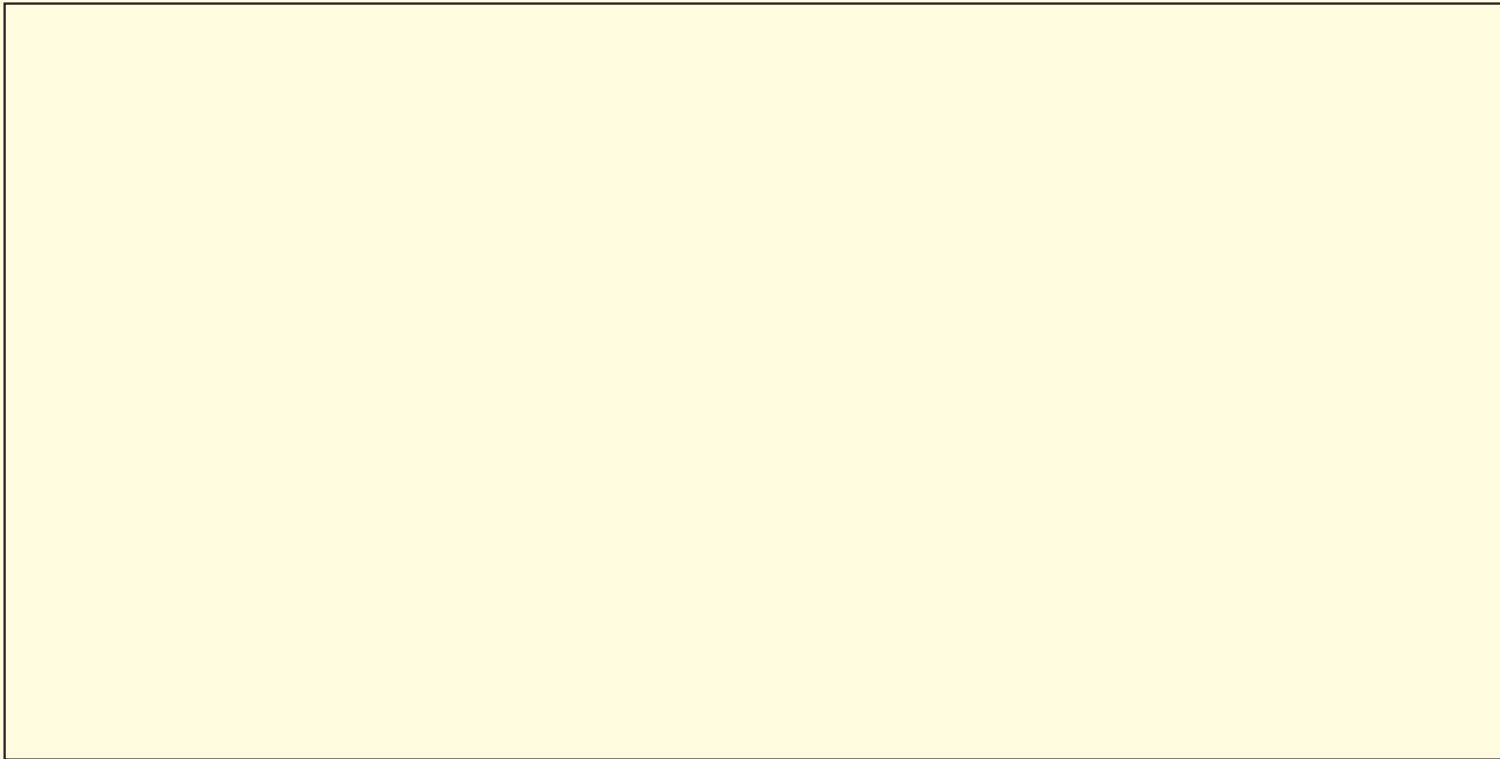


# Rail Network

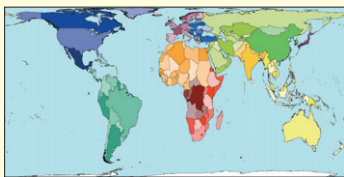


In 2002 there were one million kilometres of railway in the world. If this railway were evenly spread out in a grid system, the furthest you could ever possibly be from a railway would be 65 kilometres.

A railway can be used to transport passengers or freight. However the existence of a rail network does not always mean high usage. South America has 9% of all railway lines in the world, but only 0.5% of all passenger kilometres travelled and 0.1% of all rail freight.

Many of the territories without a rail network are relatively small islands. Of the seven territories with the largest land areas, six also have the longest distances of railway.

Territory size shows the proportion of all railway lines in the world found there.



Land area

**Technical notes**

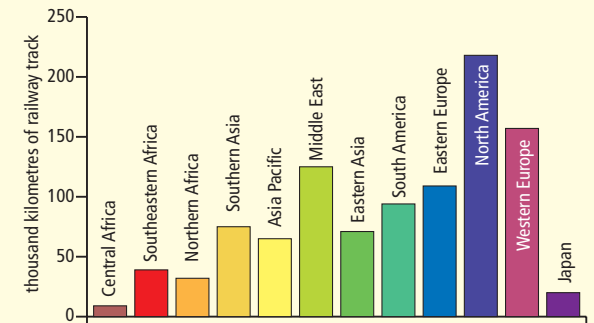
- Data source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2005. Data are from 2002.
- \*64 territories had no recorded rail system.
- The World Bank defines railway line as the length of the route available for service, irrespective of the number of parallel tracks.
- See website for further information.

## SHORTEST AND LONGEST RAILWAY TRACKS

Rank	Territory	Value	Rank	Territory	Value
1	Czech Republic	123	127	Uganda	1.31
2	Belgium	107	128	Mongolia	1.16
3	Germany	103	129	Paraguay	1.11
4	Hungary	84	130	Mauritania	0.70
5	Netherlands	83	131	Ethiopia	0.68
6	Switzerland	81	132	Mali	0.60
7	Slovakia	76	133	Saudi Arabia	0.50
8	United Kingdom	71	134	Venezuela	0.49
9	Austria	69	135	Nepal	0.41
10	Poland	66	136	Nicaragua	0.05

metres of track per square kilometre of land\*

## LENGTH OF RAILWAYS



*“Japanese railways nationwide pass through some 3800 mountain tunnels totalling 2100 km in length, including the Seikan Tunnel (the world’s longest tunnel) completed in 1988.”*

Yukinori Koyama , 1997