribution of nationalities among the staff in the Secretariat will be taken into account;
  - an assessment (based on the information provided by the candidate in writing and orally at interview) of their ability to work effectively in a multicultural environment, fostering constructive relationships with OTIF Member States and international partners.
7. **Final selection and approval.** In accordance with the applicable regulations, the preferred candidate for the post must be appointed by a decision of OTIF's Administrative Committee. Any offer made will therefore be subject to the final decision of the Administrative Committee.

Candidates who are unsuccessful in their application for this role may be considered for other suitable roles in OTIF's Legal Department.

**APPLICATION FORM****Personal and Contact Details**

- Full Name:
- Current Address:
- E-mail:
- Telephone:

**Nationality**

- Nationality (specify the OTIF Member State):

**Age Requirement**

- Date of Birth:

**Education***First-level university law degree*

- Institution:
- Degree title:
- Date of graduation:

*Advanced level university law degree*

- Institution:
- Degree title:
- Date of graduation:

**Work Experience***Total Years of Post-Qualification Legal Experience (at least 6 years):*

- From (Month/Year):
- To (Month/Year):
- Duration:
- Organisation:
- Role/Position title:
- Role/Position functions:

*Railway Law Experience (at least 2 years):*

- From (Month/Year):
- To (Month/Year):
- Duration:
- Organisation:
- Role/Position title:
- Role/Position functions (focus on railway law responsibilities):

*Managerial and/or Leadership Experience (at least 3 years):*

- From (Month/Year):
- To (Month/Year):
- Duration:
- Organisation:
- Role/Position title:
- Role/Position functions (team size, scope of responsibility, projects managed):

*Additional Experience in Legislative and Regulatory Policy (if applicable)*

- From (Month/Year):
- To (Month/Year):
- Duration:
- Organisation:
- Role/Position title:
- Role/Position functions:

**Language Skills (Basic User (A), Independent User (B) or Proficient User (C))**

- English:
- French:
- German:
- Other languages (if applicable):

**Core Competencies**

*Please provide brief examples to demonstrate each of the required competencies.*

- **Professionalism** (Describe a situation in which you applied your legal knowledge (international railway law, private law or public international law) to analyse a complex issue and develop a solution)
- **Accountability** (Provide an example that illustrates how you have assumed responsibility for tasks or decisions, including the outcomes)
- **Teamwork** (Describe your experience working in a multicultural or international context. How did you collaborate with others to achieve common goals?)
- **Communication** (Give an example of a time you used diplomacy, negotiation or networking skills to resolve differences or build relationships)
- **Planning and Organising** (Explain how you manage multiple priorities under tight deadlines. Provide a recent example)

*Note: Please submit this completed application form along with:*

1. a one-page cover letter, including a description of your vision for the post;
2. a curriculum vitae;
3. any supporting documents (e.g. degree certificates, reference letters).