



Innovative gender equality measures in the transport industry

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Introduction

Despite their growing presence, women's participation in the transport industry is still limited, particularly in certain transport subsectors. Moreover, available evidence suggests that a large proportion of women working in the transport sector are affected by poorer working conditions than their male counterparts.

In this context, the European Transport Workers' Federation (**ETF**¹) held a conference in May 2005, aimed at analysing the increasing role played by women in the transport sector and identifying the most significant future challenges facing women in the sector. In this respect, the ETF conference identified both a lack of data and visibility in relation to women working in the transport industry and a generally poor understanding of the increasing presence of women in transport and the specific needs of the emerging female workforce.

All of these issues help to explain the relative absence of actions and policies to manage this change, given that the perception of gender as a strong dimension of change seems to be usually overlooked both by social partners and policymakers. Such a scenario increases the risk of a growing segment of the transport workforce becoming exposed to poorer working conditions.

Nonetheless, some social partner groups have begun to address the issue of gender inequalities in the transport sector, essentially with the aim of making it a more attractive and 'equal' industry for female workers. Examples of initiatives in this respect include gender mainstreaming at the level of collective bargaining, or implementing practical measures at company or sectoral level to complement existing legal and collective bargaining provisions.

In this context, the ETF requested research on this issue from the European Monitoring Centre on Change (**EMCC**²) – an observatory of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The Foundation, in turn, commissioned Ikei Research and Consultancy to conduct the research, the findings of which are outlined in this report.

Outline of report

Essentially, the report aims to investigate the development and implementation of innovative measures designed to foster gender equality in the transport sector. To this end, the report outlines and analyses eight innovative measures that have been taken by national trade unions or other social partner groups in seven countries: Croatia, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom (UK). The common characteristic uniting all of these measures is their central objective of improving gender equality at the workplace in a number of transport subsectors.

It is hoped that this report will contribute to diffusing and making more visible examples of good practice in gender mainstreaming within the transport industry; at the same time, this could allow the opportunity for a major transformation in the sector from the perspective of equal opportunities in the workplace for men and women.

The report is structured in three main sections. The first section sets the scene by presenting some statistical information on employment trends in the transport industry and its subsectors, which includes data on the presence of female workers; this information is complemented by qualitative information describing some of the main barriers that continue to prevent the full incorporation of women into the transport sector. The second section constitutes the main bulk of the report, providing an outline of eight innovative initiatives, which have been adopted in the seven countries and which aim to foster gender equality in a number of transport subsectors. Finally, the third section outlines a number of conclusions, along with potential lessons to be learnt, based on the findings described in the report.

¹ <http://www.itfglobal.org/etf/>

² <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/>

Employment trends in transport

Employment in European transport industry

The transport sector plays a central role in the European Union today. The sector represents a significant proportion of the EU's gross domestic product (GDP): data for 2004 estimated that transport constituted approximately 10% of GDP in the EU. At the same time, an efficient and smoothly functioning transport sector is regarded as being a necessary precondition for adding value in the other economic sectors: transport not only facilitates the movement of passengers, goods, services and capital, but also represents one of the key success factors in business today due to its role in facilitating an efficient distribution of materials and products worldwide.

The provision of transport services requires enormous capital investment. This is particularly true in relation to rail, sea and air transport, but also in terms of modern road transport services. However, the smooth functioning of the transport system also greatly depends on the workforce. In 2004, the transport sector employed about 8.7 million people in the EU25 and the then acceding countries, Bulgaria and Romania – now collectively referred to as the EU27 (European Commission, 2007). In the EU15 alone in 2004, the transport sector provided employment to around 6.8 million people, while some 8.2 million people were estimated to be employed in transport in the EU25 (Table 1).

Interestingly, from the perspective of the EU27, the largest proportion of employment in transport is found within the road transport sector: the two most important transport subsectors in terms of employment are road freight transport and road passenger transport, which account for 31.3% and 21.1% of the sector's total employment respectively, or about 4.5 million workers in total. Railway transport accounts for 11.3% of the existing employment, whereas sea and air transport represent 2.1% and 4.7% respectively of transport employment in the EU27. It is also worth mentioning that around 28.7% of employment is found in auxiliary transport activities, such as cargo handling, storage and logistics, travel and transport agencies and tour operators. These activities are gaining in importance alongside the increasing transport volumes, especially in the EU15.

Table 1: *Number of employees by transport subsector, EU15, EU25 and EU27, 2004*

Transport subsector	EU15	EU25	EU27
Railways (NACE 60.1)	578,407	911,848	981,848
Road freight transport (NACE 60.2, partially)	2,144,125	2,600,659	2,709,666
Road passenger transport (NACE 60.2, partially)	1,382,899	1,700,991	1,825,594
Transport via pipelines (NACE 60.3)	6,218	10,134	12,248
Sea and coastal water transport (NACE 61.1)	153,579	163,325	183,325
Inland water transport (NACE 61.2)	32,342	36,746	42,002
Air transport (NACE 62)	373,940	396,649	418,399
Travel agencies and tour operators (NACE 63.3)	426,666	478,680	490,589
Other auxiliary transport activities*	1,748,498	1,925,550	1,996,002
Total	6,846,674	8,224,582	8,659,673

* Other auxiliary transport activities include cargo handling and storage, other supporting activities, activities of other transport agencies (NACE 63.1/2/4)

Source: *European Commission, 2007*

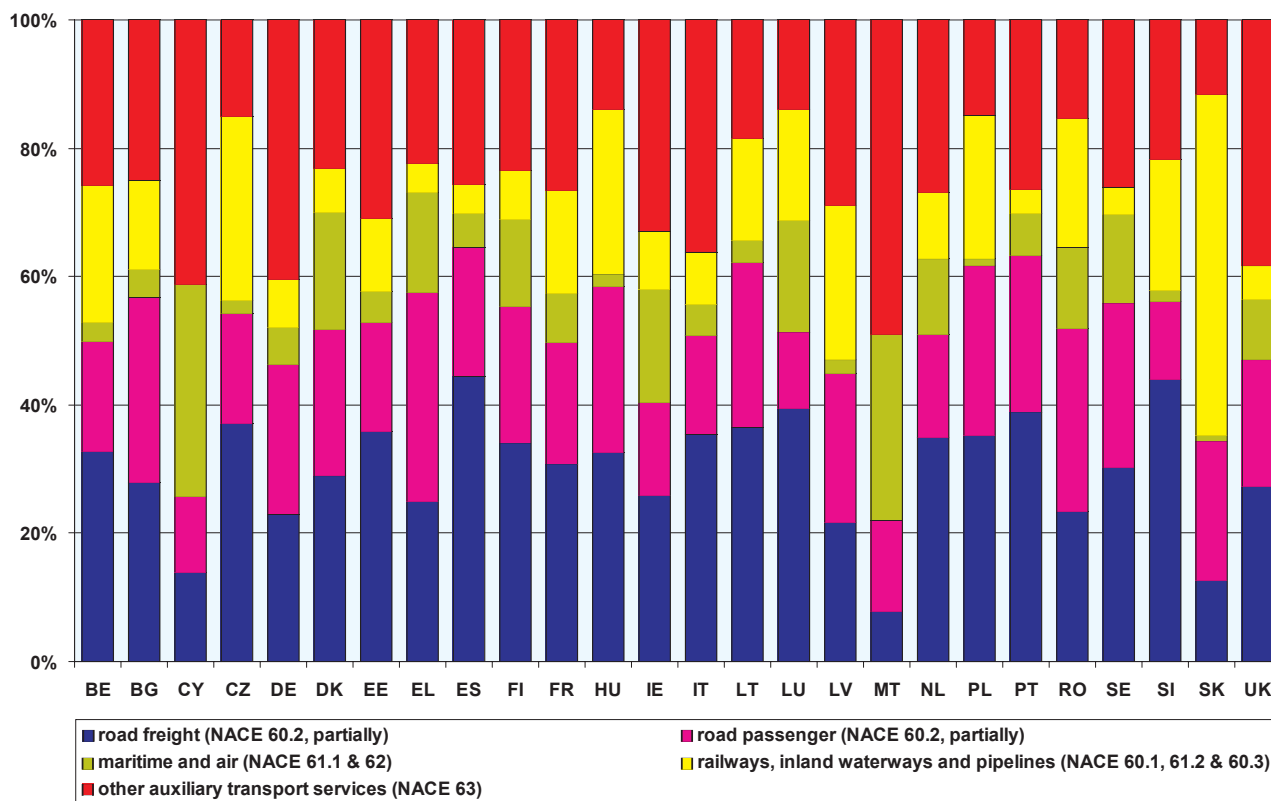
From a national perspective, the available data show that around 60.2% of total transport employment in the EU is located in five Member States – Germany (14.3%), France (13%), the UK (12.6%), Italy (10.8%) and Spain (9.5%) (Table 2). Other Member States that account for significant levels of employment in transport include Poland (6.5%), the Netherlands (3.9%), the Czech Republic (3.2%) and Romania (3.2%).

Table 2: Total number and percentage of people employed in transport

Country	Total no. of people employed	% employed
DE	1,238,001	14.3
FR	1,125,487	13.0
UK	1,091,914	12.6
IT	935,659	10.8
ES	820,203	9.5
PL	566,844	6.5
NL	341,566	3.9
CZ	277,355	3.2
RO	273,303	3.2
SE	222,458	2.6
HU	212,273	2.5
EL	200,000	2.3
AT	199,211	2.3
BE	192,352	2.2
BG	161,788	1.9
PT	150,361	1.7
DK	150,361	1.6
FI	113,518	1.3
LT	75,755	0.9
SK	75,721	0.9
LV	65,504	0.8
IE	62,642	0.7
SI	40,632	0.5
EE	35,202	0.4
LU	18,739	0.2
CY	18,237	0.2
MT	10,385	0.1
Total EU27	8,659,673	100.0

Source: *European Commission, 2007*

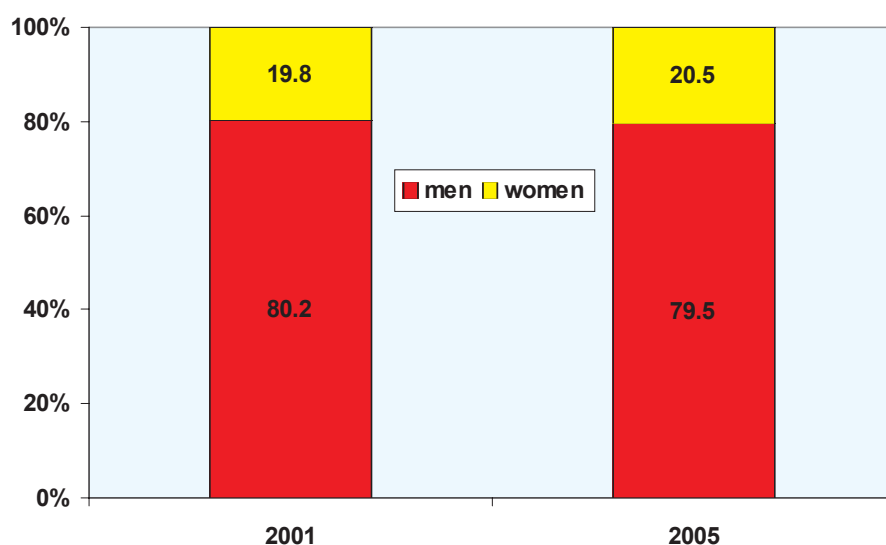
The distribution of employment by transport subsector also underlines important differences between the Member States in relation to their geographical location or area of specialisation (Figure 1). For example, employment in sea and air transport is particularly important in countries that have longer coastlines or that are relatively isolated geographically – Cyprus, Malta, Ireland and Greece. Conversely, employment in railway and inland waterway transport seems to be more important in some central European countries, such as Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. On the other hand, auxiliary services, which include tourist services, constitute an important source of employment in countries that are popular tourist destinations, such as Malta or Cyprus; these services are also important employers in countries such as Germany or the UK, which are particularly specialised in cargo handling, storage and logistics. The importance of the rail transport in the new Member States should also be underlined.

Figure 1: *Employment distribution by transport subsector and Member State, 2004 (%)*


Source: *European Commission, 2007*

Employment in transport from a gender perspective

From a gender-specific perspective, women's participation in the transport sector is growing; nevertheless, as a whole, women's involvement can still only be regarded as minor, particularly in certain subsectors. In fact, transport is one of the most gender-segregated sectors of the economy: in 2005, just 20.5% of the EU27 transport workforce consisted of women, in comparison with an overall female employment rate of 43.5% of total employment (Figures 2 and 3). Nevertheless, the presence of women in the transport sector has slightly increased since 2001, when women comprised 19.8% of the transport workforce compared with 20.5% in 2005.

Figure 2: *Employment in transport by sex, EU27, 2001 and 2005 (%)*

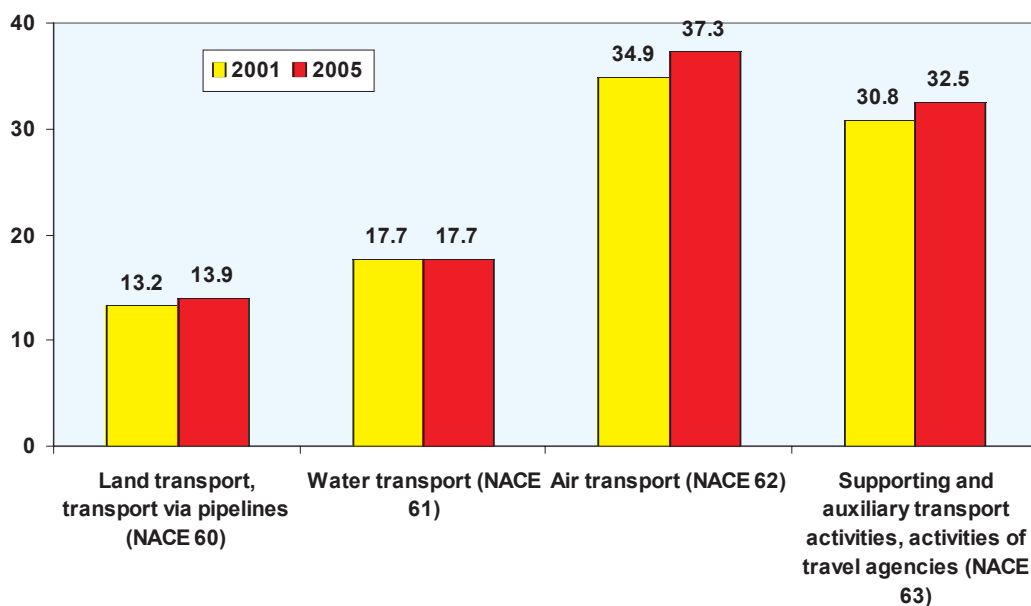
Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey (elaborated by Ikei)

Figure 3: *Total employment by sex, EU27, 2001 and 2005 (%)*

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey (elaborated by Ikei)

Interestingly, a gender breakdown of employment according to transport subsectors reveals a slightly different result in relation to women's participation (Figure 4). The presence of women is particularly significant in the air transport sector (NACE 62) and in the supporting and auxiliary transport activities/activities of travel agencies subsectors (NACE 63), amounting to more than 37% and 32% of the workforce respectively in 2005. Conversely, women have only a minor presence in the two remaining transport sectors – water transport (NACE 61) and land transport (NACE 60), comprising less than 18% and 14% of the workforce respectively. However, it should be pointed out that women's participation in all of these subsectors has increased in the last five years, since 2001.

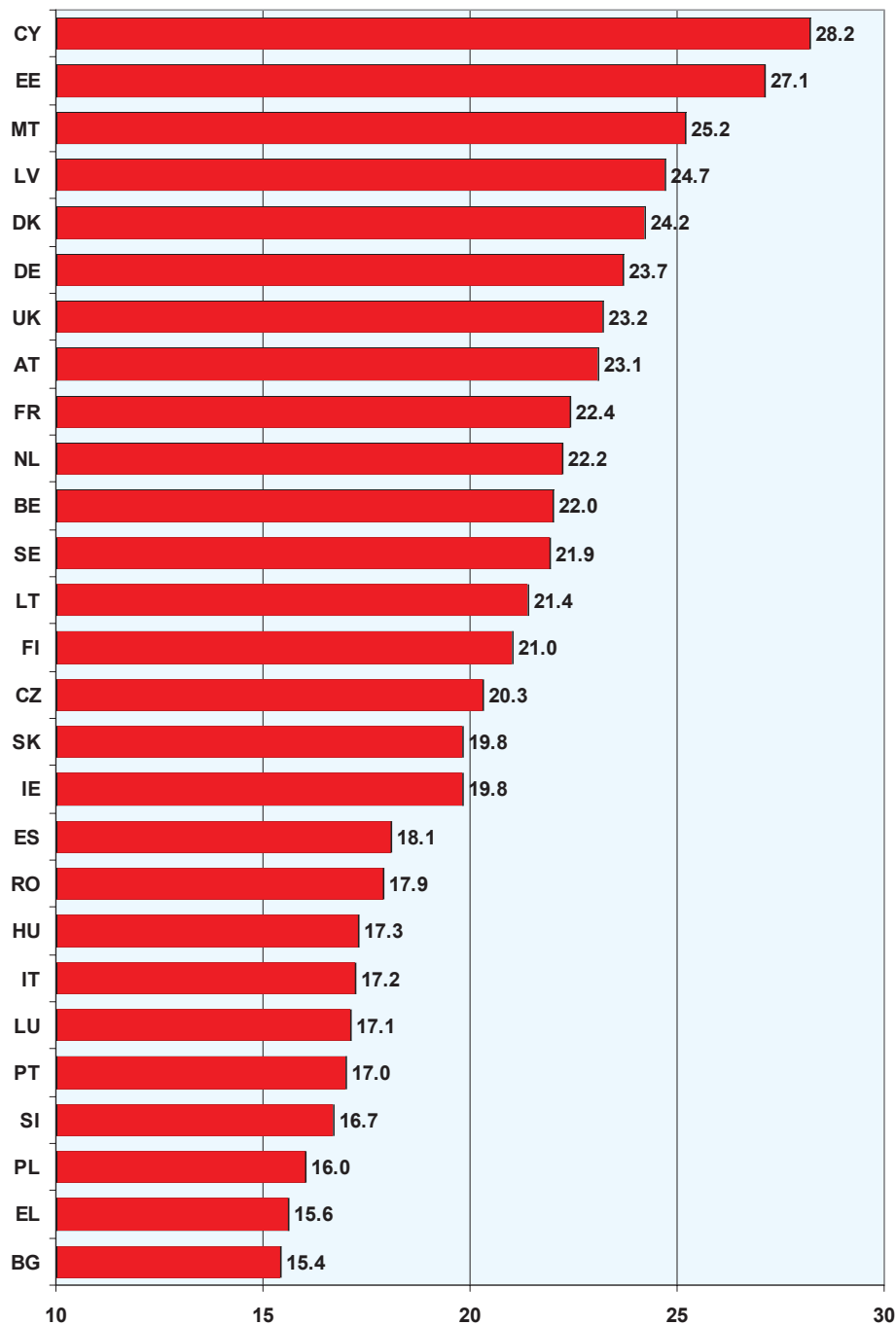
Figure 4: Female employment by transport subsector, EU27, 2001 and 2005 (%)



Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey (elaborated by Ikei)

From a national perspective, it is clear that women's employment in the transport sector is limited in all of the EU27 Member States (Figure 5). The available data show that female employment is particularly low in the case of Poland, Greece and Bulgaria, constituting less than 16% of total transport employment. In contrast, women account for between 25% and 28% of total employment in the sector in countries such as Cyprus, Estonia and Malta. The strong presence of tourism-related transport activities and the small size of the national economies may explain these results, particularly in the cases of Cyprus and Malta.

Figure 5: Proportion of women employed in transport sector, by EU Member States, 2005 (%)



Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey (elaborated by Ikei)

Barriers to women's employment in transport

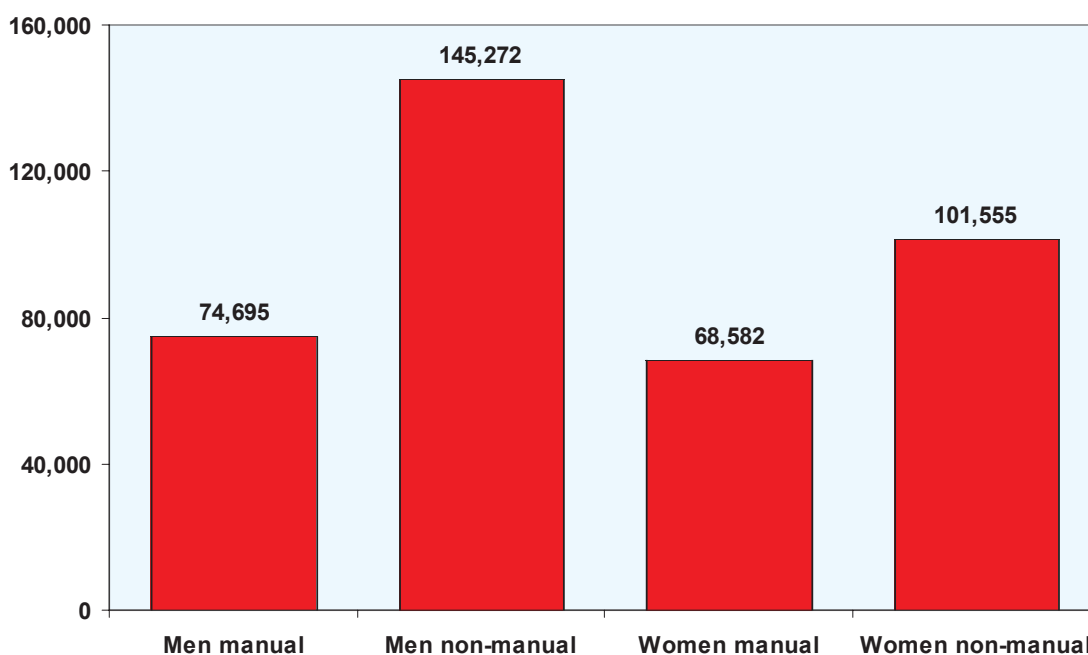
As outlined, women's involvement in the transport sector can still be regarded as limited, particularly in comparison with their presence in the labour market as a whole. In this context, women still face a number of barriers that hinder their full participation in the sector, making it an unattractive industry for female workers. Such obstacles include some of the following issues (ETF, 2005).

Pregnancy and family status have a strong influence on the recruitment and redundancy decisions of employers and can have a negative impact on the career prospects of women working in transport. Employers are particularly concerned about the impact of career breaks on workers' professional life; thus, maternity, childcare or elderly care can have an adverse effect on the women's professional careers, as employers regard female workers as being less reliable: it may be unclear for employers whether women will return to their original jobs after taking professional breaks. Moreover, employers tend to feel that it is less worthwhile 'investing' in female workers and, as a result, training opportunities and career prospects are considerably reduced for women.

Some professions in the transport sector involve working hours that are not always family friendly, particularly in the case of certain mobile professions that require prolonged absences from home – for example, long-distance drivers or jobs on board a ship or aeroplane; this can prevent women from taking up certain jobs in transport. Moreover, unpredictable work shifts and overtime – particularly in companies involved in door-to-door delivery – can represent a considerable source of stress for female transport workers with family responsibilities.

With regard to equal pay, gender segregation in transport maintains and reinforces considerable pay gaps. In Hungary, for instance, significant pay differences emerge between men and women involved in the same types of work, with male manual workers earning an average of HUF³ 74,695 (about €295 as at 12 June 2007) compared with around HUF 68,582 (€271) for female manual workers (Figure 6). At the same time, men are usually concentrated in technical jobs, which are regarded as more skilled, while women are predominantly employed in administrative and customer services; this factor may also explain the existing pay gap, as technical jobs are usually better paid in comparison with clerical positions. Male transport workers also work longer hours and account for most of the full-time jobs, as well as being the employers' preference for working night shifts, while women tend to opt for more flexible working arrangements. Finally, access to male-dominated jobs is still problematic, despite the fact that both men and women today have equal access to vocational training. This leads to situations whereby women are trained in technical professions but cannot get a job to match their level of qualifications. All of these factors contribute to deepening the gender pay gap in transport.

Figure 6: *Net wages by sex and type of work in Hungarian transport sector, 2003 (Hungarian forints, HUF)*



Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, KSH), Labour Force Survey, 2003

³ Hungarian currency 'forint'

With regard to working conditions and the working environment, workplace ergonomics in male-dominated transport subsectors usually reflect the male work environment; as a result, women working in transport often have to adjust to a male-centred organisation of work, workplace culture and working conditions. A similar situation exists in relation to health and safety issues at the workplace, which once again are usually male centred. Examples of this are evident in the maritime sector, where conditions on board sea vessels are usually not adapted to suit women's needs, or in urban public transport, where, despite company policies to attract women to this profession, workplace ergonomics still accommodate the needs of the predominant male workforce.

Women working in certain transport subsectors may be particularly at risk of aggressive or violent behaviour: this could include either external aggression from customers, to which women drivers working night shifts in urban passenger transport or airline cabin crew may be exposed; in addition, female workers may be at risk of internal bullying and harassment by work colleagues. These situations obviously influence women's decision to leave certain professions or eventually become a source of work-related stress, whilst also having a considerable impact on operational safety. Such problems are also aggravated by the lack of information among the majority of female transport workers about the existence of anti-harassment policies at their workplace and by the tendency not to report such situations; these issues also reflect the traditionally limited participation of women in trade-union activities compared with their male counterparts.

Finally, it is worth emphasising that women have been, and to some extent still are, associated with certain roles and tasks within the transport sector. For instance, in the air transport sector, Mills (1999) underlines the occupational divide that has been in existence since the early days of air passenger transport, which reflects the stereotype of the courageous male captain alongside the female cabin crew who care for passengers' needs. In a seminal analysis of this role, Hochschild (1983) introduced the notion of 'emotional labour' in her book *The managed heart*, using female cabin crew as an example. These women had to meet normative standards of sexual attractiveness, as the majority of passengers, prior to the expansion of air travel in the late 1990s, were businessmen and the key role of the female cabin crew was to offer care and comfort. To some extent, this role has been partially diluted as air transport has become a more affordable and popular means of transport.

Factors behind increasing female participation

The transport sector appears to be characterised by a number of structural barriers, which result in the unequal treatment of women in relation to their access to employment, professional training, equal pay and working conditions. Nonetheless, the available statistical data also show that, despite existing difficulties, the presence of women in the transport sector has been gaining momentum in recent years. A number of factors underpin the increasing participation of women in transport (ETF, 2007).

- Changes in the transport sector have created considerable employment opportunities for women. These changes include technological progress, the growing demand for transport-related services and the emergence of new sectors and companies – for example, the development of supply chains and logistics. Such developments have resulted in fewer typical 'male' operational transport jobs and more jobs in white-collar, technology-driven fields, involving office-based jobs, in which women are willing to work.

- A growing interest in attracting female workers is emerging in the transport sector, as pressure for greater labour flexibility increases and given the fact that women are more likely than men to resort to flexible work patterns, largely due to their family and domestic responsibilities. However, such developments also pose significant risks in terms of job insecurity, poor working conditions and limited access to social security systems and benefits. Another factor behind the greater interest in attracting women to the sector is the shortage of workers in certain sectors and professions within transport.
- Finally, it should be highlighted that restructuring and privatisation processes in the transport industry are leading to considerable job losses in some traditionally male-dominated subsectors and occupations, for example in the railway sector; conversely, other subsectors and occupations are growing in importance, for instance desk-office work in logistics or auxiliary transport activities.

Innovative measures for fostering gender equality

This section provides an in-depth description of eight innovative initiatives aimed at fostering gender equality in a number of transport subsectors in seven European countries – Croatia, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK. A brief outline of these initiatives is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: *Innovative measures fostering gender equality, by country*

Country	Total no. of people employed	Sector involved
HR	Ergonomic Association of Croatian Railways (HŽ) (<i>Ergonomska udruga hrvatskih željeznica</i>)	Railway transport
FR	Agreement on professional equality between men and women 2006–2009, Air France (<i>Protocole d'accord sur l'égalité professionnelle entre les femmes et les hommes 2006–2009</i>)	Air transport
HU	Equal opportunity plan (EOP) of Hungarian State Railways Ltd (<i>MÁV Rt. Esélyegyenlőségi terv</i>)	Railway transport
IT	Project of positive action for the safety of female workers in the sector of the Met.Ro. SpA Group (<i>Progetto di azione positiva per la sicurezza delle lavoratrici nei settori dell'esercizio di Met.Ro. s.p.a.</i>)	Local underground transport in Rome
NL	Collective labour agreements in public transport (<i>Collectieve arbeidsovereenkomsten openbaar vervoer</i>)	Railway transport of passengers and freight/air transport of passengers and freight
ES	Mixed Commission for equal opportunities in the public railways company RENFE (<i>Comisión mixta para la igualdad de oportunidades en RENFE</i>)	Railway transport
UK	London Buses Initiative – action plan to increase the number of women in the bus industry	Road passenger public transport (bus drivers)
	Promoting equality and dignity at work – Stansted Airport	Air transport (ground staff)

Source: *Ikei and associated partners*

Croatia – Ergonomic Association of Croatian Railways

Background statistical information

In Croatia, employment in the transport sector accounts for around 5.2% of total employment. Women make up just 24.4% of overall employment in Croatia's transport industry; this compares with a female employment rate of 44.8% of total national employment (figures for 2006). However, in recent years, female employment in the transport sector has been increasing, albeit very modestly, rising from 23.8% of transport employment in 1999 to 24.4% in 2006 (Table 4).

Table 4: *Number of employees in Croatian transport sector, by sex and subsector, 1999 and 2006*

Sector	1999		2006	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Land transport, transport via pipelines (NACE 60)	24,941	5,028	23,510	5,240
Water transport (NACE 61)	2,469	707	2,235	418
Air transport (NACE 62)	334	330	698	653
Supporting and auxiliary transport activities, travel agencies (NACE 63)	16,995	7,943	18,163	8,103
Total national transport employment	44,739	14,008	44,606	14,414
Total national employment	578,030	480,409	631,269	513,197

Source: *Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999 and 2006*

Framework conditions

In Croatia, the transport sector is largely a male-dominated sector. Not surprisingly, and according to information issued by the Central Bureau of Statistics (*Republika Hrvatska – Državni zavod za statistiku, Crostat*⁴), in 2006, women represented just 24.4% of total employment in the sector in Croatia

The initiative analysed here relates to that of Croatian Railways (*Hrvatske Željeznice, HŽ*⁵). Focusing on the employment situation of this enterprise, HŽ employed some 13,765 workers in February 2007 (Table 5). In terms of the educational profile of the workers, the largest proportion of HŽ workers (47.2%) had a secondary-level education, while only 6.1% had completed university studies. In relation to the age profile of the workforce, the largest group of workers are aged 36–45 years (37.8%), followed by those in the 46–55 years age group (36%). From a gender perspective, HŽ is largely a male-dominated company: as of February 2007, the company employed some 1,890 women, representing just 13.7% of its total workforce. The majority of these women (80%) work in administrative tasks, which are generally poorly paid compared with other positions that are predominately occupied by men. Moreover, access to employment in the sector is still a problem for women, and in some occupations – for example that of engine drivers – women are completely absent. Until now, no ‘positive discrimination’ policies have been adopted by HŽ. Ironically, women employed by HŽ have a higher educational profile than their male counterparts, even though both sexes share a similar age structure: some 66.5% of the women at HŽ have a secondary school education, while 17.9% have a university degree.

It is worth mentioning that, in July 2006, the Croatian government decided to divide HŽ into four different companies – HŽ-Infrastructure, HŽ-Cargo, HŽ-Passenger transport and HŽ-Pulling of trains – although all belong to HŽ-Holding. Thus, some departments, including Human Resources, are still acting for all HŽ companies. The gender employment profile of these companies is shown in Table 5. It is important to point out that, since 1991, the company has halved its employment levels.

Table 5: *Number of workers employed by HŽ, by sex, 2007*

Company	Men	Women	Total
HŽ-Infrastructure	6,842	693	7,535
HŽ-Pulling of trains	2,051	130	2,181
HŽ-Cargo	2,073	494	2,567
HŽ-Passenger transport	811	441	1,252
HŽ-Holding	98	132	230
Total	11,875	1,890	13,765

Source: HŽ, February 2007

⁴ <http://www.dzs.hr/>

⁵ <http://www.hznet.hr/eng/>

It is widely known that ergonomic factors play a key role in ensuring favourable working conditions; in this respect, differences in gender and type of work or profession constitute important variables. Bearing in mind the importance of proper ergonomics, the Railway Workers' Trade Union of Croatia (*Sindikat Željezničara Hrvatske, SŽH*⁶) – the most influential trade union in the sector – has, with the help of the Ergonomic Association of Croatian Railways (*Ergonomska udruga hrvatskih željeznica*), developed a number of initiatives in this field, aimed at improving working conditions and taking into consideration specific gender needs. A number of years ago, the trade union conducted an analysis among administrative employees at HŽ, which showed that up to 68% are not properly seated; this has led to significant difficulties for the workers. Moreover, the study showed that the environmental circumstances of administrative workers are unfavourable – for example, in terms of the ergonomic condition of desks and chairs, poor heating and air-conditioning, unsuitable uniforms, and lack of differentiated toilets; these conditions have, in turn, resulted in significant work-related problems and considerable levels of sick leave. The company has started to make improvements to working conditions; specific measures for administrative personnel (cooling systems, bigger and better wardrobes, improved furniture, ergonomic chairs) are expected in 2007.

Finally, it should be mentioned that social dialogue has always constituted a longstanding tradition at HŽ, as it is a large public sector company with a significant proportion of unionised personnel (almost 95%). Social dialogue, however, is not always coherent: among other reasons, this is due to the ongoing changes of management teams in the company.

Detailed description of initiative

The Ergonomic Association of Croatian Railways was established by SŽH in March 2004, with the aim of promoting and improving the protection of workers in the railway sector, particularly with regard to their health and safety at work. The association is largely made up of health and safety coordinators, nominated by the trade unions, and by a number of external experts. After launching the initiative, the HŽ Ergonomic Association and SŽH identified a number of materials aimed at upgrading the ergonomic conditions of existing workplaces, taking into account specific gender needs from the outset. All of this material was used for advocacy purposes in negotiating with the company's management, ensuring that the problem was recognised and solved.

Currently, SŽH together with the HŽ Ergonomic Association are collaborating with the State Office for Standardisation and Metrology in order to define a Croatian standard aimed at regulating the specific ergonomic conditions of chairs in certain occupations within the railway sector. For this purpose, the HŽ Ergonomic Association and SŽH are conducting a number of research activities in this domain. The central idea is to define a minimum standard acceptable to all sides, which can be used to classify tender procedures for purchasing chairs, whereby specific gender and occupation-related needs are taken into account. So far, a number of tenders have been postponed in order to acquire chairs externally, although some external contracts were conducted in 2006 for a number of professions in HŽ.

Specifically, from a female perspective, HŽ is also currently involved in a pilot project which commenced in 2007 and which aims to upgrade ergonomic conditions within female-dominated jobs, such as ticket selling; the pilot project will be initially implemented in the Zagreb central railway station and is set to be rolled out to the rest of the country if successful. Essentially, the project will involve a complete redesign of existing workplaces for ticket sales officials (nearly 80% of whom are women) in accordance with ergonomic principles. For example, furniture will be replaced, including chairs which will be ergonomically redesigned to take women's needs into account; moreover, separate wardrobes and toilets for women and men are planned, along with the introduction of improved air-conditioning systems and uniforms. In addition, the company plans to end night shifts, so that at night tickets will only be sold on trains.

⁶ <http://www.szah.hr/>

In relation to the issue of seating, the HŽ Ergonomic Association and SŽH have developed a number of recommendations and measures for the company to consider, ensuring that chairs are easy to use and comfortable for the users. Such measures include the following recommendations:

- Chairs need to be moveable, with a height ranging between 40 cm and 52 cm, while the width of the seat should be between 40 cm and 45 cm and the depth of the seat between 38 cm and 44 cm; the materials used have to be natural, without sharp edges, and the distance between the chair and working surface should be between 20 cm and 30 cm.
- It is recommended that the height of the chair is elevated, with the possibility of an additional cushion to support the worker's spine; the chair should have five wheels, so that it is easy to move, and the circle made by these five wheels needs to be broader or equal to the width of the chair.
- Workplaces should be designed taking into account correct levels of lighting and humidity and adequate space.

The actors currently involved in this pilot project include the company itself, which is being assisted by the HŽ Ergonomic Association and SŽH; these two bodies propose initiatives and give recommendations to be followed by the company. They are assisted by the Croatian Ergonomic Society, which plays a medically related advisory role.

In terms of financing, HŽ will fully fund this initiative, although specific figures are not yet available.

It is worth noting that, in 2005, the Croatian government introduced regulations stipulating minimum working conditions standards for people who work extensively with computers (see Official Gazette 69/2005). These minimum standards are intended to mainly cover health and safety issues and are expected to also have a positive impact on the railway sector, as they specify guideline standards that are compulsory for all economic sectors.

Main results and impact of initiative

As the HŽ Ergonomic Association was established only relatively recently, it is difficult to determine the results of its activities at this point. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the association has raised the level of knowledge in this area within the company, as well as helping to identify some specific areas for improvement.

In the long term, the association's activities are expected to help promote the fact that improved working and health-related conditions can lead to more satisfied workers and fewer accidents, as well as reducing the level of work-related absences and diseases. At the same time, it is expected that the reduction in absenteeism will help to considerably reduce the company's costs. These costs are regarded as significant, although no reliable figures are available at present.

Finally, it should be highlighted that the activities of the HŽ Ergonomic Association always feature a gender-related perspective, which obviously has a positive impact on the specific situation of female workers.

Expected future developments

As outlined, the HŽ Ergonomic Association is currently involved in a number of activities that have an important women-oriented aspect. The most important of these measures is the pilot project that began in 2007, which aims to upgrade the ergonomic conditions of those working in the ticket-selling division. Although the project will initially be implemented in Zagreb's central railway station, it is hoped that the measures will be rolled out to the rest of the railway stations and to other sections within the company if the initiative proves successful.

Strengths and weaknesses of initiative

The main strengths of the initiative include the improved working and health-related conditions of employees, which in turn result in a more motivated workforce. The pioneering activities developed by the HŽ Ergonomic Association, along with the generally positive attitude of the company in collaborating with the association and SŽH, also represent a strength; to date, the company has appeared to be willing to accept the recommendations put forward by the HŽ Ergonomic Association.

A limiting factor, which has negatively affected the initiative, is the lack of clear national standards and norms in the field of ergonomics, particularly in relation to occupations in the railway sector. Furthermore, the recent restructuring of the company, and the considerable workforce reductions resulted, have limited the outcomes of the initiative: current priorities for both company and workforce representatives are focused on alleviating the effects of the restructuring.

Views of social partners

All of the partners involved in the initiative indicate that it has been a positive experience, albeit for different reasons. The company representatives suggest that the initiative has helped to increase productivity within the company, as employees feel that their working conditions have improved; the trade union representatives claim that the initiative has enhanced the working conditions of the HŽ workers. Moreover, both parties indicate that the current dialogue and trust-based collaboration between the social partners represent a positive outcome.

Nonetheless, the company representatives have also underlined the significant costs associated with this initiative, not only in terms of finance but also in relation to the time devoted to launching and developing it.

Transferability of initiative

As suggested, some of the initiatives developed by the HŽ Ergonomic Association, namely the pilot project for administrative workers, are expected to be rolled out to other railway stations and to other parts of the country if successful. The measures devised by the HŽ Ergonomic Association are also attracting the interest of the railway sector in other neighbouring countries, such as Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and can be regarded as an example of good practice for these countries. However, differences between these countries are significant, either in terms of available resources or with respect to problematic social dialogue. Other transport companies in Croatia – for example the Central Bus Station in Zagreb and the Zagreb Electronic Tram – are also interested in introducing similar ergonomic principles.

France – Agreement on professional equality between men and women at Air France, 2006–2009

Background statistical information

In France, employment in transport accounted for about 4.5% of overall national employment in 2004 (Table 6). Women constituted just 22.4% of employment in the sector, which is well below the 45.6% share of overall employment held by women. Nevertheless, women's participation in transport has increased from about 19.1% in 1995, while their involvement in air transport has risen to 43.3% – a proportion which is almost equivalent to the general French average.

Table 6: *Employment in French transport sector, by sex and subsector, 1995 and 2004 (thousands of workers)*

Sector	1995		2004	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Land transport, transport via pipelines (NACE 60)	566.7	84.9	609.8	106.4
Transport via railways (NACE 60.1)	158.2	20.4	160.5	35.2
Other land transport (NACE 60.2)	406.7	64.2	447.8	71.2
Transport via pipelines (NACE 60.3)	1.8	0.4	1.5	0.0
Water transport (NACE 61)	9.1	1.6	8.2	4.6
Sea and coastal water transport (NACE 61.1)	8.3	1.6	6.3	4.5
Inland water transport (NACE 61.2)	0.9	0.0	1.9	0.1
Air transport (NACE 62)	38.1	25.3	42.6	32.5
Supporting and auxiliary transport activities, travel agencies (NACE 63)	133.6	64.7	196.0	103.6
Activities of travel agencies and tour operators (NACE 63.3)	14.6	28.6	16.4	39.0
Activities of other transport agencies (NACE 63.1/2/4)	119.0	36.0	179.6	64.5
Total national transport employment	747.6	176.4	856.6	247.1
Total national employment	12,622.1	9,921.9	13,480.0	11,304.0

Source: *Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (INSEE), Enquête Emploi, 1995 and 2004*

Framework conditions

From a gender perspective, women are well represented in air transport, and their presence has been continuously growing over the past decade. In the case of the national airline **Air France**⁷, the percentage of women in the overall workforce has increased from 31% in 1991 to 43% in 2005. When focusing on the gender breakdown according to job categories, the available data show that women maintain a huge presence in some, whereas others are not yet open to them. The findings in Table 7 give a more precise breakdown of the employment of women by occupation in Air France, focusing on the three job occupations of ground staff, cabin crew and cockpit crew.

Table 7: *Proportion of female workers at Air France, by occupation 2003–2005 (%)*

Occupation	2003	2004	2005
Ground staff	39	39	40
Cabin crew	66	66	66
Cockpit crew	4	5	5

Source: *Air France, 2003–2005*

⁷ <http://www.airfrance.com/>

From a legislative perspective, France has introduced two main laws that are specifically devoted to fostering gender equality in enterprises. These laws have contributed to increasing companies' awareness about the issue of gender equality at the workplace.

- In 1983, the Roudy Law made it compulsory for enterprises with more than 50 employees to compile an annual report analysing the situation of men and women in the company; this report is to be used for generating a debate between management and the works council on the issues raised in the report. However, in practice, the measure has not been widely enforced.
- In 2001, the Génisson Law took a further step in the area of gender equality. Firstly, the law stated that the report provided for under the Roudy Law had to be established on the grounds of quantitative indicators regarding four main issues: general working conditions, remuneration, career development and training. At the same time, the law placed an obligation on management to negotiate with employee representatives on the issue of gender equality, in order to define objectives and means for achieving this aim. In this respect, the law formed the basis for the initiative taken at Air France.

The Génisson Law introduced the practice of social dialogue as the basis for implementing gender equality policies at the workplace. Moreover, the joint collaboration between the different trade union federations and professional sectors within the air transport industry contributed to the establishment of the initiative in question at Air France.

Detailed description of initiative

Following the approval of the Génisson Law, Air France and its employee representatives signed their first gender equality agreement in 2001. Negotiations for this agreement were organised separately for each job category – that is, for ground staff, cabin crew and cockpit crew. In 2004, the initial agreement was assessed, revealing many drawbacks in relation to the job category approach. According to the assessment, this approach prevented the definition of a global company strategy on gender equality, instead resulting in a wide array of different conditions and opportunities that varied from one job category to the other.

Subsequently, negotiations for a second gender equality agreement began in 2005. This second agreement envisaged a global approach for all job categories within the company; the planning of the agreement was set up jointly by the management at Air France and the representative trade unions. It is worth mentioning that both negotiating parties also received the assistance of external collaborators: for instance, both hired consultants to strengthen their argument in relation to the calculation of remuneration differences by gender. Finally, in March 2006, the 'Second agreement on professional equality between men and women' (*Protocole d'accord sur l'égalité professionnelle entre les femmes et les hommes*) was signed for the three-year period 2006–2009.

The implementation of this agreement was carried out by the HR department at Air France, where a joint committee comprised of company and employee representatives was established to oversee the agreement's execution. As part of the second agreement's framework, a Commission on Gender Equality was also established at central level, consisting of company and social partner representatives. This commission controls the conditions of the agreement's implementation.

Objectives of agreement

In relation to its main objectives, the second equality agreement aims at developing a gender mix within the different job categories, increasing the presence of women in some professions (computing, cockpit crew, maintenance) while also hiring men for jobs that have traditionally been carried out by women, such as cabin crew positions. At the same time,

the agreement aims to promote career development for women, as they are less well represented in high-profile jobs. The agreement also takes into account the issue of gender equality in recruitment and training practices for students and young people, particularly in relation to certain female or male-dominated job categories.

Specifically, the second agreement contains seven principal objectives, for which actions and indicators have been defined.

Objective 1 – Ensuring gender pay equality for equivalent positions

- **Action 1** Carrying out a survey to measure the gender pay gap. Based on the survey's results, a working group will implement appropriate measures over the subsequent 24 months.
- **Action 2** Guaranteeing the maintenance of salary levels during maternity leave.
- **Indicators** Average salary discrepancy between men and women; proportion of women whose salary stagnates during maternity leave

Objective 2 – Adapting working conditions

- **Action 1** Increasing the gender mix by adapting working conditions within jobs and occupations and in designing job offers so that both men and women can apply.
- **Action 2** Protecting the health of pregnant women at work, by changing their working conditions or appointing them to a new position if necessary. Women who work as cabin crew will be able to work temporarily as ground staff during their pregnancy.
- **Action 3** New projects developed within a company will have to incorporate the gender equality goal from the start of the design process.
- **Indicators** None

Objective 3 – Developing greater gender balance

- **Action 1 (orientation)** Promoting a more gender-balanced career orientation among students: companies will participate in events organised by schools and universities to encourage students to move into occupations and jobs that have traditionally had a gender bias.
- **Action 2 (integration)** Developing initiatives that promote the integration of underrepresented staff.
- **Action 3 (recruitment)** Encouraging a gender-balanced recruitment policy; in addition, the company will ensure that no gender stereotypes are conveyed through job offers, or during the recruitment process.
- **Action 4 (professional mobility)** Ensuring that men and women have equal access to professional mobility.
- **Action 5 (training)** Guaranteeing that the company's training activities do not contain any sexist stereotyping; moreover, women and men should have equal access to all training programmes.
- **Action 6 (communication)** Integrating the company's commitment to gender equality into all of its communication activities, particularly when advertising jobs.
- **Indicators** Developing gender breakdowns for job applications and recruitment (in particular, when recruiting for permanent contracts), where jobs display a gender bias

Objective 4 – Improving the balance between professional and family life

- **Action 1 (information)** Publishing, disseminating and updating a handbook on maternity and parental leave.
- **Action 2 (part-time working)** Air France offers parents the possibility of working part time; the agreement outlines the conditions for part-time work: before opting for part-time work, each employee must attend an interview with management in order to adapt the goals and objectives that they must reach. If the level of part-time work appears to be very low in certain job categories, the conditions for accessing it will be examined and possibly changed.
- **Action 3 (maternity and parental leave)** The agreement outlines the conditions for obtaining maternity and parental leave: the employee must attend an interview with management before taking such leave. On their return, they must attend a further interview to examine the conditions of their return. The agreement also stipulates that the time spent with a sick or disabled child must be fully taken into account when determining the rights linked to seniority.
- **Indicators** The proportion of men and women taking parental leave; the number of men opting for paternity leave; the number of women who are temporarily assigned to ground staff positions during their pregnancy; the proportion of interviews conducted before and after maternity or parental leave

Objective 5 – Promoting equal opportunities in career development

- **Action 1 (professional evolution)** The company will ensure that the male–female ratio of internal promotions in different job categories is in line with the average male–female ratio of the company staff. The committees responsible for staff selection will have to consist of a mix of men and women. The company will also ensure that it maintains a gender mix among its newly hired managers, and plan for identifying obstacles hindering career development.
- **Action 2 (impact of maternity leave and part-time work on career development)** Maternity leave or part-time work practices will not be taken into account when evaluating promotions or access to greater responsibilities.
- **Indicators** Gender breakdown among executive staff, for internal promotions in all job categories and for part-time staff

Objective 6 – Measuring the development of the agreement’s provisions using above indicators

Objective 7 – Creating a communication plan for the agreement

- **Action 1 (Activities within the company)** Diffusion of existing ‘good practices’ among managers in the company, as well as regularly reminding them of the conditions in the agreement. The company will also develop training programmes on gender equality for managers and HR staff. Moreover, the company will carry out specialised communication gender equality actions, developing a transversal, cross-sector approach to address issues such as access to work, training and human resources management.
- **Action 2 (External communication activities)** The company will develop partnerships with national and European associations, including public administration bodies, in order to identify and disseminate measures relating to the gender equality issue.
- **Indicators** None

Finally, in terms of funding, the agreement does not include any precise provisions. However, it has been confirmed that the implementation of the agreement on gender equality is financed through the section of Air France that deals with social responsibility issues, with an annual budget being devoted to the agreement’s implementation.

Main results and impact of initiative

As the agreement was only introduced in March 2006, many of the actions it proposes have not yet been fully implemented. Nevertheless, a number of positive results can already be identified. For instance, the agreement has contributed to a change of mindset among the Air France workforce in relation to gender equality. In particular, the publication of several gender-related indicators for a number of fields, such as average salary levels, promotion and gender breakdown by job, have made the entire workforce aware of the importance of gender equality and of addressing inequalities within the company. At the same time, the agreement has resulted in an increase in the proportion of women holding top management positions within the company, a development expected to continue.

However, in certain fields, the possibilities envisaged in the agreement have not yet been fully exploited. For example, the impact of maternity leave or part-time work on career development is still regarded as problematic: company surveys show that Air France employees still believe that parental leave and part-time work reduce their chances for accessing training or promotion. Incidentally, it is still predominantly women who make use of these arrangements.

Expected future developments

None of the interviewees for this study elaborated on how the initiative might develop. Since the agreement is rather recent, more attention is being focused on implementing it and following up the different indicators. Given that the time span of the initiative is for the period 2006–2009, an assessment of the measure should be conducted by 2009–2010; this may lead to a new agreement, although no decision has yet been made on this issue.

Strengths of initiative

A strength of the initiative is its indicator-based, quantitative approach, a direct result of the Génisson Law, which stipulates that the annual report on gender issues be established on the grounds of quantitative indicators, allowing for precise comparisons to be made on the situation of men and women in the workplace. The interviewees felt that the methodology used was quite innovative.

The second strength is the wide array of issues that the agreement deals with. This is in recognition of the fact that gender equality should be dealt with as an issue affecting all job categories and requiring different fields of action, such as in relation to recruitment, training, remuneration and career development.

Views of social partners

The results of the interviews imply that the trade union and company representatives have different views on what gender equality policies should entail. The company representatives suggest that two particular framework conditions have had a direct effect on increasing awareness of the issue of gender equality: firstly, the adoption of the Génisson Law, which was an important factor influencing the introduction of the first agreement on gender equality at Air France; secondly, the company's increasing engagement in corporate social responsibility (CSR) issues. This is reflected in the 2002 Global Social Agreement in which gender equality was included as part of the company's social responsibility agenda.

Thus, for the company representatives, the gender equality perspective fits into the 'social responsibility of the company'. Gender equality is regarded as a key issue that should be dealt with in the context of a more global sustainable development strategy, and which should be treated on equal grounds with other issues, such as employees' working conditions, environmental protection, diversity policies and social responsibility practices. Such an approach is reflected in the company's *Sustainable Development Report 2005–2006*.

The trade union representatives, on the other hand, are in favour of a more transversal treatment of gender equality, whereby the issue is embedded in the overall strategy of the company. As a result, the union representatives are critical of the fact that often, when a new project is designed, managers are still reluctant to take the gender equality perspective

into account from the outset; they argue that this, in turn, can pose a serious barrier to the success of the initiative from a gender equality perspective. However, the company representatives contend that the trade unions' insistence on dealing with gender equality in a more transversal way can sometimes be taken too far. For instance, in relation to part-time work, the trade unions wanted to analyse its impact on career development in all job categories. However, management could not agree to this because, in some job categories part-time work is widespread; therefore, the assessment should deal specifically with those opting for parental part-time work, rather than all part-time workers.

Nevertheless, both the company and trade union representatives agree that one of the key success factors of the initiative was that all parties defined common priority objectives. (The company representative highlights that the fact that the unions were able to work together and to agree on a strategy facilitated the negotiation of the second agreement; this contrasts with the negotiation of the first agreement, where the trade unions were divided and could not agree on the objectives to be reached.) This enabled the different actors to adopt a more concrete and precise approach to the issue of gender equality. For instance, while the issue of working conditions was addressed in the first agreement, it was spread among different actions. After further analysis, the trade unions concluded that working conditions should constitute a core issue in the new agreement. The subject of working conditions for pregnant women, for example, needed to be addressed far more thoroughly. As a result, in the second agreement, adapting working conditions has become an objective in itself (Objective 2), featuring very precise actions such as the possibility for female cabin crew to be transferred to ground staff positions during their pregnancy, along with the design of specific maternity clothing for work.

Transferability of initiative

The interviewees feel that the Air France agreement on professional equality between men and women can easily be transferred to other sectors or countries, particularly with regard to two specific areas.

- The methodology used in the initiative can be transferred to other sectors and countries. In addition, an internal and external communications strategy is a measure that can be used in other sectors.
- In terms of the contents of the agreement, the seven objectives defined could also be applied in other sectors, as they address core issues affecting gender equality. However, the interviewees also recognised the importance of adapting actions to the specific needs of different sectors.

Both parties emphasise that the success of this initiative lies in the ability of the representative trade unions and the company to work together in defining and negotiating common objectives. This situation may not be as favourable in other countries and sectors, which may thus limit the potential transferability of the initiative.

Hungary – Equal opportunity plan of Hungarian State Railways

Background statistical information

According to data for 2005, employment in the Hungarian transport sector accounts for 5.8% of total employment (Table 8) and 2.5% of female employment. Women account for just 19.5% of employment in transport, compared with the overall female employment rate of about 46%.

Table 8: *Employment in Hungarian transport sector by sex, 1995 and 2005 (thousands of workers)*

	1999		2006	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total national transport employment (NACE 60–63)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total national transport + post and telecommunications employment (NACE 60–64)	238.1	81.5	212.5	72.9
Total national employment	1,993.6	1,629.2	2,116.1	1,785.4

Source: KSH, Labour Force Survey, 1995 and 2005

Framework conditions

Hungarian State Railways Ltd (*Magyar Államvasutak Rt*, MÁV)⁸ is one of the biggest companies in Hungary. In terms of the number of employees, it is the largest company in the country, as well as being the eighth biggest company in relation to gross value added in 2005 and the 29th largest in terms of own capital. The company employs around 37,700 people, is fully state owned and is permanently loss-making. Losses are sometimes financed through the state budget. In the Hungarian railway sector, only one other relatively small private company exists, which means that MÁV dominates the sector. Between 1995 and 2006, the company has suffered more than a 40% reduction in its workforce.

The findings presented in Table 9 give an insight into the numbers of women at MÁV. As shown, women account for about 22% of the workforce and have a stronger presence in certain occupations and job categories – mainly in administration, such as finance and HR. This area has been affected by significant layoffs, so it may be argued that the relative proportion of female workers has been reduced in recent years. The presence of women in blue-collar occupations is still very limited.

⁸ <http://www.mav.hu/>

Table 9: *Employment at MÁV by occupation and sex, 2006*

Occupation	Men	Women	Total
Top managers	386	84	470
Middle managers	5,349	1,452	6,801
Administrators	2,431	3,254	5,685
Administrative assistants	259	2,434	2,693
Total white-collar workers	8,425	7,224	15,649
Unskilled workers	221	46	267
Semi-skilled workers	8,788	1,071	9,859
Skilled workers	10,880	103	10,983
'Master' skilled workers	949	19	968
Total blue-collar workers	20,838	1,239	22,077
Total	29,263	8,463	37,726

Source: MÁV database, 31 December 2006

In relation to the role of social dialogue, the transport sector – and especially MÁV – has one of the strongest trade union presences in Hungary. According to data provided by the KSH, trade union members represent 33.1% of the total workforce in the transport and telecommunications sector, compared with the national average of 16.9%. Five representative trade unions operate at MÁV, and over 75% of the total workforce is a member of a trade union. The company has maintained a long tradition of continuous intensive dialogue on various issues, including wages and working conditions, between the employer representatives and trade unions. Social dialogue is organised and formalised in line with the company's Council for the Reconciliation of Interests, which provides a systematic, institutionalised forum for negotiations between employer and employee representatives. Negotiations are carried out at the level of different occupations, such as those of engineers, platelayers and ticket-inspectors.

From a more general perspective, it is also worth noting that the Law on Equal Treatment and Equal Opportunities, passed in 2003, obliges state-owned companies to prepare an Equal Opportunity Plan (*Esélyegyenlőségi Terv*, EOP), which includes gender issues. MÁV was the first company in the country to negotiate and introduce an EOP. The strong tradition of dealing with gender issues in the company also constitutes an important background element in relation to the initiative. The largest trade union in the company at present is the Trade Union of Railway Workers (*Vasutasok Szakszervezete*, **VSZ**)⁹, which is the successor to the only trade union that existed at MÁV before the system changed in 1989. VSZ established a section for women as far back as the 1970s. In 1979, this section drafted its first plan, which is similar to today's EOP and which was based on a systematic survey of female employees in the company.

As in other European countries, the railway sector has traditionally been male-dominated; even today, women are excluded from certain types of jobs, such as driving engines. However, in the 1970s, MÁV began to employ more women, particularly in administrative positions; women have a limited presence in manual positions. Recent layoffs in the company have affected women to a greater extent, mainly because the administrative workforce experienced the largest job cuts. Thus, the position of women in the company differs greatly from that of men. Moreover, in line with other countries, the state railway company was extensively unionised. Due to this strong trade union presence, the company's collective agreement already contains a number of equal opportunity elements – a factor no doubt facilitated by the introduction and negotiation of an EOP.

⁹ <http://www.vsz.hu/>

Detailed description of initiative

From an historical perspective, the strong trade union presence in the transport sector and at MÁV resulted in a relatively favourable position for employees in terms of gender equality, even before the social partners signed the EOP. In 2003 – before the Law on Equal Treatment and Equal Opportunities was submitted to the parliament – an Equal Opportunity Committee was established at MÁV. Nonetheless, the introduction of the law provided the impetus for launching an EOP, which was only implemented after the law was approved. The committee that launched the EOP comprised representatives of the employer and of the five trade unions. In addition to gender issues, the EOP addresses the interests of various groups that may be subject to discrimination, for example on the basis of religion, nationality, disability or sexual orientation. The EOP came into effect in January 2005 and was valid until 31 December 2006.

The EOP at MÁV could be deemed an example of good practice by other companies, as the plan has many elements that were not identified in the Law on Equal Treatment and Equal Opportunities. At MÁV, a committee was established to negotiate the EOP. Employees could refer to the committee whenever they felt that they were not being treated in accordance with the EOP's requirements. However, the committee developed into more of an advice-giving, consultancy body. In theory, the head of the committee, who represents the employer, is responsible for implementing the EOP. After the EOP expired, the committee began to evaluate its practical implementation from the point of view of the various occupational groups. Therefore, although the company itself evaluates the EOP, the committee helps to manage the evaluation. As the EOP has since expired and is under evaluation, no further details can be provided.

In relation to the EOP's target audience, the plan places particular emphasis on certain categories of women, such as women over 45 years of age, women with family duties, those on maternity leave, women willing to work part time, and those on special study leave. The plan explicitly states that the employer aim to help women in their professional career.

Provisions of EOP

The EOP has six main provisions:

- equal opportunities in the recruitment of workers;
- improving working conditions;
- equal opportunities in professional careers;
- equal opportunities in access to training and educational programmes;
- equal opportunities in relation to wages and other allowances;
- measures for employees with a family.

In terms of equal opportunities in the recruitment of workers, discrimination is prohibited when hiring workers, including discrimination based on gender; instead, emphasis is placed on the skills, abilities and education of the prospective employees. Job advertisements must be published in a wide range of media to reach all potential employees, including those with disabilities. When vacancies arise, preference must be given to those who are already employed part time; this affects mainly women and employees with families. In calculating length of service, absence due to maternity leave or training is taken into account, so improving the career opportunities of women with families. During recruitment and restructuring, marital status is taken into account; preference is given to those with families.

The second provision deals with improving working conditions. This part of the plan focuses on employees aged over 50 years and those with disabilities, but does not include any gender-related elements. The employer finances a health maintenance programme for manual workers exposed to stressful working conditions. A survey of employees is conducted, which collects relevant information from the point of view of EOP data. Short training courses about the EOP are conducted at the company premises.

The third provision deals with equal opportunities in professional careers. Assistance is given to all women to enable them to build their careers and attain higher positions. This assistance is also provided to all, women and men, working part time. During restructuring, special programmes and training are organised to enable workers to find new jobs. The fourth provision concerns equal opportunities in access to training and educational programmes. All employees are guaranteed equal opportunities in accessing training and educational programmes. Training courses are organised during times when childcare institutions or schools are open. In certain courses – for instance, for computers or foreign languages – quotas are introduced for disadvantaged groups such as women or disabled people. A flexible training system is to be introduced.

The fifth provision deals with equal opportunities in relation to wages and other allowances, allowing for special allowances to be introduced for certain disadvantaged groups. Special pre-pension saving schemes are provided for, along with the possibility of early retirement for employees over 50 years of age. During restructuring, special attention is paid to female employees aged over 45 years and to male employees over 50 years old.

The sixth provision concerns allowances for employees with a family. In determining working hours, the employer takes into account the problem of reconciling working and family obligations – for example, working hours are set to times when childcare institutions and schools are open. Employees with small children are allowed the possibility of flexible working times. Those with small children are also given the opportunity to change shifts or to reduce their working time. Employees with small children can choose whether or not to continue working overtime; where possible, leave periods are reconciled with school holidays. The needs and extra costs of those with small children are taken into account when determining additional allowances. Employees' children who are of working age can work as trainees or do their work experience in the company, receiving assistance for their diploma studies from the company. Employees on maternity leave are offered the opportunity to work part time or to telework, thus maintaining contact with the company during maternity leave. On returning to work after maternity leave, the employee is offered special training or teleworking opportunities.

In terms of funding, no separate budget was allocated for the implementation of the EOP; thus, the employer paid for the costs relating to the EOP, such as the committee's expenditure and the preparation of surveys.

Main results and impact of initiative

A number of positive results have been achieved as a result of the initiative.

- An employer-funded health programme has been introduced for all employees exposed to stressful working conditions (both mental and physical stress).
- Many other state-owned companies have used the EOP at MÁV as a basis for devising their own.
- From a gender equality perspective, a growing proportion of men appear to be taking paternity leave.

However, a number of negative results have also arisen.

- It may be argued that relatively few concrete results have been achieved to date.
- In terms of work-life balance, the EOP has resulted in few changes to previous working practices, as arrangements concerning flexible working hours for workers already existed.
- Although not directly linked to the initiative, the presence of women is declining due to redundancies in certain occupations, particularly administrative jobs.

Expected future developments

As outlined, the first EOP at MÁV came into effect in January 2005 and lasted until 31 December 2006. At present, this EOP is being evaluated. It was expected that a new EOP would be introduced around mid-March 2007 and that it would be similar to the previous plan, with the exception of some modifications based on the findings of the current evaluation. No further details concerning the evaluation are yet available. The lifespan of the new EOP – reflecting the four-year collective bargaining agreement – is set to be extended to four years.

Strengths and weaknesses of initiative

A number of strengths can be identified in the EOP initiative.

- The existence of the EOP is itself a strength, as it is regarded by all parties as being an example of good practice at national level.
- The EOP has addressed a number of issues and aspects that were ambiguously defined in the Law on Equal Treatment and Equal Opportunities.
- The EOP was based on pragmatic and realistic goals.

However, the EOP has two particular weaknesses:

- it does not foresee any measures for penalising the non-fulfilment of the EOP's provisions. In addition, the implementation of the EOP largely depends on the willingness of the employer.
- a number of elements included in the EOP have not been put into practice within the company.

Views of social partners

Surprisingly, the social partners did not differ greatly in their opinions concerning the EOP; this can partly be attributed to their long tradition of working together. As both parties outlined, the EOP is very realistic as it contains elements already provided for in the collective agreement and in other parts of the company's policy. Interestingly, the company representatives reported that employees were often reluctant to take part in various aspects of the training programmes; this may pose a problem for realising certain elements of the EOP. From the employees' perspective, some elements have been particularly welcomed, especially those relating to maternity leave and the health programme.

Transferability of initiative

The different elements provided for under the EOP at MÁV may be applied in other sectors in Hungary. In particular, the health programme may be beneficial in companies and sectors with a high proportion of manual workers and where workers are exposed to stressful working conditions.

Italy – Positive action plan for safety of female workers at underground public company Met.Ro.

Background statistical information

The Italian transport sector accounts for just 4% of the country's national employment (Table 10). Women make up only 17.3% of employment in the sector, compared with the national female average of 39.1% of total employment. The level of female employment is particularly low in the land transport subsector, amounting to 10.9% of employment.

Table 10: *Employment in Italian transport sector by sex and subsector, 2005 (thousands of workers)*

Sector	2005	
	Men	Women
Land transport, transport via pipelines (NACE 60)	544.3	66.8
Water transport (NACE 61)	35.1	5.0
Air transport (NACE 62)	19.8	14.7
Supporting and auxiliary transport activities, travel agencies (NACE 63)	155.7	71.3
Total national transport employment (NACE 60–63)	754.9	157.8
Total national employment	13,737.9	8,824.9

Source: *Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (ISTAT), 2005*

Framework conditions

The group Metropolitana di Roma (**Met.Ro. SpA**¹⁰) is responsible for operating Rome's underground metro lines 'A' and 'B' and the regional railway services Roma–Ostia Lido, Roma–Pantano and Roma–Viterbo. Established in 2000, the company has around 2,600 employees, of whom only 283 are women – the equivalent of almost 11% of the total workforce (data for 2002). These women mainly work in administration and as station personnel (277 women); only the remaining six women are involved in maintenance (four women) and engine-driving activities (two women). More specifically, 27 women work as office coordinators, 164 as station operators, 36 as office workers, 30 as office operators, while 20 women work in managerial positions. The female workers at Met.Ro. maintain a particularly strong presence in two job categories – office operators and station operators. In these occupations, men maintain only a slightly higher presence than women.

A number of legislative developments in recent decades aimed to address the issue of gender equality in Italy. Law 903/1977 of 9 December 1977 on equality between men and women at work represented the first attempt to deal with this issue; however, the legislation quickly showed its limitations given the deeply-rooted historic conditions and cultural stereotypes embedded in Italian society. The 1991 Law 125/1991 of 10 April on positive action for equality between the sexes at work represented a far more significant effort in relation to gender equality. This law was inspired by EU guidelines and has emerged as a key development in helping to remove obstacles to equal opportunities at work. Among other measures, the law establishes quota mechanisms for recruiting women in traditionally male-dominated sectors.

¹⁰ <http://www.metroroma.it/Metroroma/>

With regard to social dialogue, despite the large number of tripartite social agreements signed in Italy over the last two decades, no institutional mechanisms have been set in place to support the negotiation of social agreements; these have always been signed at government headquarters by the prime minister, the treasury minister and the labour minister, on the part of the government, and by the social partners. The only existing tripartite body in Italy, the National Economic and Labour Council (*Consiglio Nazionale dell'Economia e del Lavoro*, **CNEL**¹¹), is an advisory and monitoring body in which the government is represented only by appointed experts; it has no real government authority, although it does monitor government economic activity. The social partners in Italy have always been strong and capable of engaging in bipartite industrial relations, while the government's role has always been rather weak. Resorting to tripartite social agreements was deemed necessary by the government – which has always taken the initiative in this respect – when the political and economic situation was considered too critical to be dealt with by the government alone.

This tradition of bipartite industrial relations is also evident in the transport sector. For example, in mid-December 2006, employer organisations and the main sectoral trade union federations reached an agreement on the renewal of the pay element of the national collective agreement for local public transport workers in Italy. This agreement affects more than 115,000 workers employed by around 1,200 companies in the sector and covers the two-year period 2006–2007.

Detailed description of initiative

The initiative analysed in this section is referred to as the 'Project of positive action for the safety of female workers in the sector of the Met.Ro. SpA Group (*Progetto di Azione Positiva per la sicurezza delle lavoratrici nei settori dell'esercizio di Met.Ro. SpA*)'. Launched in 2001, the initiative was cofunded by the company and the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, in accordance with the provisions of Law 125/1991. The project was finally concluded in 2002.

Essentially, the project aimed to improve the skills and competencies of 200 female station operators who were hired by the company between 1999 and 2001. The objective was to enable the operators to deal with all situations, particularly conflicts that may arise between the general public and the female workers during their work at the Met.Ro. stations. The company believed that by enhancing the participants' skills and competencies, it would increase both the general quality and safety of the services provided and that of the female participants' work. Until this point, female workers were not common at the Met.Ro. stations.

The 200 female station operators were employed to work at the underground stations for lines 'A' and 'B' in Rome and at the railway stations of Roma–Lido and Roma–Viterbo, in accordance with the professional duties outlined under the 'National contract for underground metro, bus, tram and light rail service workers' of 27 November 2000. Up until that point, women's involvement in the company and in the sector in general was very limited both in terms of their quantitative presence and the types of tasks; most were employed in traditional administrative duties. The average age of the participants was 27 years; 70% were in the 20–30 years age group, while only four participants were aged over 40 years. Some 82% had a secondary school certificate and 18% a university degree.

¹¹ <http://www.portalecnel.it/portale/HomePageSezioniWeb.nsf/vwhp/HP?Opendocument>

The project was divided into four distinct phases.

- **Phase 1 – Research and intervention** The objective was to collect information on the training needs of women working as station operators. Two questionnaires were distributed to the participants, to identify their views on the issue and on what they deemed to be acceptable standards of security. Information was also gathered on similar experiences in Europe.
- **Phase 2 – Implementation** The aim of this second phase was to organise and manage the project's training activities, including defining the schedules and training contents and organising several meetings and preliminary discussions with teachers and instructors.
- **Phase 3 – Training** The third phase involved the development of the training activities; this training was delivered by several specialists, who were managed by an education coordinator. A central objective of the training was to adopt a practice-based, bottom-up approach, whereby the female participants were also allowed to elaborate a number of proposals for further training and job-content design.
- **Phase 4 – Verification and feedback of results obtained** Once the training sessions were delivered and the participants were working as station operators, the company distributed a detailed questionnaire to the participants, which aimed to identify the women's degree of satisfaction and the main strengths and weaknesses of the training programme.

The specific contents of the training programme were formulated following a series of meetings held between the company and the trade union representatives. Overall, some 11 training modules were devised, with a total duration of two full-time days, or 13 hours, for each participant. Altogether, some 130 female station operators took part in these training activities. Given the short duration of the training activities, they were designed with a very high practical, hands-on approach, involving 'simulation' activities based on real situations and conducted within groups. Communication – including observation, listening and body language skills – and the ability to evaluate and handle critical situations were among the main themes of the training activities.

Main results and impact of initiative

The initiative successfully integrated women into traditionally male-dominated jobs, such as those of station operators, within the Met.Ro. group. Male personnel seem to have accepted the increasing presence of women in the company. At the same time, the growing presence of women within the group has given rise to a whole new set of demands – in particular, work–family reconciliation issues – which need to be addressed by the company. This increasing presence of women is becoming a catalyst for the incorporation of other women, a process which has been gaining momentum since 2000.

As outlined, the last phase of the project involved answering a questionnaire that assessed the participants' level of satisfaction with the training and the extent to which it matched their work needs. In addition, the questionnaire gave participants the opportunity to identify areas for improvement. In general, the views of the female participants were mixed: 45% considered the course to be fully suited to their work requirements, 54% felt that the course was interesting but only partly suited to their work requirements, while only 1% expressed a completely negative opinion.

Expected future developments

The project was completed in 2002. Since then, no similar initiative has been implemented by the Met.Ro. group. Nevertheless, as more women are joining the group, the company has developed a number of female-oriented activities. Most of these activities have focused on the negotiation of work–family reconciliation issues.

Strengths and weaknesses of initiative

Judging by the results obtained in the questionnaire, it is clear that the participants valued some aspects of the training more than others. Some 82% indicated that the content of the training was good or very good, in contrast with 18% who regarded it as merely sufficient or insufficient.

The participants particularly valued the competency of the teachers or the relationship between teachers and students: 90% rated this favourably and 94% very favourably. Other elements of the training were not rated as highly, such as the general organisation of the courses: only 67% felt that this was good or very good. Nearly half the participants felt the training was useful or very useful to them in doing their job.

The participants also recommended a number of areas for improvement. These included the need for more practical information on a number of issues, particularly on how to communicate effectively with the public, or on the possibility of taking more training for professional development. Participants also raised the possibility of extending the training to their male colleagues, as they considered that it could be of significant benefit. They valued the possibilities the courses provided for exchanging information and sharing mutual problems with colleagues. However, participants criticised the limited number of hours dedicated to the training courses. They also pointed to the need to upgrade existing communication channels with company managers and directors.

Views of relevant social partners

The social partners expressed a positive view of the initiative. Both employer and employee representatives suggest that the initiative has helped to successfully integrate female workers within the company, as these women have been trained to carry out a job that was traditionally regarded as being male-oriented. Thus, the initiative has helped to widen the perspective of both the company and the employees, by including women in more male-dominated jobs. Moreover, the employer representatives suggest that this successful experience has increased the company's awareness of the specific risks that female station operators are exposed to. However, the trade unions were critical of the short duration of the training, arguing that some issues were not adequately covered by the level of training provided.

Transferability of initiative

The methodology used in this project can be applied to any job category in the transport sector that involves contact with the public – for example, railway ticket vendors or airline cabin crew. Furthermore, the four-phase structure of the project could prove useful for other training initiatives. The training was also deemed beneficial for both men and women.

The Netherlands – Collective labour agreements at Royal Dutch Airlines and Dutch Railways

Background statistical information

According to available data, the Dutch transport sector employed an overall 314,800 people in 2005, which represents 3.6% of total national employment for the same year; this percentage is similar to that recorded in 1995 (Table 11). From a gender perspective, women represent 23.9% of the working population in transport, a considerably lower percentage than the national female average of 45.3% of total employment. Nonetheless, women's involvement in the transport sector has increased from 19.5% in 1995 to 23.9% in 2005. In terms of the subsectors analysed, the female workers have a greater presence in air transport (39.8%) than in rail transport (16.9%), although in both cases the proportion of female workers has risen since 1995.

Table 11: *Employment in Dutch transport sector by sex and subsector, 1995 and 2005 (thousands of workers)*

Sector	1995		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Land transport, transport via pipelines (NACE 60)	146.2	19.7	153.4	27.0
Transport via railways (NACE 60.1)	45.0	7.8	29.1	5.9
Other land transport (NACE 60.2)	101.1	11.9	124.2	21.1
Transport via pipelines (NACE 60.3)	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Water transport (NACE 61)	12.3	1.3	9.9	1.7
Sea and coastal water transport (NACE 61.1)	7.0	0.7	4.7	0.8
Inland water transport (NACE 61.2)	5.3	0.6	5.2	0.9
Air transport (NACE 62)	15.8	10.0	18.6	12.3
Supporting and auxiliary transport activities, travel agencies (NACE 63)	48.2	22.9	57.7	34.2
Activities of travel agencies and tour operators (NACE 63.3)	41.7	10.3	52.7	18.0
Activities of other transport agencies (NACE 63.1/2/4)	6.5	12.6	5.0	16.2
Total national transport employment	222.5	53.9	239.6	75.2
Total national employment	4,401.0	3,240.0	4,774.0	3,952.0

Source: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), National Account Statistics, 1995 and 2005

Framework conditions

Two cases of collective labour agreements in public transport are described here (*Collectieve arbeidsovereenkomsten openbaar vervoer*) – specifically in rail and air transport. One agreement was signed by the social partners at Dutch Railways (*Nederlandse Spoorwegen*, **NS**¹²) and the other was an agreement between the social partners at Royal Dutch Airlines (**KLM**¹³). NS operates the vast majority of rail transport in the Netherlands, while KLM is the largest aviation company in the Netherlands.

In 2005, NS employed around 15,800 people, of whom about 12,200 were men and 3,600 were women. In 2006, the company reduced its workforce by 800 employees to 15,000 employees. Despite this reduction, the number of female employees has remained the same. According to NS, this was mainly the result of positive discrimination in favour of women when recruiting new employees. This policy had, and still has, a positive effect on the gender composition of the workforce. It should be noted that NS was previously a public organisation that was privatised a few years ago. One of the effects of the privatisation process, as in many other organisations, was a ‘rationalisation’ and reduction in size of the workforce. Positive discrimination in favour of women was another result of the privatisation.

KLM employs around 16,000 people, some 11,000 of whom are men and around 5,000 of whom are women.

Unfortunately, neither NS nor KLM have available a gender breakdown of occupations, which would have provided a greater insight into the presence of women in higher and lower positions. However, according to NS, a substantial proportion of women work in the railway stations as counter clerks and also as train guards. In recent years, the number of female engine drivers has grown to about 100, which is quite an achievement considering that it was traditionally a

¹² <http://www.ns.nl/pages/index.html>

¹³ http://www.klm.com/travel/klm_splash/splashpage.html

male-dominated job. At KLM, a considerable proportion of women are employed as stewardesses, either on the ground or in the air. A relatively small proportion of female employees work as pilots.

The main driver of change in relation to the policy and focus on gender issues in the Netherlands is European legislation on the equal treatment of men and women. In 1993, this legislation was transposed into Dutch legislation. In addition, the Dutch Equal Treatment Commission (Gelijke Behandeling) was established in 1994. Every Dutch citizen who makes a claim of gender discrimination can bring their case before the Commission. It is an independent organisation that was established to promote and monitor compliance with equality legislation. It also gives advice and information on the rights of Dutch citizens in relation to unequal treatment and handles each case free of charge.

Following the transposition of European legislation on the equal treatment of men and women in 1993, a broad range of jurisprudence on gender discrimination has since been developed, which indicates how the legislation should be interpreted and how it can be used to protect citizens' rights.

Prior to 1993, a wide-ranging dialogue took place in Dutch society on the principles of equal rights, payment and career possibilities for men and women. Although the legislation has since come into force, the number of women in higher positions is still relatively low. However, this is probably because a considerable proportion of women still interrupt their careers to raise children or work part time, and so have fewer years of service in their profession. Compared with other EU Member States, the percentage of women working part time is significantly higher in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, collective labour agreements are concluded by both individual enterprises and by sectors. In the framework of this case study, the collective agreements are concluded between the employer and the representative trade unions in the enterprise or sector. However, if and when these parties reach a collective labour agreement, the agreement applies to all employees in that particular enterprise or sector, regardless of whether these employees are members of the trade unions participating in the negotiations.

As mentioned, the participation of women in the Dutch labour force is relatively low compared with other Member States, such as the Nordic countries. This is also due to the tightening of the labour market as well as the ageing of the population in the Netherlands, as in other Member States. The collective labour agreements include provisions for the possibility of including actions that focus on the recruitment of certain target groups of employees. In this respect, NS pays special attention to the recruitment of young women and of women who want to return to the labour force.

Detailed description of initiative

The two public transport collective agreements described here cover a substantial proportion of the labour force in public transport. Moreover, they can be considered as being representative of other agreements in public transport.

Both the NS and the KLM collective agreement came into force in April 2005 and were set to expire on 1 April 2007. In both agreements, only three exceptions relating to the equal treatment of men and women can be found; while not specifically aimed at this issue, they are related to the health and employability of workers; as a result, they can be viewed positively from the perspective of female employees.

- Firstly, the HR policy is based on the principle of equal rights. However, in some cases, it is possible to make exceptions – for example, in situations where a group of employees is underrepresented. On the basis of this exception, positive discrimination may be applied in the selection and recruitment of new personnel, such as women.

- Secondly, it has been agreed that pregnant women are exempt from overtime work and are permitted to work between the hours of 07.00 and 21.00 only. Depending on the stage of pregnancy, women are also entitled to additional rest hours. In both agreements, it is also stipulated that pregnant women who work in occupations where they experience continuous shaking and vibrations – such as in the case of engine drivers – should be offered other positions within the company with more appropriate conditions. Moreover, when these women return from maternity leave, they should be entitled to resume their original post.
- Thirdly, the collective labour agreements stipulate that special training funds may be allocated for certain target groups. For example, training funds can be designated to enable women who previously worked to return to the labour market.

In general, one main difference is apparent between the current collective labour agreements and those that existed prior to 2005. Up until 2005, financial arrangements for childcare were negotiated through the collective labour agreements. However, since 2005, these arrangements have been taken over by government policy, through the ‘Wet Kinderopvang’ Law on childcare; this means that such conditions are decided upon at government level. In the existing collective labour agreements, reference is made to this legislation.

Main results and impact of initiative

As outlined, equal rights and equal treatment of men and women are anchored in the Dutch legislative system. The exceptions stipulated in the aforementioned collective labour agreements are all positive from the perspective of women: for example, in the case of pregnancy, women are entitled to a job guarantee and in the event of their underrepresentation in the workforce, positive action can, and according to the trade unions will, be taken. Such actions, particularly those relating to maternity, have a positive effect on the opportunities of women in planning their professional career.

With regard to job guarantees, experience shows that only a few women apply for their old job as engine drivers at NS after maternity leave. A common reason for this is that they no longer want to engage in shift work due to their new situation at home. In addition, a significant proportion of these women return to work on a part-time basis.

Expected future developments

In February 2007, the social partners involved in the collective agreements at KLM and NS had already begun negotiations on a new collective agreement for the coming years. At this point, the equal treatment of men and women is not on the agenda. In addition, none of the parties has expressed any intention to propose changes to the clauses already included in the current agreements relating to the treatment of women.

Strengths and weaknesses of initiative

The exceptions stipulated in the collective labour agreements have been accepted by all of the social partners, so they do not warrant further discussion.

As mentioned, the conditions regarding childcare arrangements are currently decided upon at government level; in other words, the government decides which part of the costs are to be covered by the employers and which part by those employees accessing childcare (but benefiting from tax deductions). Until 2005–2006, companies were free to decide whether they wanted to contribute to the government’s costs. However, this situation has changed since 2007: currently, all enterprises have to contribute to the costs incurred by the government, regardless of whether or not their employees make use of childcare facilities. Therefore, current and future collective labour agreements will have to refer to this legislation.

It should be highlighted, nevertheless, that there is still room for increasing the participation of women in the Dutch labour force.

Views of relevant social partners

Both employers and trade unions are positive about the exceptions in relation to the equal treatment of men and women included in the collective labour agreements. However, according to the trade unions, the employers do not seem to be eager to include clear, specific targets in the agreements – for example, in relation to the exact number of women they aim to recruit; rather, they have alluded to more general obligations, such as: ‘in the recruitment process, there will be a focus on women’.

While government, trade unions and employer representatives seem to have largely similar points of view on gender equality, at the individual enterprise level, irrespective of sector, practices may differ. As a result, gender issues may not be sufficiently taken into account in the recruitment of new personnel. Another issue is the fact that in some sectors, women are not employed at all: therefore gender issues are not included in the collective labour agreements (such as those for harbour workers).

Transferability of initiative

The exceptions included in the two collective agreements described are also included in the agreements of other Dutch sectors and enterprises. Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting the work of the Dutch Equal Treatment Commission, as this is very important for gender equality issues in the Netherlands. The commission is a transparent organisation, which Dutch citizens can approach free of charge. Similar institutions could be usefully set up in other EU countries.

Spain – Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities in the public railways company RENFE

Background statistical information

The Spanish transport sector employs 786,000 people – 4.4% of total Spanish employment (data for 2004); this percentage has not changed greatly from 1995, when transport accounted for 4.7% of total employment (Table 12). Women represented only 13.1% of total transport employment in 2004, which was well below the national female average of 39.2% of total employment. Nevertheless, women’s involvement in the transport sector has grown somewhat, increasing from 11.1% in 1995 to 13.1% in 2004. The railways sector employed 36,100 people in 2004, or 4.6% of total Spanish employment in transport. Women represent only around 11% of total employment in Spain’s railways sector.

Table 12: *Employment in Spanish transport sector by sex and subsector, 1995 and 2004 (thousands of workers)*

Sector	1995		2004	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Land transport, transport via pipelines (NACE 60)	430.4	28.9	532.7	43.4
Transport via railways (NACE 60.1)	n.a.	n.a.	32.5	3.6
Other land transport (NACE 60.2)	n.a.	n.a.	500.3	39.8
Transport via pipelines (NACE 60.3)	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	0.0
Water transport (NACE 61)	1.8	2.1	6.4	1.4
Sea and coastal water transport (NACE 61.1)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Inland water transport (NACE 61.2)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Air transport (NACE 62)	19.0	9.1	23.8	14.7
Supporting and auxiliary transport activities, travel agencies (NACE 63)	59.6	25.5	120.4	43.3
Activities of travel agencies and tour operators (NACE 63.3)	n.a.	n.a.	0.0	0.0
Activities of other transport agencies (NACE 63.1/2/4)	n.a.	n.a.	120.4	43.3
Total national transport employment	522.8	65.6	683.2	102.8
Total national employment	8,237.5	4,274.6	10,934.3	7,036.5

Source: *Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE), Spanish Labour Force Survey and Annual Survey on the Tertiary Sector, 1995 and 2004*

Framework conditions

The Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities (*Comisión Mixta para la Igualdad de Oportunidades*) was established by the National Network of Spanish Railways (*Red Nacional de los Ferrocarriles Españoles*, **RENFE**¹⁴) – Spain's main passenger and freight rail company. RENFE is a state-owned enterprise. The approval of Law 39/2003 on the rail transport sector gave way to a company restructuring process, which, since 1 January 2005, has resulted in the splitting of RENFE into two separate state companies: the Railway Infrastructure Administrator (*Administrador de Infraestructuras Ferroviarias*, **ADIF**¹⁵), which is responsible for managing the railway infrastructure, and RENFE Operadora, which is in charge of providing both freight and passenger transport services.

According to RENFE data, the company currently employs around 29,700 people, 9.2% of whom are women (December 2005). Although the level of female employment is lower than the overall Spanish transport average for women of 13.1%, the relative presence of women at RENFE has increased, rising from 7% in 1995 to the current 9.2%. However, this increasing female presence is only true in percentage terms. In the last 10 years, the company has experienced a significant reduction of its workforce, which has affected men more than women. At the same time, RENFE has not recruited significant numbers of new personnel over the last decade, instead resorting to extensive subcontracting. Nonetheless, in the last two years, the company has started hiring new personnel again, recruiting around 150 new workers in 2006, while a further 300 people are expected to be hired in 2007. Most of these work in high technical, knowledge-intensive positions, such as engineering. Moreover, women have a relatively strong presence among the newly hired personnel – around 40%.

¹⁴ <http://www.renfe.es/>

¹⁵ <http://www.adif.es/>

Women maintain a particularly strong presence in a number of specific occupations at RENFE, such as in administration, ticket controllers and sales or information agents. In job categories – such as those of engine drivers, maintenance and repair personnel – women are practically non-existent.

RENFE has maintained a longstanding tradition of social dialogue. This is partly due to the high trade union density at RENFE (around 90% of the workers are trade union members). The main trade unions at RENFE are the two primary Spanish unions – the General Workers' Confederation (*Unión General de Trabajadores*, **UGT**¹⁶) and the Confederation of Workers' Commissions (*Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras*, **CC.OO**¹⁷). The sector-specific trade union, the Spanish Trade Union of Train Drivers and Rail Assistants (*Sindicato Español de Maquinistas y Ayudantes Ferroviarios*, **SEMAF**¹⁸), is also active within the company, representing the main interests of engine drivers.

It is worth mentioning that, besides the RENFE initiative, there is not much evidence of gender-related measures among Spanish enterprises. In this respect, CC.OO has recently carried out a study, which has yet to be published, on 14 collective agreements in Spanish enterprises within the communication and transport sectors. The study has tried to identify the inclusion of gender-related issues in these agreements, such as in relation to access to employment, pay equality, working time, sexual harassment, family duties and maternity leave or anti-discrimination practices. The study reveals that none of these 14 agreements adequately deals with the gender issue from a transversal perspective. In order to remedy this situation, the study proposes raising the gender awareness of the negotiating social partners through further training. Nevertheless, the study does identify some concrete collective bargaining examples that are significant from a gender perspective. One of the most interesting examples is that of the public company Seville Urban Transport (*Transportes Urbanos de Sevilla*, **TUSSAM**¹⁹). In November 2004, TUSSAM introduced a 'Positive Action Plan' (*Plan de Acción Positiva*), aimed at integrating equal opportunities into the company's human resources management (HRM) policy, as well as reducing existing gender inequalities within the organisation. This plan has since been integrated into the company's collective agreement for the period 2005–2008. The plan has four main goals:

- to increase the level of awareness among the workforce in relation to gender equality issues;
- to increase the presence of women in traditionally male-dominated occupations;
- to increase the participation of women in continuous training activities and in career advancement;
- to promote work–life balance.

As a result of this plan, the number of women bus drivers has almost doubled from 13 drivers in 2004 to 25 drivers in 2007. In addition, a number of gender-equality training activities have been introduced for the entire workforce.

Detailed description of initiative

The Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities was initially established within the framework of the 'NOW-LUNA Programme – Actions for assuring equality in opportunities in employment', introduced in 1995. The NOW-LUNA Programme is co-funded by the European Social Fund and the Women's Institute of the Spanish Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (*Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales*, **MTAS**²⁰), and was in turn established within the general framework of the New Opportunities for Women (NOW) community initiative. (The NOW community initiative aims

¹⁶ <http://www.ugt.es/index1.html>

¹⁷ <http://www.ccoo.es/cscceo/>

¹⁸ <http://www.semaf.org/>

¹⁹ <http://www.tussam.es/>

²⁰ <http://www.mtas.es/>

to promote equal opportunities for men and women in employment and training.) The Spanish trade union confederation CC.OO played a key role in promoting the programme, while the Miguel Escalera Foundation of Training and Employment (*Fundación Formación y Empleo Miguel Escalera*, **FOREM**²¹) was the main managing organisation. FOREM is a non-profit, private foundation, promoted by CC.OO, which specialises in providing training opportunities for workers and unemployed people. Subsequently, the NOW-LUNA Programme was included within the Optima Programme, developed by the Women's Institute at MTAS.

The NOW-LUNA Programme was introduced in 19 public and private enterprises in Spain, including RENFE. The companies belong to different sectors, although the majority are large enterprises. The programme, which was completed in 1998, consisted of four steps developed in each participating enterprise: the first step involved an analysis of the employment situation of women within the company; the second step consisted of training sessions on gender equality issues for the employee representatives; thirdly, a set of 'protocols' were devised aimed at encouraging the enterprise to engage in future activities; finally, an evaluation of the results obtained was conducted.

In the case of RENFE, a decision was made to focus the analysis on the employment situation of women working in one particular job category; this was due to the large size of the company and the available resources, which did not make it feasible for the analysis to be extended to all job categories. The job category finally chosen was that of station agents who are in charge of running small train stations and who perform different activities such as ticket selling, monitoring of public activities and controlling train traffic. The presence of women in this category was relatively significant, representing about 17% of the workforce in this particular job category; therefore, it was felt that the study might shed some light on the professional difficulties and drawbacks faced by women working in this occupation. The analysis was conducted by an external consultancy company in three of Spain's most important train hubs of Madrid, León and Seville. It should be noted that, subsequently, and after the NOW-LUNA Programme ceased, a number of additional studies have since been conducted among the remaining job categories at RENFE.

Following the analysis of the station agent job category, a protocol was signed at RENFE in June 1998 between the company and trade union representatives. In accordance with this protocol, RENFE committed itself to developing a number of actions aimed at improving women's access to certain jobs, as well as their career prospects. As part of this initiative, in 1998 RENFE established the Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities. It was set up with the aim of preventing discriminatory gender-related measures within the company's collective bargaining agreements and guaranteeing equal opportunities for both sexes. The commission consisted of representatives of RENFE, along with representatives of the main trade unions active within the company – CC.OO, UGT and SEMAF.

Since its inception, the Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities has implemented a number of important measures. For example, the commission has launched several information campaigns aimed at increasing awareness about the importance of equal treatment for men and women within the company. Such campaigns have also highlighted the added value that can be obtained from increasing women's participation within the different job categories at RENFE. The commission has also introduced several training initiatives on equality for company and trade union representatives, improving their knowledge and awareness of such issues. These training activities have also increased the representatives' awareness and knowledge of existing discriminatory practices within the company, and have thus been

²¹ <http://www.forem.es/portal/index.asp>

regarded as a positive experience by all participants. At the same time, the commission has been particularly active in including measures to increase gender equality in the collective agreements signed at RENFE since 1998. These have given rise to the following initiatives:

- identifying cases of sexual harassment and regulating the treatment of such instances;
- regulating the rights of non-married couples;
- work–family reconciliation clauses;
- facilitating the job transition of pregnant women who are exposed to risky situations; prior to this, pregnant women were often relegated to ‘useless’ occupations;
- adapting existing facilities – such as toilets and showers – to the needs of female workers;
- disclosure of gender-specific company information;
- promoting non-sexist language in the company’s communications, as well as in other company documentation, such as collective agreements;
- preference for the recruitment of women in job categories where women are underrepresented and where equal conditions are stipulated. Specifically, the agreement establishes that in situations where workers are promoted on an indefinite basis in gender-biased occupations and categories, the applicants will be selected from the underrepresented gender category, provided that they demonstrate equal abilities. This criterion is also used for the selection of intermediate and senior managers.

In terms of funding, the NOW-LUNA Programme covered only the expenses incurred in the analysis of women’s employment situation within each participating enterprise and in the training on gender equality issues conducted among the employee representatives. In recognition of RENFE’s participation in the programme, MTAS and the Women’s Institute issued the company with a special logo, which can be used in all of RENFE’s communication activities. Any subsequent activities conducted by the Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities have been financed by RENFE itself.

Main results and impact of initiative

In general, the activities developed by the Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities at RENFE have had a positive impact from a gender equality perspective. The present agreement at RENFE can be regarded as being one of the most advanced in terms of equality issues in Spain: for example, RENFE was one of the first companies to deal with the issue of sexual harassment, by establishing a clear definition of the issue along with mechanisms for dealing with it. In addition, the training on gender equality conducted among the company and trade union representatives has increased awareness, as well as enabling the development of concrete resolution mechanisms. Moreover, RENFE has made the issue of gender equality an integral part of the continuous training activities provided to intermediate managers. The commission has also developed activities in the area of career development and work–life balance.

Despite these positive results, a number of significant weaknesses have also been alluded to in relation to RENFE’s activities. One trade union representative, for instance, criticised the lack of follow-up mechanisms within the collective agreements for ensuring the fulfilment of existing gender-related clauses; this problem has been attributed to a lack of interest on the part of the company and a heavy workload among trade union representatives. The trade union representative also pointed to significant difficulties in internally promoting the recruitment of women in gender-biased occupations and job categories.

In spite of such weaknesses, the activities of the commission have allowed for a qualitative improvement in the situation of women within RENFE. Such improvements are particularly evident in the areas of career development, sexual harassment and work–life balance. Nevertheless, RENFE has not raised the total numbers of women in the company, largely due to the restructuring that has been carried out.

Expected future developments

The Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities has remained active since its establishment in 1998. In terms of future developments, it is expected that the activities of the commission will be reinforced in the two newly-created state companies, ADIF and RENFE Operadora. This is particularly pertinent at present, given that negotiations on, and the approval of, new and differentiated collective agreements are envisaged for both companies in 2007. These new collective agreements are also expected to give fresh impetus to the activities of the commission, which have been on standby due to the restructuring that took place at RENFE in 2005 and 2006.

Both negotiating parties have underlined important areas for improvement in relation to the commission in the coming years with regard to the issue of gender equality. For the trade union representative, one of the most important challenges to be addressed in future collective agreements is the need to incorporate the necessary follow-up mechanisms for ensuring the fulfilment of existing gender-related clauses. The company representative, meanwhile, has highlighted the importance of including in the agreements those elements already recommended in the new Spanish legislative framework and better reflected in the Organic Law of Equality between Women and Men (*Ley Orgánica de Igualdad entre Mujeres y Hombres*), introduced at the beginning of 2007. This new law includes provisions for a number of developments – for example, in relation to paternity leave and equality plans – which will have to be covered in the new collective agreements.

Strengths of initiative

It is worth highlighting once again the importance of gender-equality training that has been delivered to company and trade union representatives. This training has helped to raise awareness of the issue, as well as to encourage the development of concrete mechanisms aimed at combating gender inequality. RENFE has integrated this gender-equality focus into its continuous training activities for intermediate managers.

Views of social partners

From the trade union representative's point of view, the change of attitude among the RENFE company representatives in relation to gender equality represents a positive development. The trade union representative suggests that the company's initial opinion regarding the situation of female workers at RENFE was completely different to that of the trade unions. In particular, the company had suggested that no sexual harassment or discrimination problems existed at RENFE, and that the collective agreements were gender neutral. However, once the initial analysis of women's employment situation at RENFE was conducted, it became clear to the company how important it was to resolve cases of gender inequality; this included the concentration of women in certain occupations and instances of harassment of some female workers. The trade union representative also values the progress in gender equality that have been made in RENFE in recent years. For instance, RENFE employees have received more information on their rights and obligations in terms of gender equality and on the existing mechanisms for dealing with undesired situations. The activities of the Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities at RENFE are deemed to have played a key role in this respect.

The company representative at RENFE expressed a positive view of the commission's activities. The company considers that negotiations on gender issues have proven relatively straightforward compared with other issues, such as wage conditions, as everybody agrees on the importance of having a gender-balanced HR policy. The company representative also feels it important that RENFE's involvement in the NOW-LUNA/Optima Programme has given the company the status of a 'collaborating organisation', an asset used extensively by RENFE in its marketing and communication

activities. In terms of future developments, the RENFE representative suggests that the new Law of Equality between Women and Men will give added impetus to the development of gender-related activities within the company. Such activities would include the design and implementation of equality plans at RENFE, which would have to be negotiated with the employee representatives.

Overall, both parties agree that the success of the commission's activities depend on a number of conditions:

- a predisposition among employee and company representatives to work together and to obtain positive results in the gender domain;
- the presence of a highly unionised workforce, represented by a small number of trade unions, which can influence company representatives in ensuring the proper follow-up of gender-equality measures.

Transferability of initiative

The activities of the Mixed Commission for Equal Opportunities at RENFE can be replicated in other sectors. It should be noted that the NOW-LUNA Programme was initiated in a number of enterprises operating in very different economic sectors, although RENFE was one of the few companies to ensure the ongoing continuity of the activities introduced.

It is particularly noteworthy that state railway companies in other EU countries, such as Finland, have paid special attention to the activities of the RENFE commission and have tried to establish a similar body in their respective countries.

UK: The London Buses Initiative – Action plan to increase the number of women in bus transport

Background statistical information

The UK has a relatively large transport sector, representing 6.8% of total employment in 2005. Women account for 24.5% of total employment in the sector, which is considerably lower than the national female average of 46.1% of total employment, despite a slight increase during the last decade.

Table 13: *Employment in UK transport sector and total employment by sex, 1998 and 2005 (thousands of workers)*

Sector	1998		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total national transport employment (includes communications)	1,345.8	431.8	1,473.8	478.4
Total national employment	14,624.0	12,309.0	15,524.0	13,288.0

Source: *UK government statistics, Annual Business Inquiry, 1998 and 2005*

In terms of subsectors, road transport and ancillary activities account for the largest proportion of the sector's employment (Table 14). Air transport represents 8.1% of total transport employment.

Table 14: *Employment in UK transport sector by subsector, 1998 and 2005 (thousands of workers)*

Sector	Total employment	
	1998	2005
Land transport, transport via pipelines (NACE 60)	565.0	581.0
Transport via railways (NACE 60.1)	57.0	55.0
Other land transport (NACE 60.2)	508.0	526.0
Transport via pipelines (NACE 60.3)	24.0	0.0
Water transport (NACE 61)	18.0	18.0
Sea and coastal water transport (NACE 61.1)	17.0	17.0
Inland water transport (NACE 61.2)	1.0	1.0
Air transport (NACE 62)	93.0	90.0
Supporting and auxiliary transport activities, travel agencies (NACE 63)	290.0	416.0
Activities of travel agencies and tour operators (NACE 63.3)	105.0	117.0
Activities of other transport agencies (NACE 63.1/2/4)	186.0	300.0

Source: UK government statistics, *Annual Business Inquiry, 1998 and 2005*

Framework conditions

The road transport subsector covers a wide range of activities, including public transport and distribution industries. In recent years, each of these industries has changed considerably. The privatisation of public transport in the UK has resulted in a wider range of service provision, albeit, to some extent, leading to a shift away from public sector best practice standards.

The company **London Buses**²² is a subsidiary of the enterprise Transport for London (**TfL**²³), which manages bus services in the Greater London Area. It plans routes, identifies service levels and monitors service quality. The company is also responsible for bus stations, bus stops and other support services. Most of the services are provided by private sector bus operators that work under contract to London Buses, although this is not particularly obvious to passengers, as buses are required to conform to the same red colour scheme and fare system. Currently, seven private operators are working for London Buses.

Despite privatisation and expansion, the industry is still clearly segregated along gender lines. In the case of public bus transport, women are largely found in administrative and support services and are underrepresented as bus drivers. The reasons for this date back to a time when such jobs required some physical strength and knowledge of vehicle maintenance – qualities usually associated with men; as a result, these occupations became largely male-dominated. (Although it should be noted that women easily undertook heavy and light vehicle driving during wartime, therefore challenging the notion of their inability to undertake such tasks.) Thus, it must be assumed that occupational closure and negative stereotyping have emerged as the major reasons for female exclusion from such roles. In recent years, given the growing need for drivers and advances in vehicle technology, women should be entering these occupations in greater numbers; however, this is not the case.

²² <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/modalpages/2605.aspx>

²³ <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/>

In an effort to explore the persistence of gender segregation, TfL, along with its bus operators, developed an action plan in 2004 aimed at encouraging more women to consider bus driving as a career. This initiative was motivated by concerns about persistent gender segregation and by a shortage of bus drivers. As women constitute 50% of the working population, they represent a valuable source of potential labour, which is currently not being used in the industry.

By way of illustration, the first female bus driver at TfL was not hired until 1976. Up until the 1980s, most buses operated on the basis of a male driver and a female conductor. This reflected the traditional division of labour, whereby a man undertakes the skilled, physically demanding role and women liaise with the customers and collect money. Since the introduction of buses staffed by one driver working alone, the role of the conductor was phased out and, consequently, a small proportion of women began to train as drivers. In 1985, the company still employed only 51 female drivers; by late 2003, this had risen to 1,211 female drivers. This figure is still only 5.7% of all London bus drivers and is substantially lower than the proportion of female workers in the transport and communications sector as a whole (about 24.5% in 2005). The proportion of female bus drivers has remained stable at around 6% since 2000.

It is important to highlight that social dialogue in the UK remains highly decentralised, as most bargaining takes place at company or workplace level, with little multiemployer bargaining being conducted outside the public sector. Findings from the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey, conducted by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI²⁴), show that just over a quarter (27%) of UK workplaces recognise trade unions for at least some of their workforce. These 27% of workplaces represent 48% of total employment in the UK. Trade unions are recognised in only 16% of private sector workplaces, compared with 90% of public sector workplaces, although union recognition does not necessarily mean that negotiations take place over terms and conditions. Negotiations were most widespread in relation to pay (in 61% of workplaces recognising unions), working hours (53%), holidays (52%) and pensions (36%).

Detailed description of initiative

The London Bus initiative, entitled the ‘Action plan to increase the number of women in the bus industry’, began in 2004. The initiative involved a joint working group consisting of representatives from TfL and its subsidiary London Buses, along with representatives from the main private bus operating companies and from the Transport and General Workers’ Union (T&G²⁵). For this purpose, a working group called ‘Women in the bus industry’ was established in order to identify existing problems and possible solutions. This initiative is still ongoing.

The working group first identified the objectives which they deemed necessary for achieving their aim of increasing the number of female bus drivers:

- identifying obstacles preventing women from becoming bus drivers and developing strategies to address them, based on experience in similar industries;
- reviewing research undertaken by (or known to) members of the working group;
- developing an understanding of current practices adopted by the bus operators and their success rates, including practices outside of London;
- obtaining national data from T&G on their experiences and initiatives;
- identifying further research needs;
- identifying examples of best practice and disseminating these practices to other bus operators.

²⁴ <http://www.dti.gov.uk/>

²⁵ <http://www.tgwu.org.uk/>

To realise these objectives, the working group devised 12 action points, which can be grouped under four main headings: recruitment and training, working in the industry, retention of drivers and image of the bus industry.

Recruitment and training

Action Point 1: Setting up of a research group to develop ‘best practice guidelines’ for bus companies in relation to recruitment; such practices include targeted advertising, promoting the case for increasing the number of female bus drivers, providing information to job centres, and using ‘women-only open days’ for recruitment purposes.

Action Point 2: Establishment of funding resources by London Buses to specifically target the training of women in the bus industry; this initiative is directed at women who do not have a driving licence, who may need language or numeracy training, and those from underrepresented groups.

Action Point 3: Development of best practice guidelines for the training of female bus drivers; this guideline should cover aspects such as grouping women together during training where possible and using a female instructor for at least part of the course; bus companies were also encouraged to increase the number of female instructors over the longer term.

Working in the industry

Action Point 4: Development of best practice guidelines for bus companies in relation to the provision of flexible work options, such as shift work and part-time working options for both men and women; this includes ensuring that the bus companies adopt a more formal approach to allow for or assist in shift changes, that companies are more flexible and sensitive to people’s needs, and that managers adopt a consistent approach at all of the company’s garages.

Action Point 5: Devising best practice guidelines for bus companies with regard to childcare; this involves reviewing existing opportunities for childcare vouchers, as well as the feasibility of sourcing schemes which operate outside of daily working hours, along with the consideration of school-holiday schemes.

Action Point 6: Development of a training course for garage staff who have regular dealings with bus drivers, including management, supervisory, training and duty allocation staff; this training was to be developed by London Buses and the bus companies.

Action Point 7: Devising a number of best practice guidelines for bus companies to ensure adequate and clean toilet facilities, and other amenities including shower facilities, at garages for women.

Action Point 8: Support for the provision of on-the-road bus driver facilities; in particular, this involves emphasising the need for the planning and equality sections of local authorities to look favourably on applications for toilet and restroom facilities; at the same time, London Buses was asked to ensure that such facilities were available on all routes and to assess this service when new routes or alterations were proposed; this action point was to be managed by London Buses.

Action Point 9: Sharing of best practices to ensure that ‘women’s mentors’ are present at each garage; larger bus companies were also encouraged to appoint more senior women advisors from the management grades.

Retention of drivers

Action Point 10: Bus companies monitor the progress of women recruited over the preceding 12 months, from July 2004, and identify the reasons why any staff members left during this period; this includes assessing the drop-out rates during training. The findings should be periodically reviewed so that any further improvements can be identified and pursued.

Image of the bus industry

Action Point 11: Marketing and promotion activities of the company, including a generic advertising campaign featuring women drivers; this should include highlighting the important social role of drivers and aspects of the job relating to dealing with passengers.

Action Point 12: Promoting the image of the industry and the role of the driver through the media, with a view to enhancing its image as a more female-friendly industry; where appropriate, it was agreed to promote the longer-term career prospects of bus drivers, for example, progression to supervisory roles.

In terms of funding, it was planned that the changes in operations made to accommodate the action points envisaged in the initiative would be funded by the bus operators themselves; nonetheless, some specific costs were set to be met by TfL centrally.

Main results and impact of initiative

In reviewing the achievements of the London Bus Initiative, it is clear that some progress has been made, although much more remains to be done. One of the major problems concerns the lack of a female presence in bus transport, which in turn renders invisible the specific problems facing women. Efforts are being made to challenge the stereotypes surrounding the role of bus drivers, for example in relation to the need for strength and technical knowledge, or the lack of opportunities and rigid working conditions in the profession.

Employers' perspective

In relation to recruitment and training, the number of female bus drivers has remained stable at about 6% since 2000. This is attributed to the fact that the terms and conditions of employment have risen markedly in recent years and, as a result, staff retention has improved and labour turnover has dropped from an average of 30% prior to 2000 to about 15% at present. Consequently, bus operators are not struggling to recruit new drivers and are not being forced to focus on 'hard to reach' groups such as women. In addition, the companies have been successful in recruiting eastern European drivers. However, applications from women are still encouraged and welcomed, and company websites are actively promoting women's employment. Moreover, as part of his election pledge in 2000, the Mayor of London, Ken Livingston, outlined his aim of increasing the number of female bus drivers – an initiative that TfL has responsibility for delivering. Some debate took place regarding quotas; however, it was recognised that these would prove both difficult and unpopular. As a result, it was agreed that the operating companies would work with TfL to overcome the barriers that prevent women from applying for and securing positions as bus drivers.

A high-profile campaign is being planned that aims to boost the recruitment of women by highlighting job opportunities for women. The campaign is to be funded by TfL and implemented across the bus operating companies. To add to the visibility of the campaign, 'women-only' recruitment open days have been held at bus garages, to address the misconceptions surrounding the bus driver profession and to encourage more applications from women. The women who attended these open days were given the opportunity to speak to experienced female drivers and to obtain information on working conditions. Feedback was positive, and a number of women submitted their applications to the company and are now working as bus drivers. Moreover, partnerships with Job Centre Plus offices and pre-employment programmes have been established, which target women who are returning to the labour market. These programmes also offer six to

eight weeks of training, enabling women to obtain their theory test and to undergo a placement with an operator, thus gaining a proper understanding of the work involved.

In relation to funding, it was felt that the initiative should be cost neutral, as the costs of recruitment campaigns have to be met through the budgets of the operating companies. Thus, the central emphasis is on changing the focus and content of the campaign rather than on adding to the overall cost. Nevertheless, some specific costs, such as the London-wide campaign, are met by TfL centrally.

In terms of flexible working and childcare, it was recognised that working patterns can be problematic for women, as shift work is a necessary part of the job but raises challenges in relation to caring responsibilities. A flexible roster system has been adopted in an effort to meet the needs of drivers, although this is not always possible. The options for part-time work are still limited and this issue requires further attention, despite efforts by the trade unions to ensure that all employees are aware of their right to part-time work, and even though the funding and cost implications of this option should be slight. At the same time, little success has been achieved in expanding support for childcare, as it is not practical to offer care services at garages. As a result, tax breaks and guidance are offered, with some limited availability of vouchers to contribute towards care costs. These vouchers, however, are of limited use as they can only be used for formal child carers and most women rely on friends and family for childcare.

Some considerable attention has been given to training. Although the aim of appointing more female trainers has been achieved, their number remains low as the actual number of women in the overall workforce is also very small. Training activities have also been introduced to challenge the typically male-oriented culture in garages. All frontline staff members are required to undertake a specific Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualification – a vocational qualification which fully engages learners; this covers issues such as discriminatory behaviour, and all line managers are required to undertake training based on the theme of dignity at the workplace. In particular, greater respect for individuals and zero tolerance for discriminatory behaviour are emphasised. The importance of offering part-time training programmes is also recognised, in order to meet the needs of part-time workers who are more likely to be women. Moreover, all trainers have themselves been fully trained in equality and diversity issues, and procedures and policies have been put in place to address harassment issues.

A mentoring system has been introduced for all new staff members; this includes ‘buddy’ schemes at the workplace for new recruits, enabling them to access support informally and when required. In this respect, a number of experienced women have been selected to work as mentors, offering advice and support to new female drivers.

In terms of facilities, the problems experienced by women have been identified, and the costs of improving facilities, such as toilets in garages, are being met by TfL.

Regarding cultural issues and the image of the bus driver profession, issues still remain in relation to security, as drivers are at particular risk of abuse and violence (a factor that is especially intimidating for women). However, a dedicated section of the London Metropolitan Police – the Transport Operational Command Unit – has since been assigned to deal with antisocial behaviour and traffic flow issues. All buses are also equipped with a radio system and an alarm button and are satellite-tracked for security. Cash is now rarely handled on the buses thanks to the use of prepayment systems, which also help to reduce levels of crime and threatening behaviour. Moreover, in recognition of the potential for harassment in this male-dominated environment, T&G have introduced a 24-hour listening service to allow women to discuss any incidents of harassment. In instances where cases of harassment are to be formally investigated, the complainant can be accompanied by a trade union representative. On a more positive note, the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, has been actively involved in promoting bus usage. High-profile assistance has also ensured that the support programmes remain visible and are high on the agenda for change.

Employee representative views

More proactive and positive actions have been taken to tackle the underrepresentation of women in the bus driving profession: monitoring all stages of recruitment and employment including reasons for leaving, training initiatives, open days, advertising, promotional activity, follow-up of female applicants who do not make it through the recruitment process and additional exit interviews for women leaving the profession.

The number of female bus drivers who have applied for positions and who have been successfully recruited has increased.

Female trade union representatives have been appointed in a number of London Bus companies; these representatives are recognised by the company and granted paid release from their duties. Such a development has increased overall recognition for equality among trade union representatives.

Ongoing discussions on working time patterns have taken place. This includes discussions on both good and bad practices in relation to the recruitment of women, particularly those with family responsibilities, and on working time opportunities for existing staff members.

Overall, therefore, despite existing difficulties, the bus operating companies and employee representatives are actively working with TfL on a range of activities aimed at addressing the gender imbalance in this particular industry. Such activities include specific recruitment campaigns, dedicated training, the identification of best practices and the improvement of facilities. At the same time, the initiative has drawn attention to the significant gender imbalance in the sector.

Expected future developments

The initiative is currently ongoing and no major changes are envisaged for the future. It is envisaged that future activities will focus on ad hoc recruitment events, and on the need for improved facilities and for ongoing training aimed at overcoming the current male dominance of the sector.

Strengths and weaknesses of initiative

Two main weaknesses in the initiative can be identified at this point. First, despite the efforts that have been taken, the rate of female recruitment is still low. Second, as already outlined, flexible working and childcare continue to be problematic within the companies.

With regard to the strengths of the initiative, these include the focus on recruitment, a number of specific initiatives such as 'women-only' open days, the increased presence of female trainers, and the changes achieved in the gender-related culture in the bus companies. Furthermore, the trade union representative points to the fact that the London Mayor's office is serious about achieving the targets set for the number of women bus drivers: it is anticipated that action will be stepped up in areas where progress is not being made.

Views of social partners

The partners working on this initiative are the seven bus operating companies in London, the T&G trade union, job centres, outreach programmes and community initiatives directed at hard-to-reach groups such as women from ethnic minorities. The programme has received generally broad support both from the company managers and from the trade union officers and representatives. In terms of potential criticisms, however, the employee representative highlights the need for greater investment on the part of the bus companies, to ensure that working patterns do not discriminate against existing or prospective female bus drivers.

Transferability of initiative

A number of elements of the initiative described can be regarded as being ‘transferable’ to other transport sectors in the UK, as well as to other public transport bus companies in Europe. These include:

- the importance attributed to the recruitment process;
- the introduction of ‘women-only’ open days;
- flexible roster practices;
- mentoring practices conducted by female personnel and trainers;
- efforts to adapt and improve existing facilities to suit women’s needs;
- the use of training to promote a cultural change among the male colleagues;
- collaboration between TfL, the bus operating companies and the trade union representatives.

UK: Promoting equality and dignity at work among air transport ground staff at Stansted Airport

Framework conditions

Employees in the aviation industry can be categorised in three groups:

- professional workers – pilots, technicians and engineers;
- aircraft support personnel – cabin crew, cleaners and maintenance workers;
- ground staff – check-in staff, baggage handlers, catering staff and all management staff.

Traditionally, men have dominated the professional tier of employment in the aviation industry. For example, the UK national carrier British Airways traces its roots back to 1919 but only employed its first female pilot in 1987. Moreover, the first all-female airline crew was only recorded in 1995. By the late 1990s, approximately 1,700 female pilots were employed around the world, the largest proportion of whom worked in the US. In the UK, female pilots constitute only around 5% of all commercial pilots, while women’s presence in the technical and engineering fields is even more limited.

The composition of ground staff in the air transport industry also reflects the extent of gender-related occupational segregation: Mills (1999) noted the dominance of white, middle-class men in senior management positions, while women predominated in lower managerial roles and as ‘service contacts’, largely working as check-in, catering and cleaning staff. Thus, airline cabin crew reflect a specific historical tradition, which reinforces gendered occupational segregation, while ground staff occupations reflect the wider sectoral segregation evident in the national labour market.

Stansted Airport is the third-busiest airport in the UK, as well as one of the fastest growing major airports in Europe, and the main home of the leading low-cost scheduled airlines. The airport is owned by the British Airports Authority (**BAA**²⁶), the world’s leading airport company. BAA also owns six other UK airports, including Heathrow and Gatwick. Currently, Stansted Airport is used by more than 23.5 million passengers each year and employs around 11,600 people. Of this total, 1,000 are employees of BAA Stansted, some 36% of whom are women. BAA highlights its commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in employment, in terms of recruitment and treatment of staff. The company also has a comprehensive bullying and harassment policy, which is publicised to all staff and which aims to support equality at work.

²⁶ <http://www.baa.com/>

As previously outlined, social dialogue in the UK continues to be highly decentralised, with most bargaining being conducted at company or workplace level; little multi-employer bargaining takes place outside the public sector. Just over a quarter (27%) of workplaces recognise trade unions for at least some of their workforce. However, trade unions are recognised in only 16% of private sector workplaces, compared with 90% of public sector workplaces.

Detailed description of initiative

The initiative at Stansted Airport aims to promote an inclusive working environment, ensuring that all employees feel valued and respected, irrespective of their race or gender. Introduced in 2002–2003, the project was funded by BAA. Recognising the advantages of a diverse workforce, the company aims to promote greater diversity, and ultimately improve business performance. Those involved in the initiative included employees, line managers, senior management and trade unions. The project's target audience comprised all current employees, subcontractors, consultants, customers and potential recruits.

The multifaceted initiative aimed to:

- utilise the talents of all staff;
- improve recruitment and retention;
- ensure that employment decisions were based on objective issues related to the job;
- enhance decision making through improved engagement and interaction;
- expand the company's ability to relate to a range of customers and other stakeholders;
- build effective relationships in the wider community.

In order to achieve these objectives, a number of concrete initiatives were adopted:

- an employee and trade union survey was conducted aimed at assessing individuals' views on the action plans and strategies;
- training was to be provided for all those involved in key decision-making roles in relation to potentially discriminating practices;
- it was decided that complaints regarding harassment and bullying were to be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated;
- employment opportunities were advertised widely and all applications welcomed;
- all employees were encouraged to undertake training and development activities, which would enable them to pursue opportunities for promotion;
- selection criteria were related exclusively to the job or training;
- subcontractors were made aware of the initiative and all contracts included a clause prohibiting unlawful discrimination;
- policy was monitored regularly and a report was published annually for staff and public perusal.

While this initiative was extended to all BAA employees, it also stipulated some specific responsibilities. A 'corporate responsibility board' was assigned the task of reporting on annual progress on diversity targets, and of ensuring that these

results were communicated to all the organisation's stakeholders. At the same time, an executive committee was given responsibility for putting policy into practice, leading by example and supporting an organisational culture that recognised and supported diversity at a local and national level. The director of HR had the task of advising this executive committee on how policy could be most effective, of ensuring that such policy was implemented throughout the company and of reporting annually on the effectiveness of the diversity measures. In general, all managers were expected to maintain an informed and supportive stance in relation to the objective of ensuring diversity and dignity at work; the managers had to be aware of company policy on this issue and to ensure that it was implemented and observed. Line managers were also trained to act as role models, as well handling issues related to bullying, harassment and discrimination. Managers were also asked to ensure that all contractors and subcontractors received a copy of BAA policy and practice regarding diversity, bullying and harassment. Trade unions were required to support the company approach to equality and diversity, encouraging their members to be aware and informed of the relevant policy and practice.

In order to assess the effectiveness of these policies, information on the degree of representation in terms of gender, age, race, ethnicity and disability was collected. This information was used to draw attention to areas of concern, although it was held in confidence. If underrepresentation occurred, further investigation was undertaken in conjunction with the HR department to eliminate any possible discriminatory practices. In addition, policies were formally reviewed on an annual basis and any changes communicated to staff and trade unions.

A copy of the policies was provided to all staff. They were also posted on the company website, on notice boards, and published in manuals and guidance material. During induction, training and development the policies were promoted. Diversity policies were included in tender information and contractors were expected to comply with their provisions. Efforts were also made to ensure that the information was clearly written and available in alternative formats if required.

All BAA employees, temporary workers and job applicants were subject to the policy's provisions. A dedicated BAA 'diversity manager' was appointed and assigned responsibility for this area of policy and practice; they were also available to discuss any related issues or queries.

Main results and impact of initiative

Discussions with the trade union and company representatives at Stansted Airport give an insight into the initiative's progress to date. The initiative was developed as part of the ongoing trade union focus on equality and fairness at work. All company policy regarding issues of bullying and harassment is reviewed and monitored regularly. It is felt that the general approach of the employer is constructive and positive but that more work is needed, given the size of the organisation. Instances of bullying and harassment have emerged, particularly by line managers towards more junior employees and those with disabilities.

This particular focus on equality and diversity was introduced to ensure that all employees were treated fairly and appropriately. In an effort to achieve this objective, a rigorous programme of training and education has been undertaken, particularly for shop stewards, health and safety representatives and equality officers. BAA has offered its full support to this training programme and employs a diversity manager within the HR department. The company's diversity and equality policy has proved quite successful, particularly in increasing the number of female and ethnic minority trade union representatives. At present, 50% of shop stewards are female; although some of the male stewards initially resented the efforts to include more women and left the union as a result, this female presence is now largely accepted. As a result, women maintain a significant presence in the organisation of employees and among trade union representatives who are trained in equal opportunity issues and involved in promoting dignity and respect at work. This has resulted in a change of culture, particularly in areas of the work environment such as restrooms where inappropriate behaviour and comments had been commonplace. BAA also provides shop stewards with office facilities, allowing them

time to communicate with the workforce and to produce newsletters that draw attention to the equality and diversity initiative. The newsletters also give employees information on new employment regulations and on their rights in the workplace.

It should be mentioned that many of the contract companies use migrant labour; this has caused some resentment among BAA employees, given the pay disparity and the willingness of migrant workers to accept poorer terms and conditions. To address this issue, the company has introduced a campaign to involve the contracting companies in the equality initiatives. Migrant workers themselves have been informed of the support offered by the trade union. Apart from this issue, it is felt that the initiatives have proved relatively successful and that the company has been supportive of the efforts to promote equality and diversity initiatives and training.

Expected future developments

It is expected that the initiative will continue to provide training and information and monitor the effectiveness of current practice and policy. One issue that will need to be addressed is that of flexible working arrangements, most employees being on rosters. The company is reluctant to allow employees to manage their own rosters; this creates difficulties for those with caring responsibilities. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that rosters are changed regularly, which disrupts caring arrangements; as a result, some women have left the organisation. However, there are no plans to address this problem at present.

Strengths and weaknesses of initiative

The initiative has been largely successful, as it has drawn attention to the existence of discriminatory behaviour and problems relating to it. At the same time, training and awareness campaigns have led to a cultural change in the organisation, aimed at protecting and enhancing the dignity of employees.

Views of social partners

This initiative had been devised by T&G following an agreement with BAA. When the policy was first introduced, some resentment emerged among existing trade union representatives regarding the need to increase female and ethnic minority representation; however, it is now felt that training and communication efforts have addressed this issue.

Transferability of initiative

According to those who were interviewed, the aforementioned training initiatives audits can be used in any organisation; the trade union is working to increase the impact of these initiatives.

Ongoing dialogue is also taking place between T&G and the International Transport Workers' Federation (**ITF**²⁷), both of which are working together to improve training and awareness. However, the extent to which this initiative is transferable does depend, in part, on employment regulation in other Member States. For example, equality and diversity policy will be shaped by the degree of obligation stipulated in the respective countries' employment legislation: some countries, such as Sweden, have a highly regulated approach, while the UK has, until recently, adopted a more *laissez-faire* approach.

²⁷ <http://www.itfglobal.org/language-selector.cfm>

Conclusions

Women's employment in the transport sector

The transport sector plays a central role in the EU economy: it represents approximately 10% of the EU's GDP and is crucial for the functioning of other economic sectors, as it enables the distribution of goods and services. The transport sector employed about 8.7 million people in 2004 in what are now the 27 EU Member States. Of these, 6.8 million were employed in the EU15 and 8.2 million in the EU25. The two most important transport subsectors in terms of employment are road freight transport and road passenger transport, which account for 31.3% and 21.1% of the sector's total employment, respectively. Railways account for 11.3% of the sector's employment, while sea and air transport represent 2.1% and 4.7% respectively of transport employment. Auxiliary transport activities account for 28.7% of sectoral employment, and these activities are gaining in importance as transport volumes increase. Significant differences emerge among the Member States in the distribution of employment according to transport subsector and with respect to geographical location or productive specialisation. About 60.2% of Europe's total transport employment is located in five countries: France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the UK.

From a gender-specific perspective, the participation of women in the transport sector is limited and lower compared with their presence in the labour market as a whole. In 2005, only 20.5% of the EU27 transport workforce were women, compared with 43.5% of total employment. A breakdown of employment by transport subsector shows that the presence of women is particularly strong in air transport (NACE 62) and in supporting and auxiliary transport activities/activities of travel agencies (NACE 63): women account for over 32% of employment in each subsector. Conversely, women's involvement in water transport (NACE 61) and land transport (NACE 60) is far less significant: less than 18% in both. It should be highlighted that, in all sectors, women's slightly increased in the five years since 2001. Nonetheless, from a national perspective, the presence of women in the transport sector is still limited in all cases, not reaching higher than 28% of total employment in the sector.

A number of barriers still exist, which prevent the full participation of women in the European transport sector, making it an unattractive sector for women. Such barriers include:

- the reluctance of employers to hire women;
- poorer working conditions (in terms of wages, access to training, family unfriendly working hours, male-centred ergonomic working conditions, the risk of violence and harassment);
- cultural stereotypes that associate women with specific roles and tasks in the transport sector.

Despite present difficulties, however, female participation in the transport sector has been increasing in recent years. This is partly due to greater demand for white-collar, technology-driven and flexible labour. Another reason is the labour shortages that exist within certain sectors and professions (for example, desk-office work in logistics or auxiliary transport activities); companies are seeking to attract women to fill these shortages.

Conclusions from national initiatives

This report has investigated the development and implementation of innovative measures fostering gender equality in the European transport sector. For this purpose, the report has presented and analysed eight specific measures. These have been adopted by national trade unions or other social partners in seven countries in an effort to improve gender equality in the workplace in a number of transport subsectors (see Table 3).

Based on the analysis of these measures, it is possible to make a number of conclusions.

All of the experiences analysed underline the importance of a collaborative relationship between the company and employee representatives in working together to define and negotiate common priority objectives, and so achieve results that are valuable for both parties. Some experiences indicate that these negotiations are made easier if the employee representatives (trade unions) have high legitimacy (i.e. the workforce is highly unionised) and are able to work together to agree on a common strategy among themselves in cases where the workforce is represented by several trade unions.

The analysis shows that transport companies, particularly the larger companies identified in the research, are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the issue of gender equality in their working practices. Very often, this issue is addressed in the policy domain of corporate social responsibility (see British Stansted and Air France cases). It is interesting to observe that, in some cases – that of Air France, for example – trade unions do not agree with this approach to the gender equality issue and prefer a transversal approach, whereby the issue is more deeply embedded in overall company strategy.

Some cases – for instance, the Dutch, French, Hungarian and Italian experiences – underline the important role that national equality legislation can play in fostering gender equality in enterprises. Such legislation establishes a number of legal obligations and positive actions for enterprises, which can accelerate significant changes within companies. In this respect, public authorities can play an important role in countries where significant gender imbalances persist. Such public action also needs to be complemented by broad dialogue in society on the principles of equal rights, pay and career opportunities for both women and men.

Some of the initiatives analysed, in particular the French case, highlight how a gender bias in a sector very often starts early on, in the educational system. Evidence suggests that some courses and specialisations have a significant gender bias, which obviously makes gender-balanced recruitment policies more difficult. In this respect, the development of gender-balanced orientation practices for students are considered crucial.

The importance of enhancing the image of the transport sector from a female perspective should also be highlighted. Some transport subsectors and occupations have a very male-dominated image, which can pose a significant barrier to women (see the example of London Buses).

As the Italian case shows, the integration of women into traditionally male-dominated transport occupations can act as a catalyst for the increased participation of women in other jobs or occupations within a company, as male colleagues become accustomed to working with women and realise the advantages of this development. Nevertheless, some of the initiatives analysed – for instance, the Dutch, French and Spanish cases – show that gender equality policy cannot be based solely on increasing the presence of women in male-dominated jobs: it also requires a gender mix within the different job categories. This entails 'feminising' some male-dominated professions or occupations, particularly management positions, and hiring men for jobs regarded as being typically 'female'. In this respect, the introduction of positive discrimination tools in the selection and recruitment of new personnel for underrepresented groups is considered an effective instrument (see the Spanish initiative).

The French and Hungarian examples reveal that existing gender imbalances within enterprises require a global approach for all job categories and occupations, in order to be fully effective for the entire workforce. Otherwise, initiatives focused on certain job categories or occupations run the risk of securing better arrangements and working conditions only for these specific job categories. This compounds existing gender inequalities among women in the same enterprise. In this respect, the French experience also underlines the importance of allowing for the effective involvement of all company groups in the initiatives being implemented, particularly in relation to managers and HR staff who are mainly responsible for conducting such activities. For this purpose, training and communication activities are seen as being particularly useful.

The Hungarian example also highlights how women are not necessarily a homogeneous group in themselves: in some cases, specific actions are required for upgrading the working conditions and prospects of particular groups of women – for instance, women over 45 years of age, women with family duties, those on maternity leave, and women willing to work part time.

The gender equality measures analysed address a number of different aspects aimed at effectively ensuring equality at work. These aspects include: pay equality for the same level of responsibility, competence and seniority; the adaptation of working conditions, including ergonomic and health and safety conditions; improving work–life balance; and the development of an active gender equality policy in companies, covering recruitment, professional mobility, career development or access to training and skills development activities.

An issue that is addressed in several of the cases concerns the potentially negative impact that maternity leave or part-time work can have on career development prospects: in particular, these practices, used predominantly by women, tend to diminish access to training or promotion possibilities. This underlines an important point: that a real gender-balanced labour market in all sectors will only be achieved when gender equality practices are also extended to daily life and become an issue for both men and women. In this sense, a non-discriminatory society can only be based on shared responsibilities, opportunities and resources for both sexes. Otherwise, policies and measures aimed at improving work–life balance – for example, part-time working practices – may indirectly lead to discrimination against women.

The Croatian example shows that improved working and health conditions for female workers have a positive effect both on the workers in terms of better ergonomic conditions and on the enterprise: advantages include significant productivity gains as a result of higher satisfaction among workers, along with fewer accidents and absences due to work-related illnesses and diseases. The Croatian case also highlights the importance of maintaining a special gender-related approach to these issues, as women's needs may be very specific and distinct from those of their male counterparts, for example in terms of uniforms, desks and chairs, toilets and dressing-room facilities.

The UK and Italian initiatives underline the importance of improving the security and safety levels of women working in certain professions, particularly in occupations where they may be exposed to violent situations, such as those of bus drivers or station operators. Exposure to such risks is often regarded as a barrier to women accessing certain jobs and occupations. The UK experience also shows the key role that women trainers and mentors can play in working with newly-recruited women in some male-dominated occupations, such as bus drivers, especially in providing advice and support.

The Hungarian example highlights the importance of including mechanisms for evaluating the development and results of the measures implemented. With regard to the extent to which the elements agreed upon by both the company and trade union representatives are fulfilled, the experience shows that the implementation of the agreements often greatly depends on the willingness of the employer. In this context, the Dutch experience underlines the need to include clear targets in the agreements, as trade unions often complain about the fact that employers prefer to include more general obligations rather than clear and measurable goals. At the same time, the Spanish example emphasises the importance of including follow-up mechanisms within the agreements, to ensure the effective fulfilment of the gender-related measures.

The research has discussed innovative case studies in large transport companies. However, as it is well known, the transport sector – especially some subsectors such as road transport – is composed of many micro and small enterprises that account for the bulk of employment. The involvement of these small enterprises in gender equality practices is an additional challenge for the transport sector as a whole, one that requires specific action both by company representatives and trade unions.

Another issue raised by the research is the lack of comparable data across countries on employment and working conditions in the transport industry. This is particularly evident in relation to emerging companies and sectors, such as logistics, which appears to be a source of significant current and future employment for women. The availability of data represents a key factor enabling social partners to take action and to adopt measures and strategies directed at gender equality.

Finally, this analysis has described numerous innovative measures aimed at enhancing gender equality in the workplace within the diverse transport subsectors. However, the transport industry has adapted very slowly, if at all, to the specific needs of female workers. In this respect, it is important to communicate and promote these measures, as much as possible, among the relevant national and European associations and public administration bodies, as they can provide a source of ideas and information for similar initiatives in other sectors and countries, while highlighting important lessons. In addition, extending the current research experience to other measures and initiatives in the future could represent a further worthwhile initiative, as transport companies and sectors will hopefully devote their increasing attention to the gender equality issue.

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Annex 1: Country codes and abbreviations

Country codes

EU27

AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DE	Germany
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FI	Finland
FR	France
HU	Hungary
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
LV	Latvia
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SE	Sweden
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
UK	United Kingdom

Candidate countries

HR	Croatia
TR	Turkey

Country abbreviations

EU15	15 EU Member States (before May 2004)
EU25	25 EU Member States (after May 2004)
EU27	EU25 plus two new Member States, Bulgaria and Romania, both of which joined the EU in January 2007

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Annex 4: Sources of information for Hungarian initiative

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