



For and with the European Social Partners CER and ETF

EUROPEAN PROJECT
REPRESENTATION AND BETTER
INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE
DIFFERENT PROFESSIONS OF THE RAILWAY
SECTOR

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Chapter 1

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1. The General Context

To undertake for the first time a research study on the equal opportunities for men and women in the railway sector of the 25 countries now forming the current European Union, not only implies an accurate knowledge of the productive, legislative and social conditions characterising the single Countries concerned, but above all requires an adequate focus on the reference Community context. This will enable us to highlight an approach, which is wide-ranging and not overly specialised or highly sectoral, to be used to interpret the role of women in the European railways and to propose a variety of solutions for the related problems.

The project entitled “Représentation et meilleure intégration des femmes dans les différentes professions du chemin de fer” (Representation and Better Integration of Women in the Railway Occupations) originated from an idea of the Mixed Working Team on Equal Opportunities set up in Brussels in December 2001 within the context of Social Dialogue - Railway Sector. The aim of the Working Team was to respond to the need – particularly evident to practitioners in the sector as well as to non-experts, also considering the very low rate of female employment in the railway enterprises - to acquire more precise information about this occupational area never previously examined “through the eyes of women”.

The first step in discussing “gender difference” in the European railways, on the basis of the prospect summarised at the 1995 Peking World Conference in the term ‘Gender Mainstreaming’ (now highlighted in New York at the Peking +10 UN Conference), implies an investigation from the viewpoint of the railway women workers and other social actors, who are also necessarily and immediately involved, from the dialectic and negotiation point of view, in the formulation of internal rules, in the

negotiation and application of rights as well as in the dissemination of culture specifically in these occupational areas.

The project thus involves a survey conducted with the typical means of a research study, i.e. a semi-structured questionnaire distributed to and a focused interview with the two target groups. The survey thus involves a field work - and not just a statistical and quantitative approach for the analysis of data - integrated with quality-oriented survey methods.

These instruments and methods are also designed to grasp the “unsaid” aspect of the cold series of numbers with the aim of confirming or otherwise the situation in order to propose the changes deemed necessary both for increasing and growing the number of female personnel in the railway occupations, and for improving the role of the existing personnel in terms of greater responsibility and roles. All of this takes into account the social context of reference, which now more than ever requires integration policies to achieve the concrete rights of citizenship for the people of the newly extended EU. These include the rights of women; the instruments to reconcile work and family life both for women and men; and the actions for the development and growth of individuals in the organisations and in the work environments.

The Mixed Working Team, consisting of representatives of the Community of European Railways (CER) member railway enterprises and of the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF) - affiliated trade unions, is convinced that this mixed nature can create a stimulating climate in all environments, thus contributing to the improvement of the performance and to an increase of overall productivity.

These principles are widely reflected in the fundamental documentation of the European Union. Throughout the history of the European Community, there has been a positive evolution characterising the policies for women. Starting from a restrictive concept of parity, limited to equal wages (Art. 119 of the EEC Treaty of 1957), to the attainment (with the Treaty of Maastricht) of a general agreement on the social policy regulating the equal opportunities between men and women on the labour market and the working conditions at the workplace. This agreement, besides providing for a minimum basis of women’s protection, leaves the Member States free to adopt extra measures for a positive discrimination. Since Maastricht (1993), several Directives have been adopted, for example the Directive on Parental Leave. In the various countries, on the basis of the

minimum requisites, longer-term innovative legislation has been developed. The Treaty of Amsterdam (1999), which marks the last stage of this positive path, has considerably strengthened the legal basis for equality between men and women. In particular, Art. 2 and Art. 3 confirm the commitment of the Community on gender mainstreaming and more precisely that the principle of equal opportunities must be integrated in all the Community policies.

Since 1981, the European Union has launched a series of action programmes in this specific context, and has introduced the practice of gender mainstreaming in the Social Dialogue, in the cooperation for development, in the education, in the youth training, in the Structural Funds, and in particular in the European Social Fund. This was also possible as a result of the relevant work conducted and the innovative proposals introduced by the European Parliament's Commission for the Rights of Women.

Everyone acknowledges that fair participation of women in the political and social decision-making structures guarantees the proper functioning of democracy, and thus achieving true democracy requires a more complete enhancement of the role of women considered as an important segment of the society.

A significant female presence is required not only from the quantity, but also from the quality point of view, in order to guarantee a balanced representation of the needs in all the elected assemblies and in all the political decision-making bodies at the various local, national and European levels. The path towards a new European citizenship for women and men implies that the principle of partnership and equal participation is achieved concretely by responding to the challenges of Europe in the third millennium. These challenges are the economic and monetary union, the fight against unemployment, the extension of the European Union, Europe's role in the world, the development of new technologies and consequently of the Information Society.

With regard to the Social Dialogue, instruments such as labour legislation, collective bargaining and other forms of co-operation between governments, workers and employers represent the fundamental means to promote social justice and to adjust employment policies to the changes required on the economic and social level.

The European Community, through the promotion of the Social Dialogue and the strengthening of the institutions, mechanisms, Social-Dialogue processes and the representative quality of the Social Partners, is the transversal body providing general guidelines and direction in the various sectors of production.

Interprofessional dialogue embodies a strategic relevance in the social-policy development, through both social agreement and the new employment strategy; however, there could be made further efforts on key issues such as the abilities for job insertion or the information and consultation of workers.

Sectoral dialogue, on the other hand, is a more effective means of action, being closer to the public. Nevertheless, the very potential of the sectoral dialogue, as a framework for joint actions and negotiations of agreements, is far from being fully exploited. The Commission thus promotes the development of the actions, and among these latter, in particular, the positive actions specifically designed for women. The implementation of the agreements signed in the framework of the social-agreement procedures, can take place in two ways:

- directly through the Social Partners, in compliance with the procedures followed by employers, trade unions and Member States;

or

- through the Community regulations. In this case, the Commission makes a case-by-case evaluation of the representative status of the signatories, the legality of the clauses of the agreement with regard to Community law, and the pertinence of a relative action on the Community level. An example of the latter can be observed in the recent Framework Agreements signed between the Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES), the Union des Industries de la Communauté européenne (UNICE) and the Centre Européen des Entreprises (CEEP) on parental leave and part-time work.

In order to achieve these objectives within the Project on “Représentation et meilleure intégration des femmes dans les différentes professions du chemin de fer”, the work has been co-ordinated by a mixed team, with the support of an external consultant, who firstly visited the enterprises and trade unions in all the partner countries (Italy, Austria, Germany, and France) and in the two countries that have recently entered the European

Union (i.e., Hungary and Poland), and then worked on site, thereby reporting the personal direct experience. The choice to actively involve the two newly-entered Member States was based on the desire for a proactive participation in the general process currently under way for the exchange of good practices.

The discussions between the various countries and the sharing of positive actions highlighted by a careful benchmarking study, conducted in sectors which are either similar to or different from the railway sector, have strengthened the Social Dialogue and the cooperation between all the countries of today's Europe.

A plan for the promotion and dissemination of the results has likewise been formulated, using IT systems together with the traditional tools of internal communication utilised in the enterprises and trade unions.

These results, in addition to the research study on qualitative and quantitative factors, are in accordance with the relative directives issued by the Commission, i.e. increasing the dialogue and the exchange between the various countries, developing equal opportunities (the true foundation of all the policies of the current 6-year period), integrating cultures and providing homogenous information and instruments.

Our project can thus be defined ambitious in this regard, since it responds to the logic and to the aims of the Commission, which provides considerable resources for this specific purpose. The project has been co-financed and will create, as an immediate and significant output, a database considered as a platform for formulating an equal-opportunities policy agreed between the parties in the European railways.

1.2. The Main Results of the Research Study

The surveys conducted on the enterprises and trade unions have involved several countries of the extended European Union, including all the major EU countries.

The weight of the 11 railway enterprises/holdings participating in the structural survey is considerable: almost 850,000 employees, of whom approximately 160,000, or 18.8% of the total, are women.

The first obvious result of this research study thus confirms from the quantitative viewpoint, the serious under-representation of women in the workforce of the European railway enterprises.

In general, in the countries of the Eastern Europe the percentage of women workers is higher, on average approximately 30%. In the countries of the Western Europe, on the other hand, the percentage sometimes falls under 10%. An exception is the German *DB*, where women workers account for just over 20% of the total, also considering the merger with the former East German railway enterprise.

The employment trend over the past three years reveals a general decrease in the workforce of the railway enterprises. The extensive restructuring process, affecting the entire sector for some years, is still under way, thereby causing a large reduction in the labour force employed. In the railway enterprises of the Western countries, the expulsion of labour force began earlier, and we can state that the most acute phase of the process is now over. The female component of the workforce is now growing in almost all the railway enterprises involved in the survey, and therefore the percentage of women in the labour force is rising, although at a modest rate.

In the railway enterprises of the Eastern countries, where the speed of restructuring is in some cases still very high, the female component of the labour force is decreasing, both in the absolute value and as a percentage. The railway enterprises of the Eastern countries have fewer and fewer instruments for support to female employment (corporate childcare facilities, concessions in working hours, adequate wage levels, etc.) so that it is increasingly difficult for women to reconcile work and family life.

In the distribution by age groups, we can observe that the female labour force in the European railway enterprises is on the whole younger with respect to the male labour force. In this regard, the female workers aged under 30 account for 15.5% of the total as compared to 11.0% of male workers; and in the age group 31-40, female workers total 29.4% as compared to 23.6% of male workers. On the other extreme, female workers aged over 50 total 16.0% as compared to 23.6% of male workers. The data on the distribution of the female workforce by corporate seniority are rather similar: 19.7% of female workers have been employed in the railway enterprise for less than 5 years (12.7% of male workers) and 8.5% have been employed in the enterprise for 6-10 years (6.8% of male workers).

With regard to professional positions, female workers show a prevalence of clerical workers (40%), thus revealing a percentage double that of the male workforce. For the higher professional positions, the weight of managers among women is slightly lower with respect to men, while the weight of the executives is basically aligned at around 1% of the total.

The comparative analysis of the data concerning the fields of employment and job tasks was more difficult due to the considerable lack of homogeneity in the information. We can observe, as a general trend, that:

- with respect to the various sectors, the most important factor is that the departments with the greatest female percentage are those considered least significant for the overall corporate employment rates. For example, the health sector generally records a very high percentage of women (as high as 94% in France) but accounts for 2-3% of the total workforce. Other significant sectors for female employment are on-board and on-ground assistance (with differences between the various countries), the administrative sector (in all the countries) and the sales sector (in the Eastern countries, France and Belgium);
- the data on tasks undertaken basically reflect those on the business units, with medical and paramedical jobs, office work, commercial functions and on-board and on-ground assistance being the departments where the percentage of women is relatively higher.

When comparing the wages of female and male workers of the European railway enterprises, there is a widespread penalisation of women. Among the workers, in particular, the average female wage is lower than for males with percentages ranging from 10% (Poland and Austria) to almost 30% (Lithuania). This significant difference can presumably be explained above all by the percentage of extra-remuneration (overtime work, night-shifts...) which is normally higher among male workers. However, the lower average wage level for female workers is also significant among clerical and technical workers. With regard to the higher managerial positions, the gap seems to be smaller, and even eliminated in some cases, though not irrelevant (around 8-10%) in various situations. If we consider that at these professional positions, the 'overtime work' factor is no longer relevant, the wage differences confirm the greater difficulties of women workers in achieving better paid positions of responsibility.

With regard to the different types of employment contract, the open-ended contract is the main type used in the European railway enterprises (95.2% of the total workforce). Among the female workers, flexible types of contract are more widespread, especially part-time (9.8% of the total).

Finally, it should be pointed out that in 5 of the 11 corporate holdings participating in the survey, there is a specific body entitled to ensure equal opportunities, in compliance with the legislation and labour contracts applicable in the country.

With regard to the survey on the trade unions (17 organisations representing 10 countries participating in the survey), the main results can be summarised as follows:

1. women represent only 18.2% of trade-union membership and the female percentage of new members is substantially similar. Unlike the railway enterprises, the trade unions do not show a trend towards the increase of the female component, although half of the trade unions acknowledge that new female entries have triggered positive changes in the trade-union organisation model (above all in terms of equal opportunities, relationships between members and the protection of the women's rights). With regard to the initiatives undertaken over the past 3 years by the trade unions to foster the growth of the female trade-union members, we can mention above all the organisation of training courses, specific canvassing actions, the insertion of women in management bodies, the creation of specific Women's Sections in the trade unions, the creation of support groups to identify problems or obstacles for women at work, and the insertion of statutory anti-discrimination provisions (e.g., not less than 40% of women in the corporate management teams);
2. there is a significant initiative undertaken by the trade unions to promote a better reconciliation between work and family life, in particular through the increase of a system of flexibility more favorable for workers (including the promotion of suitable and diversified part-time contracts). As a result of this pressure on the employers, the collective labour contracts of 5 out of 10 countries contain provisions for work/life reconciliation, and in 6 cases, regulations supporting access by women to the railway occupations (it should be recalled that only in 2 out of 10 countries, the trade unions have reported positive policies for enhancing the female component in the railway enterprise);

3. a figure of 11 out of the total 17 trade unions state that they have received reports or complaints as to the inadequacy of current legislative and the contract regulations on maternity and paternity. Among the reasons for dissatisfaction, as regards maternity they mention above all penalisation in terms of career opportunities, wage in the optional period as well as the fact that "maternity is not viewed favorably in the enterprise". It is interesting to observe that the reasons do not regard so much the provisions envisaged in the regulations, but rather than the effects of maternity leave within the enterprise. Substantially, there is penalisation, above all in terms of career progress, which seems to depend on specific corporate choices rather than contract regulations in this specific field;
4. with regard to the initiatives undertaken to promote equal opportunities in the railway sector, the action most approved by the trade unions, and common to almost all of them, is the battle to include equal opportunities in the collective-contract bargaining. Significant initiatives include the start-up of programmes for international collaboration, the support to research projects on gender differences and the promotion of teamwork for gender co-operation. Whereas initiatives to develop actions for training, vocational qualification and updating specifically oriented to the topic of equal opportunities are not very widespread. In the cases where the problems concerning equal opportunities have been discussed during collective bargaining, the main issues for negotiation are parental leave and maternity. The other issues, though less widespread, are the work organisation, the integration of women in technical occupations and wage parity;
5. regarding mobbing and harassment, several trade unions have reported receiving complaints. The reaction of the trade unions has been to undertake actions in the railway enterprise and, in some cases, to involve the corresponding 'Equal Opportunities' Committee or to file a complaint under criminal law;
6. with respect to information on equal opportunities, most of the trade unions reserve specific space for articles in the trade-union newsletters, and space on the official trade-union website as well as organise focused forums;

7. among the initiatives and projects envisaged by the trade unions in 2004 for equal opportunities, it is worthy to mention: the targeted training projects (e.g., continuing training to bridge the gap of the re-entry to work by women and men after parental or other leave), the creation of 'mobbing desks', the discussion meetings to analyse in depth topics with specialised experts, the thematic conferences, the guidance centres for the job insertion of women, the local babysitting initiatives, the setting-up of a Womens' Section and several other projects. It should also be stressed that 4 trade unions have reported that they have not planned any specific action and 4 others failed to respond;
8. it should finally be stressed that in 10 of the 17 trade unions participating in the survey, the setting-up of a body for equal opportunities is envisaged in their statutes.

With regard to the survey on policies for the occupational integration of women in the railway enterprises (with the participation of 13 enterprises/holdings representing 9 countries), the main results can be summarised as follows:

- a) a figure of 10 out of 13 enterprises state that no specific programmes are implemented to increase the female component, substantially because they do not perceive the problem of the under-representation of women, despite the evidence of structural data;
- b) among the main actions currently under way in the railway enterprises to enable a better reconciliation between work and family life, we can cite the promotion of part-time contracts (9 enterprises report this initiative) and the change in the shift organisation (7 enterprises). Only 4 enterprises indicate the increase of flexibility and the creation of social services in the enterprise; and only one reports the promotion of telework. The actions undertaken by the railway enterprises thus involve the well-consolidated job-flexibility instruments, which in some cases, such as part-time contracts, are often proposed to women workers to satisfy the corporate requirements (flexible and temporary jobs), more than to satisfy the needs of the women workers themselves. With regard to employment contracts, besides the significant diffusion of part-time work, some reports regard the so-called project-by-project and fixed-term contracts. No railway enterprise has stated that it promotes telework, thus confirming the reluctance to use innovative instruments to favour the reconciliation between work and family life;

- c) among the reasons for dissatisfaction reported by the railway enterprises regarding the use of maternity and paternity leave, both male and female workers report above all penalisation in terms of career opportunities (similar results come from the trade-union sources);
- d) whereas, in the evaluation of any gender discrimination deriving from career paths, the opinions differ between the railway enterprises and trade unions, with only 2 out of 13 enterprises reporting significant career differences between male and female workers. With respect to the main measures adopted by the railway enterprises to develop the professional role of women, the primary reports regard participation in management training and vocational refresher courses. It should be stressed that no enterprise has reported the introduction of a system aimed at enhancing women's skills;
- e) with regard to the characteristic profiles of "human resources" (in terms of skills and aptitudes) most often considered by the evaluation systems, prevailing replies are concentrated on the "productivity" profile, i.e., work performance measured in terms of quantity, constancy and speed. There is much less consideration for the "skill/aptitude" profiles related to "organisation", "innovation" and "co-operation", i.e. the sectors significantly characterised by some features such as originality, creativity, teamwork, spirit of collaboration, respect for deadlines, normally more typical of the professional and behavioural profile of female workers as compared to male workers;
- f) internal circulars are the channel most frequently used for information on equal opportunities, and then brochures and the corporate identity/charter of values. Furthermore, 11 railway enterprises state that corporate communication is oriented, in the image and terminology, towards the principle of equal opportunities between men and women;

- g) with regard to the programmes and initiatives undertaken by the railway enterprises in equal opportunities over the past three years, the range of indications is quite broad and complex: surveys on the forms of flexibility in contracts and working hours, projects for the safety of front-line and on-board female personnel, training activities to develop female professional profiles in the commercial sector, support for childcare, and training specifically targeted to the corporate Management on the issues of equal opportunities;

- h) lastly, with regard to the prospects of change in the body set up to safeguard equal opportunities - where the body is envisaged -, the strengthening of collaboration with the equal-opportunity bodies and work procedures jointly co-ordinated with the Social Partners is envisaged. It should be stressed that plans for this specific body to convert from a mainly advisory and consulting function to a decision-making role were only mentioned in 2 cases.

Further evaluations and information on the actions and prospects for the occupational integration of women and equal opportunities were collected in meetings and direct interviews with the HR managers of the various railway enterprises and with the representatives of the 'Equal Opportunities' Committees.

The employers' and workers' organisations agree that the problem of the under-representation of women in the European railway enterprises historically derives from a generalised cultural discrimination, sometimes accompanied by the exclusion policies implemented by the railway enterprises. Since the average educational degree of women has grown significantly over recent years, thereby eliminating (or considerably reducing) the criteria for personnel selection based on physical requisites - still very widespread -, a significant increase of the female component in the railway enterprises should be achieved in the medium term, with the removal of constraints by which women have been "ghettoised" in some sectors, with all the related consequences (wage differences, career limitations, etc.).

Good practices show the way how railway enterprises are working in equal opportunity and integration of woman in the enterprises. For example: Planung & Engineering (technical division of the Austrian Railways) was awarded with "Equality Inside" in December 2004. The equality/Gender Mainstreaming-Management is part of the Quality Management System and the business process of the division.

The Austrian Railway is the first Railway in middle Europe with a report in sustainability. One of the main focus of this report is the work in sustained staff management (human resource management) based on Gender Mainstreaming.

There is likewise common agreement on the need to implement a marketing and communication policy in order to improve the public image of the railway enterprise. Future women employees must be motivated not

be desirable. It is fundamental for policies, designed for increasing female employment in the railway enterprises, to ensure adequate permanent conditions for women workers (proper work environments, flexible working hours, etc.). In this regard, the instruments for reconciling work and family life are absolutely fundamental.

It is worthy to mention further issues surveyed, such as the relationships between the general context of social, economic and legislative development regarding female employment and the specific responses provided by the railway sector.

The feminisation of the labour market, as an instrument of social inclusion, represents one of the main characteristics of the modernisation process currently underway in all the countries concerned in the survey.

The European Community has often called on Member States to adopt social policies guaranteeing the equality of citizens in their particular individual conditions, a protection which also extends to their work and family life. Nevertheless, one of the main problems emerged during the targeted meetings was the significant persistence of cultural prejudices on the topic of equal opportunities leading to the lack of or difficulties in adopting mainstreaming and empowerment policies for women.

Following the issuance of the European directives, all the railway enterprises and the trade unions interviewed have, in different ways, set up suitable bodies to facilitate, organise and safeguard a corporate policy for women and to counter discrimination. The setting-up of these bodies highlights the awareness demonstrated by the European railways on the topic of equal opportunities.

In general, planned policies purposely conceived to achieve the objectives of equal opportunities and the occupational integration of women in the European railways are first of all aimed at overcoming the aid-oriented approach targeted to include women in the "weak and disadvantaged categories" and then at favouring the promotion of system-based actions specifically designed to increase the female component in the railway enterprises. Starting from the awareness that women are under-represented, especially in some occupations, we have observed the commitment by some countries to intervene with targeted actions.

Finally, as far as the critical points and weaknesses emerging from the current models of work organisation in the railway sector are concerned,

as regards the topic of equal opportunities, the first obstacle to overcome is cultural. There is a lack of full awareness that a greater female component in the railway enterprise could lead to the improvement not only of the working conditions, but also of corporate efficiency together with the quality of products and services. We need only to analyse the final reports of the railway enterprises that have adopted equal-opportunity policies to recall the improvements that could be implemented, improvements which could benefit all the workers, without gender discrimination.

The second most widespread problem observed in the experiments analysed regards the low number of female workers in the technical occupations (drivers, shunters and maintenance personnel, etc.). The railway enterprises justify this aspect first of all by stressing the "male" characteristics of these occupations, involving physical and professional requisites that women seldom possess. Technological developments (e.g., in rolling stock) and a better work organisation actually enable us to overcome most of the physical requisites which now discourage or completely prevent access by women to these occupations.

A third highly problematic area emerged during the targeted meetings regards wage discrimination, which affects the job satisfaction of women workers and leads to eventually leaving the job. Until we manage to overcome "sector distinction" in the occupations, it will be hard to achieve wage equality. Women will continue to undertake administrative and office tasks, which usually do not include the additional wage benefits typical of the more "difficult" train jobs, and this wage gap may not be overcome.

The fourth critical point common to the various countries is the difficulty - often mentioned - encountered by women in reconciling work and family life. In some cases, the enterprises have jointly planned and regulated flexibility instruments, which are - however - considered harmful for career progress and for gender equality rights. Women do not want to be forced to choose between professional gratifications and opportunities on the one hand, and the possibility of dedicating the necessary time to their family and children on the other. Furthermore, there is the problem which many of the existing contracts do not actually solve it in practice, because the enterprises believe that these contracts negatively affect job productivity and thus corporate efficiency as a whole. Even where there is a contract guarantee, there is a concealed but real discrimination. In fact,

for example, parental leave does not guarantee that women workers maintain their original job once they return to work. Moreover, women workers often fail to use the flexibility instruments aimed for a better reconciliation between work and family life due to the fear of being penalised in terms of career paths or even in maintaining their job. This perception is especially marked in the enterprises currently undergoing a restructuring process which leads concomitantly to the reduction of personnel.

1.3. Recommendations

With regard to the previous paragraphs, it has been observed that the railways, as well as other work environments not covered by the survey, highlight some critical points which especially involve women workers. These points can be summarised as follows:

- an evident under-representation of women workers at all levels of the hierarchy, especially on the higher positions and in all the occupations, particularly the technical occupations;
- concomitantly women have been “ghettoised” in some specific occupations considered to be “more suited to the characteristics of the female gender”, and marginal with respect to the corporate core business;
- clear difficulties in the access of women to some occupations with high technological and/or decision-making contents;
- a more difficult and slow career progress of female personnel working in various sectors with respect to their male colleagues;
- the definite difficulty in reconciling work and family life, especially for women, with regard to the particular working hours;
- the uneven distribution of ‘equal opportunities’ organisations and networks negotiated between the Social Partners in the various countries;
- scarce or ineffective information on the topics of equal opportunities, both among personnel and corporate management;

- a different use by men and women of the legal instruments for protecting the family;
- a type of training that is basically “neutral”, without any gender orientation.

This list, which can be further developed and is subject to the inevitable differentiation between the various countries, can be considered as a basis for interpreting the problems related to the status of women in the railway enterprises surveyed in those countries actively participating in the research study.

For the mixed working team, this is the basis for proposing solutions which, although the list is not complete, could indicate ideas, instruments and resources to utilise in order to start up a process of change in the work environments and organisations, as well as to raise awareness and provide positive stimulus to the so-called ‘decision-makers’.

Considering the various options pinpointed in the research study in terms of targeted actions or system solutions - and which each country can adopt according to its own background, system and current needs -, any path should take into account the need for all, without distinction, to move towards the change in mentality and culture essential for achieving effective equal opportunities.

Alongside a variety of proposals and suggestions for promoting policies and actions to enhance and develop gender equality, the last Chapter also contains the proposal for an ideal methodological path - in the form of a flow-chart - towards the implementation of a programme or plan to enhance human resources, with particular reference to equal opportunities for men and women. This path involves all the stakeholders, starting from the women themselves through ‘gender representation’ bodies at the workplace or in the institutions, and also with the Social Partners on the local and national level, the international sectoral associations and the European Commission, i.e. the body guaranteeing the entire process, which it has promoted through recommendations, directives and substantial funding.

Chapter 2

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

2.1. Objectives

This survey falls under the European initiatives designed for promoting and strengthening the Social Dialogue, with a specific focus on Equal Opportunities in the railway sector. The objectives of this research study therefore are structured into two levels and more precisely, the thematic focus, in detail, and the Social Dialogue, in general.

The specific objectives of the project can thus be summarised as follows (expected outputs):

1. *describe the employment structure and status of women in the railway enterprises, with respect to the quantitative profiles (percentage of female component in the various corporate departments, pay levels and trade-union representation, in relation to social and age groups etc., dynamic analysis,...), personnel management (career paths, contractual forms, working hours, etc.), policies for equal opportunities and occupational integration;*
2. *describe the employment structure and status of women in the railway enterprises, with respect to the quantitative profiles (percentage of female component in the various corporate departments, pay levels and trade-union representation, in relation to social and age groups etc., dynamic analysis,...), personnel management (career paths, contractual forms, working hours, etc.), policies for equal opportunities and occupational integration;*
3. *Identify and focus the critical points in female employment status, with particular reference to the tasks, work organisation, career paths, and policies for equal opportunities;*

4. compare the situation emerging on these themes from the railway enterprises with some significant examples of the European enterprises in other sectors (transport and others);
5. suggest actions for improvement, designed specifically to contrast and remove the emerging critical points, and more in general, to promote the occupational integration of women in the European railway enterprises;
6. create a database, for both the structural-quantitative and the descriptive-qualitative aspects, designed to compare the various corporate departments analysed and to provide an overall survey of the phenomena being analysed.

The general objectives of Social Dialogue underlying the project can be summarised as follows:

1. to foster the dialogue and exchange between European railway enterprises and between the corresponding Social Partners that, in general and with regard to the specific topic of the occupational status of women, are often characterised by very different policies, approaches and reference contexts;
2. to accept and integrate analyses, evaluations, and viewpoints from the employers' and workers' organisations, in the spirit of "social dialogue" and with the conviction that this work method, besides assisting the actors involved, can produce useful results and solutions for the specific aspect of the occupational integration of women in the railway enterprises;
3. to recognise and express the specific value of the topic of "equal opportunities", for its general characteristics (it regards all the corporate sectors), while also taking into due account the fact that the smaller female component of the workforce in the railways is an evidence of gender discrimination.

2.2. The Methodology

The research project applies a complex experimental methodology (working instruments) with regard to both the topics covered and the working procedures.

The working instruments (in particular the questionnaires) were set up with a "bottom-up" approach after considerable discussion and dialogue between the partners and the necessary search for areas of mediation, in the principles (qualitative vs. quantitative, subjective vs. objective), in the choice of the contents and in the language adopted. This mediation obviously involved the need to renounce some of the specific features of the employers' and workers' organisations in each country.

According to the original methodology, the information basis was to have been created by applying and integrating the following six different sources:

1. the collection of basic structural data on the gender composition of the corporate workforce, with detailed breakdown by age, employment seniority, areas of activity, professional position, type of contracts, wages, training pathways as well as evaluation systems for job insertion and career paths, and on the specific policies for equal opportunities;
2. the information questionnaire targeted to the railway-enterprise representatives focused on the description of policies designed for occupational integration and equal opportunities in the major sectors (occupations, working hours, leaves, wages, career paths, evaluation systems, specific actions for equal opportunities), and on the analysis of the critical points observed with reference to these aspects;
3. the information questionnaire targeted to the railway trade-union representatives focused on the description of the initiatives and projects conducted by the trade unions to improve the occupational status of women (contracts, working hours, etc.), to ensure specific protection against mobbing and harassment, to favour the job insertion of women in the railway sector, and to promote equal opportunities. The trade-union source also reports elements of dissatisfaction and critical points referred by women workers relating to the various contexts of the railway enterprise;

4. the focused interviews targeted to the personnel directors of the railway enterprises. These are in-depth interviews, conducted on the basis of a semi-structured discussion grid, aimed at reconstructing the development of the issues concerning equal opportunities and the occupational integration of women in the enterprise as well as the future prospects, also in the light of the legislative and programme-related developments recorded on the European level;
5. the "multilateral" meetings of the partner countries participating in the project, useful for the further qualitative improvement of the information being provided, derived from discussion between the Social Partners as well as between the latter and the Project Working Group;
6. benchmarking, i.e. the analysis and comparison of typical cases of gender-based occupational integration and equal-opportunity promotion within the European enterprises in the transport and other sectors, in order to gain useful indications on the topic for the railway sector.

2.3. The Information Collected: Overall Situation and Evaluation

On the whole, the quality and quantity of information collected during the research activities are highly significant, though with various drawbacks which should be pointed out in this Chapter, before illustrating in greater detail the results emerging from the survey.

With regard to the data collected in the three questionnaires, the overall situation is as follows:

Structural Questionnaires of the Enterprises

- **Number: 15 survey forms for 11 countries**
- Countries represented: 6 in North-Central Europe (Austria, UK, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Germany); 1 in the Mediterranean basin (Italy); 4 in East-Central Europe (Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic)

Information Questionnaires of the Enterprises

- ***Number: 13 survey forms for 9 countries***
- Countries represented: 5 in North-Central Europe (UK, Belgium, Germany, France Austria); 1 in the Mediterranean basin (Italy); 3 in East-Central Europe (Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic)

Information Questionnaires of the Trade Unions

- ***Number: 17 survey forms for 10 countries***
- Countries represented: 4 in North-Central Europe (France, UK, Austria, Germany); 3 in the Mediterranean basin (Italy, Spain, Greece); 3 in East-Central Europe (Slovak Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary).

The number of questionnaires collected is undoubtedly lower than the initial objectives of the survey, however it is sufficient to provide a significant picture of the problems affecting the European railway enterprises as to the occupational integration of women and the issues of equal opportunities, with some evaluations from the enterprises and the trade unions.

As regards the quality of the data collected through the questionnaires, the following observations can be made:

Structural Questionnaires of the Enterprises

- In some questionnaires, the information is quite incomplete.
- The data is not always homogeneous, partly due to the objective differences from country to country of the phenomena observed (e.g., the subdivision of personnel with respect to the corporate departments and activities, and partly to the job position). In other cases, this explanation is not significant (e.g., due to some differences in the age groups). This lack of homogeneity involves serious difficulty in the aggregate data processing.

- Where there is lack of homogeneity, there are also no explanatory notes which could be useful to interpret the data.
- The Mediterranean basin is currently under-represented.

Information Questionnaires of the Enterprises

- Sometimes the rules for filling in the questionnaires have not been respected (e.g. multiple answers have been given when just one was required).
- Some answers are incomplete.
- In general, there are not many survey forms, with the Mediterranean basin in particular being under-represented and this involves difficulties in the quantitative data processing.

Information Questionnaires of the Trade Unions

- Sometimes the rules for filling in the questionnaires have not been respected (e.g., multiple answers have been given when just one was required).
- Some answers are incomplete.

With regard to the targeted meetings with Social Partners, the following meetings took place: Rome (May 2004), Wien (June 2004), Berlin (September 2004), Paris (October 2004), Budapest (November 2004), Warsaw (January 2005).

The overall evaluation of the meetings is undoubtedly positive. In fact, the participation of the various railway enterprises and trade unions was high and the discussions with the Working Group and the mutual exchange of experience and opinions were rich and highly interesting.

Regarding the direct interviews to the representatives of the employers and 'Equal Opportunities' Committees, also in this case as well, the information collected was particularly interesting, as indicated in chapter 3. In some cases, the time dedicated to the interviews conducted during the meetings was insufficient for a detailed discussion with the various topics envisaged in the interview outline.

The last research module regards benchmarking, which is structured in the following phases:

1. reporting, by partner countries, of enterprises in the transport and other sectors which are significant for the development of exemplary projects concerning gender-based occupational integration and the promotion of equal opportunities;
2. collection of information on the structural profile of the female component in the railway enterprise and description of the excellent actions for the improvement of the women's working conditions and for the promotion of equal opportunities;
3. the development, when possible, of comparative indicators between these enterprises and the railway enterprises (e.g., the percentage of the female component in the various professional positions, career progress, training, etc.).

In this section, we should nonetheless report the small amount of information collected. Documentation has been acquired on the case of the London Transport Company *London Buses*. In December 2003, *London Buses*, set up a working group, with representatives of the enterprises and trade-unions, to examine the reasons for the under-representation of women in the urban road transport sector. The research study was conducted and an Action Plan July 2004 was drawn up with the aim of increasing the number of female workers in the sector. Numerous indications for possible further actions have come from France, such as the memorandum of understanding between government representatives and the *Fédération Française du Bâtiment*, to foster the entry of women in professions pertaining to the construction sector. Various articles have been collected from newspapers and magazines regarding some definitely interesting French cases (*Teletch, EDF, Gaz de France, EADS, Air France, Peugeot-Citroen and Renault*), for Italy significant documentation has been acquired on the cases of *Ferrovie Nord Milanesi and Solvay*.

The final chapter of the Report on Benchmarking thus summarises all the cases analysed, thereby seeking to provide some indications on "good practices" for the railway sector.

Chapter 3

THE DIRECT SURVEY

3.1. The Structural Data of the Railway Enterprises

3.1.1. The Size of the Female Workforce and the Dynamics Over the Past 3 Years

The 11 railway groups/enterprises participating in the survey and representing 11 European countries employ nearly 850,000 people of whom approximately 160,000 - i.e. 18.8% of the total - are women (**Diagram 1**). The female component in the European railway sector is thus definitely a minority.

Questionnaires (*summing up*)

	Country	Structural
1	Italy	Ferrovie dello Stato S.p.A.
2	Italy	Trenitalia S.p.A.
3	Italy	RFI S.p.A.
4	Italy	Italferr S.p.A.
5	Italy	Ferservizi S.p.A.
6	Austria	Osterreichische Bundesbahnen
7	UK	Central Trains Limited
8	Lithuania	JSC Lithuanian Railways
9	Poland	PKP JSC - Polish State Railways
10	Slovak Republic	Zeleznicna spolocnost a.s.
11	Switzerland	SBB Swiss Federal Railways
12	Hungary	Hungarian State Railways Co.
13	France	SNCF
14	Belgium	NMBS
15	Germany	Deutsche Bahn AG

There are also considerable differences between the railway enterprises participating in the survey as to female employment, both in absolute and percentage values. In absolute values, these figures range from over 48,000 female employees in the German *DB* Group to 331 in Britain's *Central Train Limited (CTL)*, or 2,752 in the Austrian *ÖBB* Group.

Obviously, such relevant differences can be explained first of all with the different size of the network and the railway services provided in the various countries. In this regard, the weight of the railways in countries with a very large population and geographical area, such as Germany, France or Poland, is not comparable with the weight of the railways in small countries such as Austria, Belgium or Switzerland. As to the small size of the British *CTL*, it should be recalled that the British model is peculiar in the European panorama. The UK numbers many private enterprises operating in the railway sector, while almost all the other European countries have only one major State-owned group, sometimes divided into various specialised enterprises, and substantially occupying a monopoly position.

Secondly, we should stress the different percentage level of women in the workforce of the European railway enterprises. In the countries of East-Central Europe, this percentage is generally much higher compared to the other European countries. In Lithuania, women account for 34.9% of the workforce in the railway sector, 28.2% in the Slovak Republic, 27.7% in Poland, and 26.2% in Hungary. Whereas, this percentage falls down to 6% in Austria, 7.6% in Belgium and 10.9% in Italy. Therefore, in a small country like Hungary there are more women workers in the railway sector than in a large country like Italy (13,454 compared to 10,484). Similarly, there are almost 40,000 women working in the Polish railway enterprise, much higher than the female component in the French *SNCF* or in the Italian *FS* Group.

Germany is the only Western country where the percentage of women workers in the railway sector exceeds 20% (20.8%).

There are various reasons for the higher number of women workers in the countries of East-Central Europe, partly due to the specific situations in these countries.

In general, we can state that in these countries the structure of the workforce in the railway enterprises has been determined by:

- the high participation of women in the world of work, a generalised phenomenon extending to all sectors of the economy;
- the existence of strong support networks for female employment, thereby favouring a better reconciliation between work and family life (childcare services, working-hour flexibility, etc.);
- the substantial lack of cultural barriers to access by women to the railway occupations considered as being typically male (drivers, marshalling personnel, etc.);

Some of these structural trends are changing extensively. In particular, the significant restructuring processes in the railway enterprises, under way throughout Europe for at least 15 or 20 years, have been speeded up considerably over recent years in the countries of Eastern Europe, especially for the female component of labour force.

Considering the changes in the workforce in the various railway enterprises over the 3-year period 2001-2003 (**Diagram 2**), we can observe an overall decrease in employment, with a peak in the Slovak Republic (-15.1%) and a better situation in Belgium (-0.6%) and the France (-1.7%). However, if we closely examine the trends in female employment alone, the different dynamics in the countries of East-Central and West-Central Europe are quite obvious:

- in the first group, the changes in the female population are always negative and record values higher than the overall average, ranging from -7.6% in Hungary to -17% in the Slovak Republic;
- in the second group, changes are instead always positive, with significant growth rates above all in Switzerland (+7.4%) and Belgium (+6%), besides negative exception represented by Austria (-11.4%).

Substantially, in the railway enterprises in the Eastern countries, where the percentage of female employment is higher, the expulsion of the workforce due to restructuring processes has above all affected women. There are fewer and fewer measures to support female employment, making it increasingly difficult for women to reconcile work with family life. At the same time, the railway enterprises are seeking maximum efficiency and utilise instruments such as work flexibility (working hours, atypical contracts, etc.) and early retirement, thus penalising women workers.

In the railway enterprises of West-Central Europe, on the other hand, the fall in employment has adversely affected above all the male component: -12% in Germany, -9.6% in Italy and -8.7% in Austria.

In order to better understand the causes of this process, it is useful to make a detailed analysis of incoming and outgoing labour flows over the past 3 years, divided by gender (**Diagram 3**). We can observe that the percentage of women among those newly hired by railway enterprises in the Western countries is systematically higher than the percentage of overall female labour force in enterprises, with a significant peak totalling 42% in Germany. The percentage of the outgoing female workforce is lower (with the exception of Austria). The turnover rate of the female workforce in these enterprises is thus rather high, and tends to increase the percentage of women in the enterprises.

In the Eastern countries, similar trends have been recorded, but the incoming labour flows (higher percentage of the female component in the railway enterprises) are systematically lower than the outgoing flows, thus producing an equally high turnover rate but going in the direction of a lower percentage of the female component.

Looking at the causes of exit from the railway enterprises (**Diagram 4**), dismissal is the main reason (40%) followed by a similar rate for retirement (29.2%) and resignation (28.3%). Among the women, dismissals accounted for a much higher percentage (55.2%) above all compared to retirement.

3.1.2. Distribution by Age Groups

In the distribution of age groups, we can observe that the female workforce in the European railway enterprises (average of 11 countries) is on the whole younger with respect to the male workforce (**Diagram 5**). The female workers aged under 30 account for 12.6% of the total as compared to 9.1% for male workers; and in the 31-40 age group, the female workers account for 30.6% of the total as compared to 23.6% for men. On the other extreme, the female workers aged over 50 total 16.9% as compared to 24.5% for men. As for the data regarding France, distributed by slightly different age groups, the rates are in line with the overall rates.

The relatively higher percentage of the lower age groups among female workers is in accordance with the labour flows previously analysed. In recent years, in fact, the number of incoming female workers, mainly young, is rather large with respect to the percentage of the female component of the workforce, while relatively few young male workers are hired. This trend creates a greater generation-turnover effect in the workforce for the women compared to the men.

With a view to observing the age distribution of the female workforce in the various countries, there are some particular situations worthy to highlight (**Diagram 6**):

- the percentage of the youngest age group (up to 30) in the railway enterprises of the Western countries, except for Austria, is always higher than the general average, with a peak of 33.4% in Belgium;
- in the oldest age group (over 50), the difference between the Western and Eastern countries is less significant, with a high rate in Lithuania and Hungary (above 25%, but also in Italy and Austria (above 20%), while Germany is around the average level;
- the railway enterprises in some of the Eastern countries, i.e., Poland and the Slovak Republic, are characterised by the enormous percentage weight of the middle age group (31-50) in the female workforce. In Poland, female workers in the railway sector retire before their male counterparts. This law (which is currently being changed), together with the low insertion rate of young female employees in recent years, explains the small size of the extreme age groups (those aged under 30 and over 50);
- in some railway enterprises, anomalous trends have been observed, characterised by "generation gaps". In Italy, for example, the percentage weight of the group aged 31-40 is very low, an obvious result of a historical phase of the railways where the female hiring rate was quite low. The German railway enterprises also record a significant gap in the middle age groups, while the youngest component is quite numerous (17.6% compared to 12.1% of the overall average), thus showing that incisive policies for the job insertion of women have been recently adopted.

Diagram 7 indicates the percentage weight of women workers on the overall enterprise in the single age groups. As a confirmation of the above, we can observe that the highest percentage of women in the young age group is recorded in Germany (37%), while the same value is very low in Austria (6.3%). As regards the older age groups, on the other hand, the railway enterprises in the Eastern countries record a female component with a higher percentage, i.e. Lithuania with 37.7%, Hungary with 32.3% and Poland with 20.8%.

3.1.3. Distribution by Employment Seniority

The data on the distribution of the female workforce in the European railway enterprises are obviously not dissimilar from the data recorded for the age groups (**Diagram 8**). It is thus confirmed that among the female workers, the lower classes of seniority are more numerous with respect to male workers: 19.7% of the female workers have been employed in the enterprise for less than 5 years (12.7% for the male workers) and 8.5% have been employed in the enterprise for 6-10 years (6.8% for the male workers). The opposite positions apply for the older class of seniority (over 20 years of corporate seniority).

In percentage terms, the women workers entering the enterprise are very numerous, above all in Belgium (46.9% of the total), France (33.5%) and Germany (29.1%), and in the particular case of the British *CTL* (**Diagrams 10 and 11**). The railway enterprises of these countries thus seem to be characterised, at least in recent years, by the particular concern to ensure the greater job insertion of women. On the other hand, the percentage of new women workers in the Polish railways is very low (only 5.4% have less than 10 years of seniority, while 64.9% have worked for over 20 years), and in general in all the Eastern railway enterprises.

3.1.4. Distribution by Occupational Position

The data on distribution by occupational position is highly varied with respect to the other information provided by the railway enterprises, as observed in **Diagram 9**.

The railway enterprises of Austria, Germany and France have provided data with aggregations that are not directly comparable with those of the railway enterprises in the other countries. In the total, which does include the data of these three countries, the profile of the occupational position of the female workforce shows, as we might expect, the prevalence of clerical workers (40%), with a double percentage compared to the male workforce. Workers account for 1/3 of the female workforce (46.8% of males) and technicians for 17.8% (23.9% of males). As for the higher positions, the percentage weight of the managers is slightly lower with respect to the male workforce (7.7% compared to 8.2%), while the percentage weight of the executives is basically similar, i.e. approximately 1%.

In the occupational positions of the female workforce in the railway enterprises of Austria, France and Germany, there is a lower percentage weight of the executives (approximately 0.5% in France and Germany), compensated in France, however, by a higher percentage of managerial positions (15.5% of female workers) with respect to the male workforce.

3.1.5. Distribution by Corporate Departments and Job Tasks

There are even more difficulties in the comparative analysis of the data on the corporate departments and the job tasks (**Diagrams 10 and 11**). The lack of standards in the information in this case is very high, since the railway enterprises have different ways of classifying the professional sectors and the definition of job tasks, which may have different names to indicate the same activities, or the same names to indicate different activities.

In these two cases, it has thus been decided not to represent an overall average figure, but rather to indicate for each enterprise the departments and tasks recording the highest female component, also reporting the percentage weight of these departments in the railway enterprise.

In an overview of the various corporate situations, we can state, as a general trend, that:

- with respect to the various sectors, the most important factor is that the departments with the greatest female percentage are those considered least significant for the overall corporate employment rates. For

example, the health sector generally records a very high percentage of women (as high as 94% in France) but accounts for 2-3% of the total workforce. Other significant sectors for female employment are on-board and on-ground assistance (with differences between the various countries), the administrative sector (in all the countries) and the sales sector (in the Eastern countries, France and Belgium); the data on tasks undertaken basically reflect those on the business units, with medical and paramedical jobs, office work, commercial functions and on-board and on-ground assistance being the departments where the percentage of women is relatively higher.

3.1.6. The Comparison Between Wages and Types of Employment Contract

In the comparison between the wages of female workers and male workers in the European railway enterprises, there is a widespread penalisation of women. Despite this fact, it is also a partial situation since much information is unfortunately not available on this topic (**Diagram 12**).

Among workers in particular, the average female wage is lower than for males, with percentages from 10% (Poland, Austria) to almost 30% (Lithuania). It is presumable that this significant difference can be explained above all by the percentage of overtime work which is normally higher among male workers. The lowest level of average wages for female workers is also significant in the clerical and technical sectors. With regard to the higher managerial position, the gap seems to be smaller, and even non-existent in the Belgian and Polish railway enterprises, though still relevant (about 8-10%) in various countries (Slovak Republic, British *CTL*, and Italy). Considering that on these levels the "overtime work" factor is no longer relevant, the wage differences confirm the greater difficulties for women workers to reach better paid management positions.

With regard to the different types of employment contract (**Diagram 13**), the open-ended contract is the main type used in the European railway enterprises (95.2% of the total workforce). Among the women workers, flexible types of contract are more widespread, especially part-time work (9.8% of the total).

The open-ended contracts stipulated by the women workers are prevailing in all the railway enterprises, but with a significant difference of

percentage weight between the railway enterprises of the Eastern countries (Poland, Hungary, Slovak Republic and Lithuania), where these account for 97% of all the employment contracts, and the other railway enterprises, in particular located in Germany, Austria and Germany where this percentage is approximately 80% (**Diagram 14**). Fixed-term contracts involve approximately 2% of the women workers, with peaks of 3% in the railway enterprises of France and Germany. Part-time contracts, like open-ended contracts, are quite widespread in the female workforce in the German (17.3%), Austrian and French railway enterprises (both 15%), and almost absent in Poland, Slovak Republic and Lithuania.

Diagram 15 shows that over half the part-time employment contracts are stipulated by women, with percentages ranging from 78.2% in Austria to 44.9% in Hungary. The fixed-term contracts are also stipulated above all by the women workers, especially in France (60.6% of the total of this type of employment contract) and in the Slovak Republic (54.4%).

3.1.7. Career Paths, Training and the Use of Parental Leave

An important aspect of the structural analysis of the female component in the European railway enterprises regards the career paths and training. Unfortunately, these data also lack standardisation and are very incomplete, so that only a few simple comparisons can be carried out.

Diagram 16 indicates the percentage of women workers in the total human resources of an enterprise who have achieved a career progress over the past three years.

The reference is only to four railway enterprises, of which three in the Eastern countries. In these countries, the percentage of women workers "promoted" is on the whole rather high, in particular in the Slovak Republic (57.6%) and Lithuania. In Italy, the value is around 12.1%, in line with the weight of women in the corporate workforce. It is nevertheless interesting to note that while in the Italian railways the percentage of women workers is the same as in advancement for seniority and for merit, the Eastern countries show a higher percentage of promotions for seniority.

With regard to the number of man/days dedicated to training over the past three years, the percentage absorbed by the women workers is around

40% in the Hungarian railway enterprise and 30% in the German railway enterprise, in both cases showing levels higher than the percentage weight of women in the workforce. This does not occur in the French and Italian railway enterprises, where vocational training and updating are under-utilised by the women workers.

With regard to parental leave requested in the past three years, there are considerable differences between the railway enterprises participating in the survey (**Diagram 17**). The percentage of women workers applying for leave is, in fact, very high in the British *CTL* (100%) and in the railway enterprises of Lithuania, Hungary, France, Slovak Republic and Belgium, where the levels range between 99% and 72.4%. The rates are quite low in the Italian (30.8%) and above all in the Austrian railways (just 8.8%).

Finally a question on the existence of a body for ensuring equal opportunities, in accordance with current legislation and contracts (**Diagram 18**). Just half of the enterprises gives a positive answer: all of them are enterprises of Western countries.

Diagram 1 - The number of women in the workforce of railway enterprises/holdings in the various countries (absolute values and percentages)

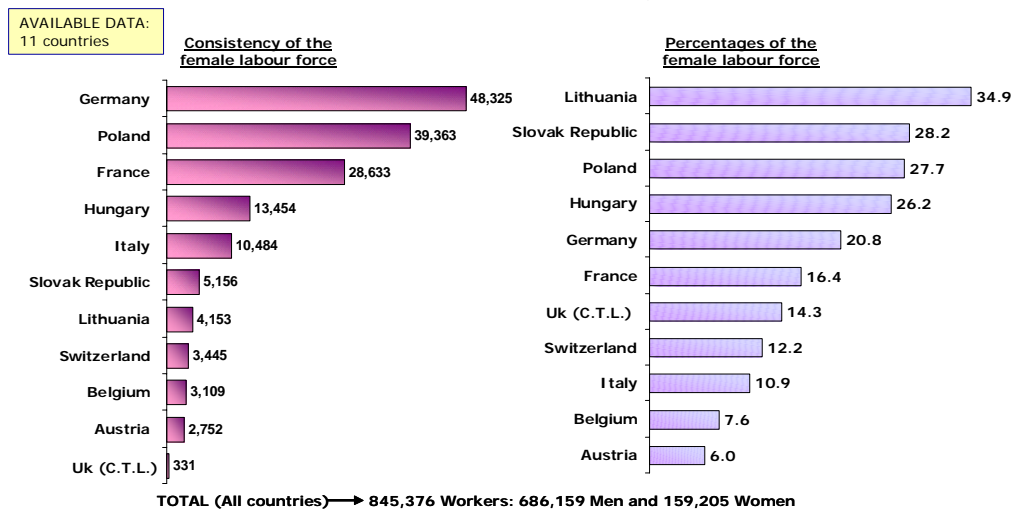


Diagram 2 The variation in the workforce 2001-2003 (%)



Diagram 3 – New entries and exits in the enterprises and the percentage weight of female personnel over the past 3 years (total 2001, 2002 and 2003)

	New entries			Total exits		
	Total	Women	% Women	Total	Women	% Women
Italy	10,210	1,688	16.5	18,818	1,204	6.4
Austria	2,463	306	12.4	6,900	660	9.6
Lithuania	3,251	681	20.9	3,710	1,256	33.9
Poland	17,756	5,758	32.4	29,505	9,948	33.7
Slovak Republic	485	219	45.2	3,733	1,272	34.1
Switzerland	5,518	1,712	31.0	6,319	1,475	23.3
Hungary	5,835	1,200	20.6	9,952	2,299	23.1
France	16,029	3,276	20.4	19,117	2,055	10.7
Belgium	3,023	475	15.7	3,283	299	9.1
Germany	17,904	7,524	42.0	41,889	6,284	15.0
Totale	82,474	22,839	27.7	143,226	26,752	18.7

Diagram 4 – Types of exit (All countries: total 2001 – 2003)

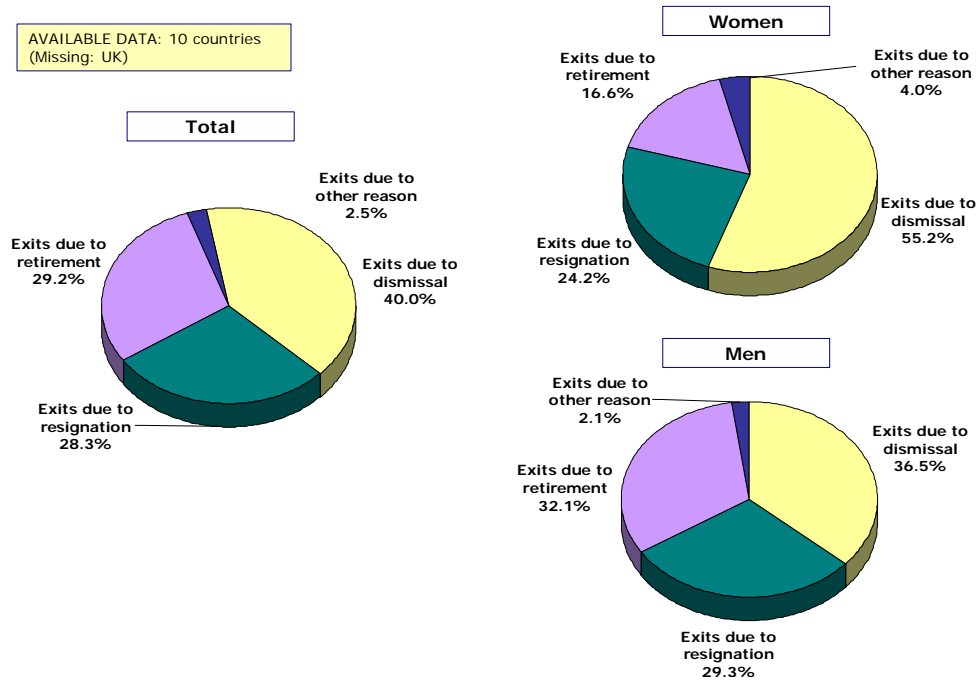


Diagram 5 – Personnel in the enterprises by age group (%)

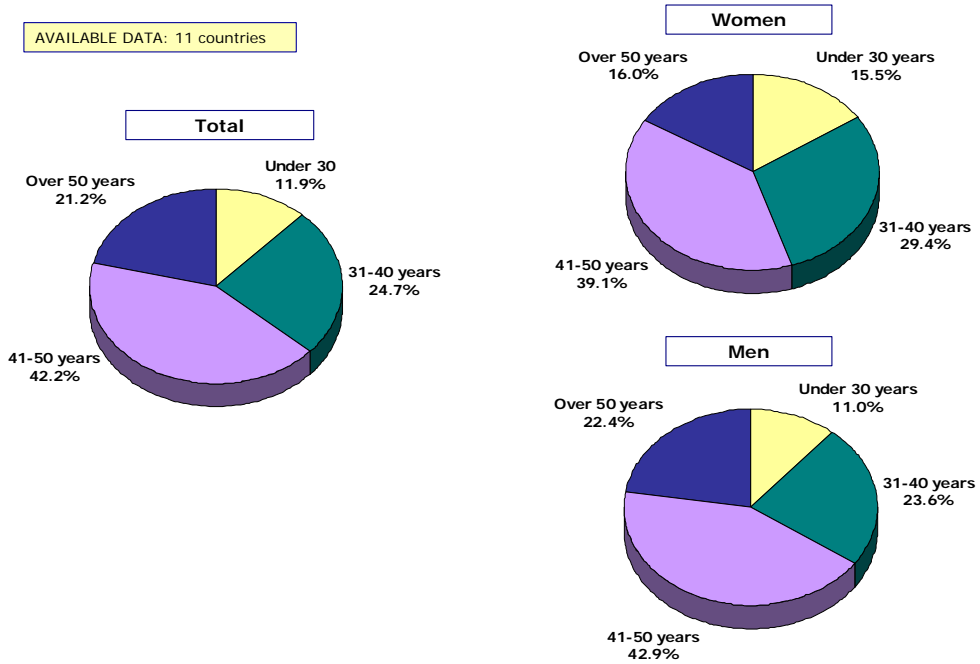


Diagram 6 – Distribution of the female workforce by age group: classification by country

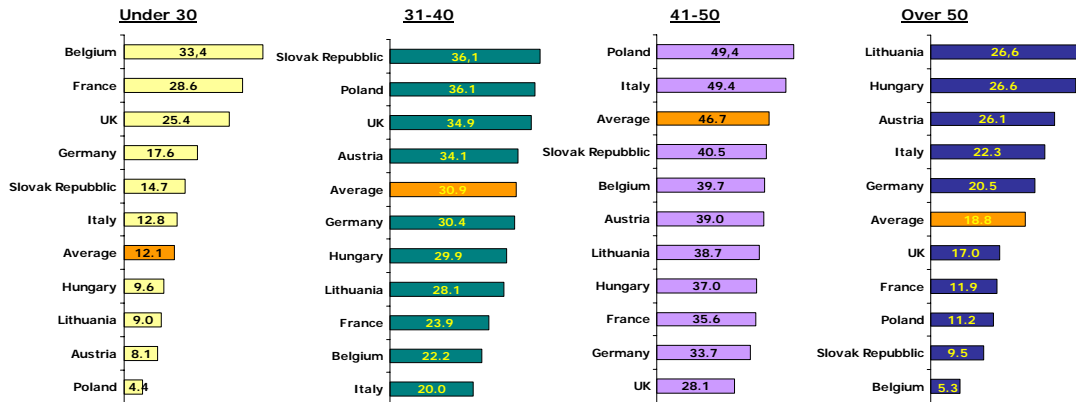


Diagram 7 – The percentage weight of women in the various age groups compared to the overall workforce of the enterprise: classification by country

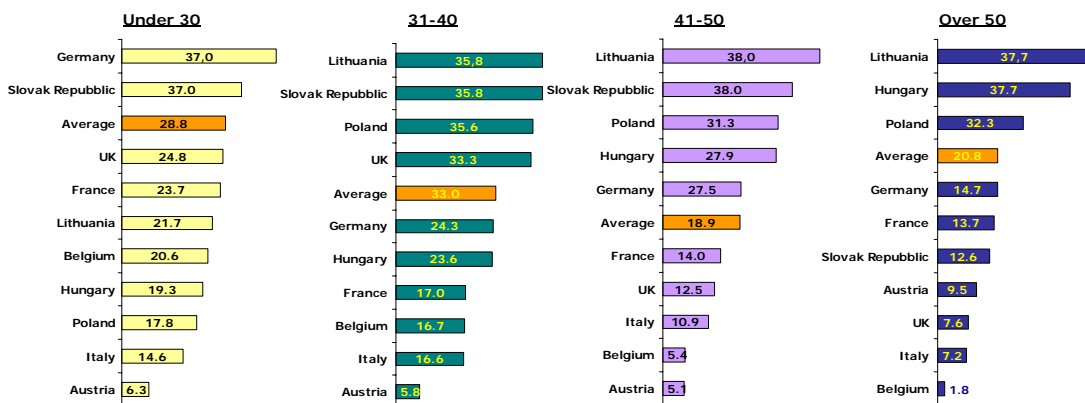


Diagram 8 – Enterprise personnel by seniority (%)

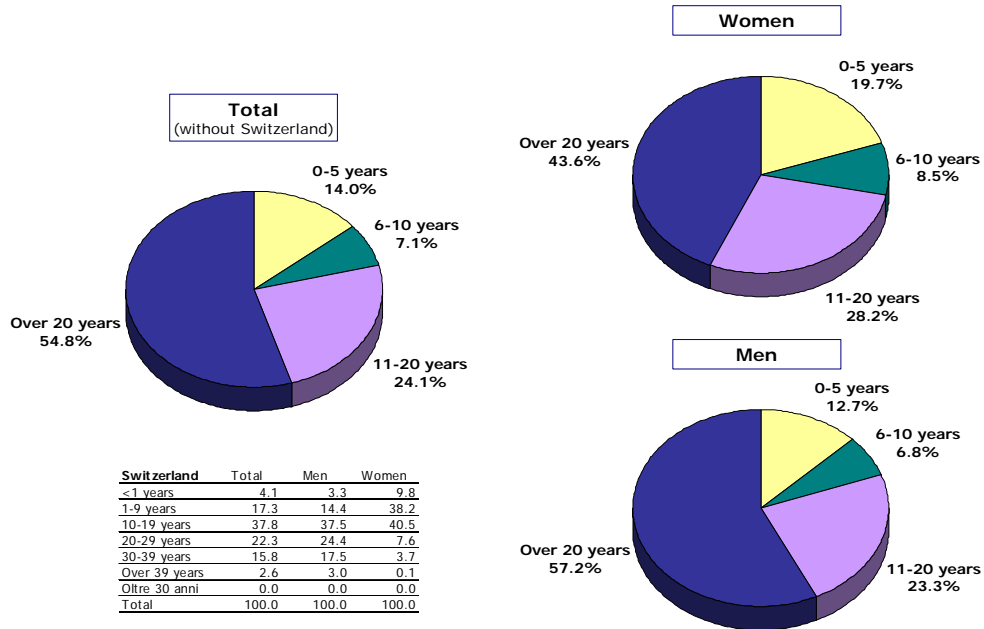


Diagram 9 - The staff positioned in the various levels of the hierarchy

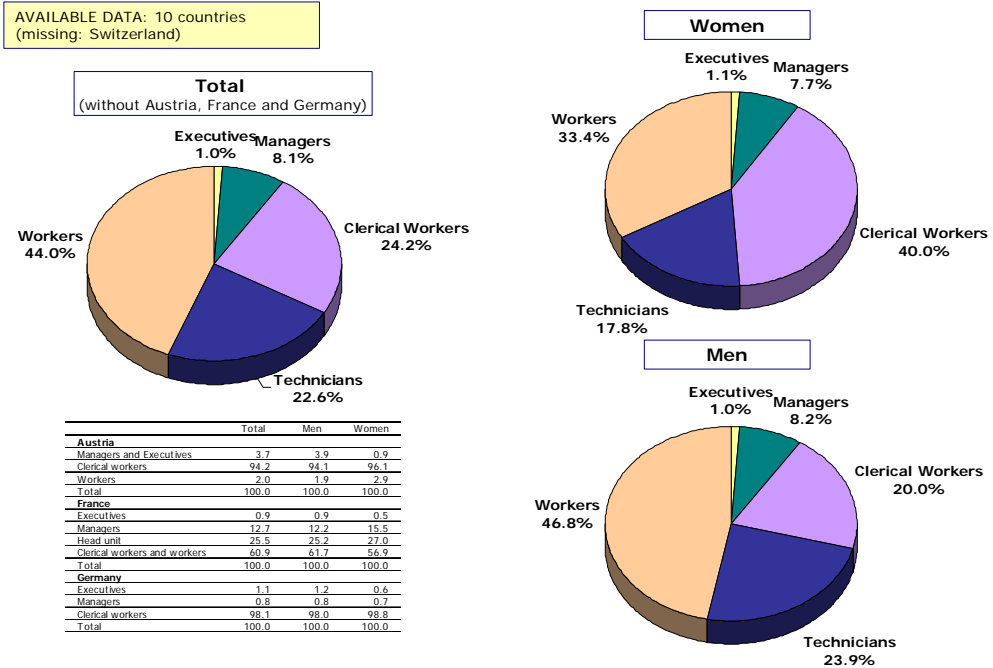


Diagram 10 – The weight of female personnel in the main departments

AVAILABLE DATA: 8 countries (MISSING: Switzerland, UK and Austria)

Country	Dept.	% W	% D
Belgium	Health Dept.	38.9	2.5
	Sales Dept.	28.1	13.4
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	20.0	28.9
	On-board Assistance Dept.	19.0	21.2
	On-ground Assistance Dept.	6.7	17.5
France	Health Dept.	94.0	3.6
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	55.0	27.4
	Sales Dept.	36.7	39.3
	Other	34.8	7.8
	New workers wait for a specific dept.	29.8	11.9
Germany	Health Dept.	80.0	0.4
	File-and telecommunication technical	80.0	11.0
	On-ground Assistance Dept.	53.3	11.0
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	46.0	15.8
	On-board Assistance Dept.	41.5	12.4
Hungary	On-ground Assistance Dept.	75.4	20.8
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	61.7	22.7
	Sales Dept.	46.6	18.0
	Health Dept.	24.0	0.3
On-board Assistance Dept.	23.8	5.6	
Italy	Health Dept.	46.2	2.1
	Area relazioni esterne	45.4	0.4
	Area gestione del personale	45.0	8.2
	On-ground Assistance Dept.	39.1	3.6
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	29.7	17.8
Lithuania	Sales Dept.	80.7	15.5
	Health Dept.	80.0	0.2
	On-ground Assistance Dept.	72.3	11.5
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	70.1	16.8
	Traffic Dept.	56.0	23.0
Poland	Health Dept.	88.5	1.0
	Sales Dept.	87.6	18.0
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	53.6	28.8
	Traffic Dept.	41.3	28.5
	On-ground Assistance Dept.	27.3	8.4
Slovak Republic	On-ground Assistance Dept.	95.3	28.7
	Technical operation Dept.	62.6	1.1
	Administrative/Accounting Dept.	57.9	20.8
	Other	52.0	3.5
	Sales Dept.	49.2	26.8

%W = The percentage weight of female workers on total personnel in the sector

% D = The percentage weight of personnel in the sector on total corporate personnel

Diagram 11 – The weight of female personnel in the main activities

AVAILABLE DATA: 9 countries (Missing: France and Germany)

Country	Activity	% W	% A
Austria	Maintenance staff (*)	50.0	45.3
	Sonstige	25.0	0.3
	Commercial activity	17.1	4.8
	Office activity	13.8	29.9
	Bahnhofsdienst	5.8	5.7
Belgium	Medical and paramedical activity	68.0	2.8
	Commercial activity	30.3	16.4
	Office activity	27.1	52.6
	On-board service	16.1	15.5
	Security staff	9.4	0.9
England	Office activity	32.1	23.8
	Station service	20.2	42.4
	On-board service	15.3	28.8
	Shunting and driving staff	2.1	5.0
Hungary	On-ground service	87.5	20.3
	Office activity	72.0	32.7
	Commercial activity	60.0	2.4
	Medical and paramedical activity	50.0	0.0
	Station service	34.0	17.9
Italy	Medical and paramedical activity	46.2	2.1
	On-ground service	39.1	3.5
	Office activity	28.9	36.4
	Commercial activity	28.0	10.7
	Security staff	17.6	0.8
Lithuania	Station service	85.8	10.1
	Commercial activity	84.8	11.9
	Inspection staff	70.6	0.4
	On-ground service	63.5	9.3
	Office activity	62.7	21.6
Poland	Commercial activity	87.6	18.0
	Medical and paramedical activity	88.5	1.0
	Administration/Accounting	58.2	27.7
	Traffic, equip. and ener. service	43.4	27.0
	On-ground service	29.2	8.4
Slovak Republic	On-board service	95.3	26.3
	Technician	62.6	1.0
	Office activity	57.9	19.1
	Commercial activity	49.2	24.7
	Other	25.0	13.2
Switzerland	Commercial activity	44.8	38.5
	On-board service	22.2	16.5
	Office activity	19.5	33.2
	Technician	7.3	5.2
	Maintenance staff	3.7	6.3

%W = The percentage weight of female workers on total personnel in the activity

% A = The percentage weight of personnel in the activity on total corporate personnel

(*) = Incl. cleaning service

Diagram 12 – Ratio between average salaries of female and male workers in the various job positions

AVAILABLE DATA: 8 countries
(Missing: Switzerland, Germany and Hungary)

Managers	Women/Men*100
Belgium	100.5
Poland	100.5
Austria	98.4
France	95.6
Lithuania	93.5
Italy	92.2
UK	91.1
Slovak Republic	88.0

Clerical Workers	Women/Men*100
UK	100.5
Lithuania	90.8
Italy	89.3
Poland	85.4
Austria	83.7
Slovak Republic	82.4
Belgium	80.0

Technicians	Women/Men*100
Poland	92.6
Slovak Republic	90.3
Lithuania	81.7
Italy	81.2
Belgium	72.6

Workers	Women/Men*100
Poland	89.6
Austria	89.1
Italy	87.4
Slovak Republic	79.6
Belgium	79.2
UK	77.1
Lithuania	71.3

Diagram 13 – The percentage weight of female personnel in the different types of employment contract

AVAILABLE DATA: 9 countries
(Missing: Switzerland and Belgium)

Types of employment contract	%Total	% Men	% Women
Open-ended contract	95.2	97.3	87.7
Fixed-term contract	1.0	0.7	2.0
Part-time contract	3.1	1.3	9.8
Project-by-project contract	0.0	0.0	0.0
Training contract	0.6	0.5	0.4
Other types of contract	0.2	0.2	0.1
Total	100.0	100,0	100.0

Diagram 14 – The percentage of female personnel in the different types of employment contract

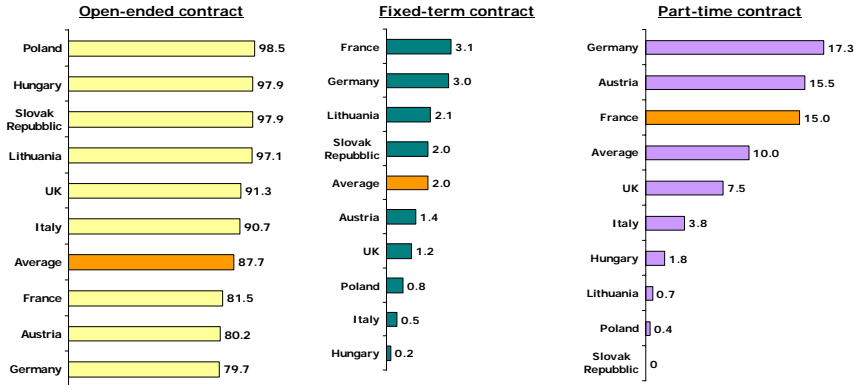


Diagram 15 – The percentage weight of female personnel in the different types of employment contract

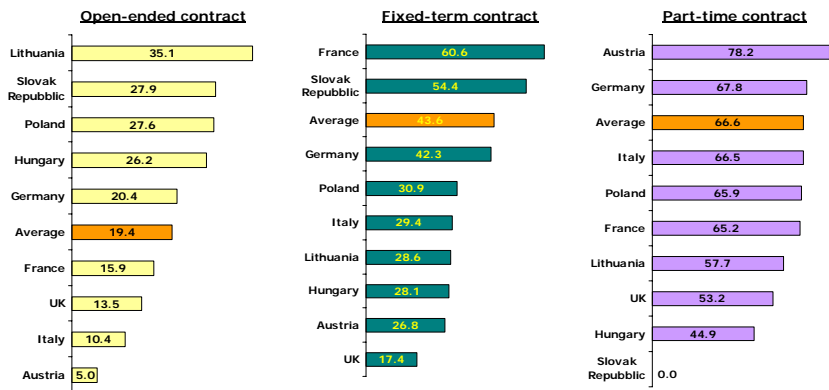


Diagram 16 – Number of workers who achieved a career progress (total 2001-2003)

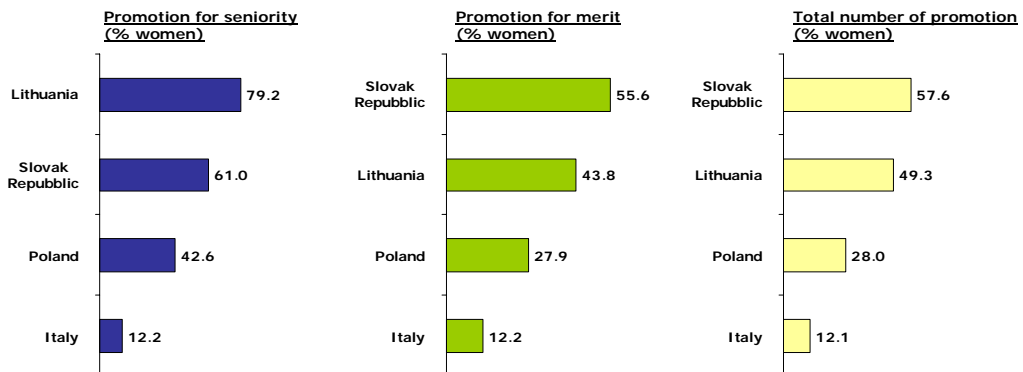


Diagram 17 – Number of parental leave requested (total 2001-2003)

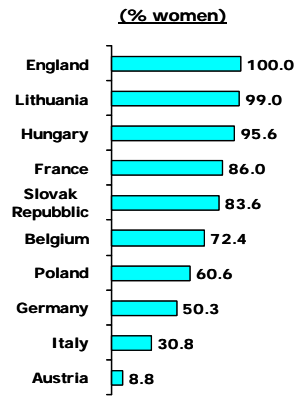
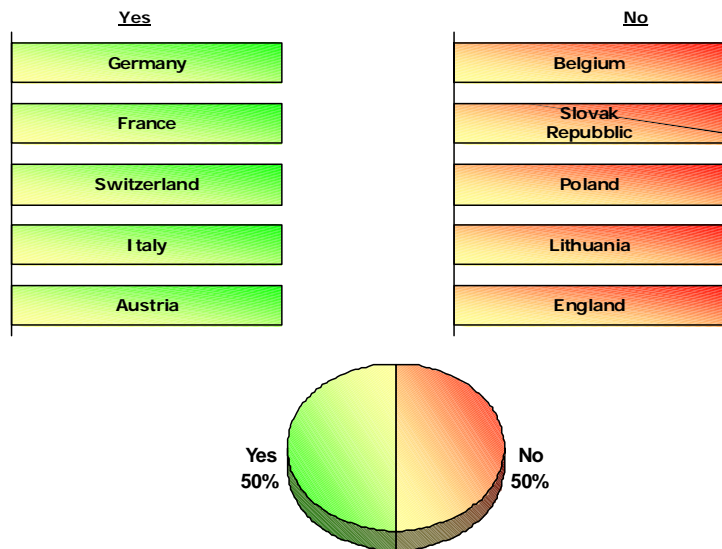


Diagram 18 – Existence of a a body for ensuring equal opportunities, in accordance with current legislation and contracts

AVAILABLE DATA: 10 countries



3.2. The Direct Survey: The Role and Action of the Trade Unions for the Occupational Integration of Women

3.2.1. Introduction

This Chapter illustrates the results of the survey conducted on the railway trade unions to know the weight and role of the female component within the trade union, the various evaluations of the trade union on the corporate policies for the occupational integration of women, and the actions that the trade union promotes for equal opportunities.

A total of 17 completed questionnaires were collected, representing 10 countries (see details in the list below).

Questionnaires (*summing up*)

Country (10)		
1	Italy	FIT CISL Trasporto Ferroviario e Servizi
2	Italy	UGL
3	Italy	SMA/FAST - CONFISAL
4	Italy	UILTRASPORTI
5	Italy	FIT CGIL
6	Austria	Gewerkschaft der Eisenbahner
7	Slovak Republic	Odborovè Zdruzenie Zelezniciarov
8	Spain	FETCM - UGT (railway section)
9	Bulgaria	Union of transport workers' syndacates in Bulgaria
10	Germany	Transet
11	Greece	Panhellenic Railwaymen Federation
12	UK	Transport Salaried Staff's Association (TSSA)
13	France	Fédération Générale autonome des Agents de conduite
14	France	UNSA Cheminots
15	France	CGT Fédération des Cheminots
16	France	Fédération Syndicaliste Force Ouvrière des Cheminots
17	Hungary	Vasuti Dolgozok Szabad Szakszervezete

Considering the relatively small number of questionnaires examined, the analysis is mostly carried out on the qualitative-quantitative data. For the same reason, sub-aggregations of data are not feasible (for example, by geographical macro-area of the trade unions), while an analysis in an overall aggregate form is conducted.

3.2.2. *Women Workers in the Trade Unions*

The first section of the questionnaire aims to provide general information on the female component within the railway trade union. In particular, the trade unions were asked to indicate the number of women members and their percentage weight on the total, and then to indicate what changes the presence of women has produced in the trade union and which initiatives the same organisations have undertaken to increase the number of women members.

As regards the first point (the number of women members of the trade union), 15 of the 17 trade unions participating in the survey accurately responded. On the whole, in these organisations women number almost 100,000 and represent 18.2% of the trade-union members. With respect to new members over the past 3 years, the percentage of women is basically similar (18.6%). It thus seems that there has not been a rising trend of female membership of trade unions. It should nevertheless be stressed that only half of the trade unions have indicated the number of new members, distinguishing between men and women, over the past 3 years.

	% women in Trade Unions	% women In Enterprises	diff. %
Hungary	34,4	26,2	+8,2
Slovak Republic	26,8	28,2	-1,4
Germany	21,0	20,8	+0,2
Italy	8,9	10,9	-2,0
Austria	7,2	6,0	+0,8

As regards the second point (changes induced by women), approximately half the trade unions state that the new women members have triggered positive changes in the trade-union organisational model (**Diagram 1**). The most relevant sectors where changes have been observed regard equal opportunities (inclusion in collective bargaining), the relationships between members and the protection of the women's rights.

With regard to the initiatives undertaken over the past 3 years by the trade unions to foster the increase of women members in the trade union, we can mention in particular:

1. the organisation of training courses,
2. the specific canvassing actions,
3. the insertion of women in management positions,
4. the creation of specific female sections in the trade union,
5. the creation of support groups to identify problems/obstacles encountered by women at work,
6. the insertion of statutory anti-discrimination provisions (e.g., not less than 40% of women in the corporate management teams).

3.2.3. Contractual Protection

The second main section of the questionnaire specifies in detail the problems linked to the promotion of the occupational integration of women in the railway enterprises as well as the specific issues of contractual protection aimed at facilitating the full and effective job-insertion of women.

The first question concerns 'Corporate Policies'. Do the railway enterprises of your country implement specific programmes to increase the presence of women?

The overall result is quite disappointing: the trade unions report, or at least perceive, the existence of active policies conceived to increase the number of women in the enterprises only in 2 countries out of 10. The corporate departments and professional activities mainly concerned - where programmes of this type actually exist - fall under the commercial and on-board assistance sectors. Other interesting areas to recall are the administrative and technical sectors. With regard to hierarchical status, the

programmes mainly involve employees and workers, however some trade unions also report a certain concern for increasing the number of women in middle and top Management.

Passing on to the trade-union aspect, among the actions promoted by the organisations in order to better reconcile work and family life (**Diagram 2**), the main indications regard the increase of flexibility and part-time contracts (both reported by 7 trade unions), followed by changes in shift organisation (4 reports). Two trade-union organisations relate the promotion of telework.

These initiatives have led to negotiations in the context of collective agreements in 4 of the 10 countries participating in the survey. As a result of this pressure on employers, the collective agreements in 5 out of 10 countries involve measures for a better reconciliation between work and family life (the situation in Italy is uncertain, with the opinions of the 5 trade unions disagreeing on this specific point), while in 6 cases there have been implemented measures for an easier access by women to the railway occupations.

There is significant data regarding reports/complaints on the inadequacy or the concrete application of current legislation and contract regulations on maternity and paternity (**Diagram 3**). In fact, 11 out of the total 17 trade unions have reported receiving complaints.

Among the reasons for the lack of satisfaction on maternity regulations, female interviewees report above all being penalised in terms of career opportunities, economic conditions in the optional period and the fact that "maternity is not viewed favourably in the enterprise".

It is interesting to observe that the reasons do not regard so much the regulatory aspect, but rather the effects of maternity leave within the enterprise. Basically, the female interviewees report being penalised above all in terms of career progress, which seem to depend on specific corporate choices rather than on contract regulations in this specific field.

In the case of paternity leave, penalisation in terms of corporate choices actually increases. Among the first complaints, it is worthy to mention that "paternity is not viewed favourably in the enterprise" and then career is penalised. Both the complaints regard discriminatory behaviour by employers rather than insufficient contractual protection.

The trade unions were further asked whether the existing collective contracts provide for a period of absence in case of children's illness. The answer was affirmative for 7 countries out of 10. The right to leave is mainly exercised by women according to 11 trade unions (belonging to 6 countries) and equally by women and men, according to 2 organisations (belonging to 2 different countries).

3.2.4. Equal Opportunities: Projects, Initiatives, Measures and Information

The last sections of the questionnaire are specifically dedicated to equal opportunities.

Initially, the trade unions were asked which initiatives they implemented to promote equal opportunities in the railway sector (**Diagram 4**). The first item to highlight is that none of the 17 organisations stated that they had not undertaken any initiatives.

The action most reported by the trade unions, and thus involving almost all the organisations, is the fight to include equal opportunities in the negotiation of collective agreements (with 15 reports out of a total of 17 trade unions). Another highly significant aspect was the start-up of international co-operation programmes (9 reports), the support to research projects on gender differences (8 reports) and the promotion of teamwork to achieve gender co-operation. These three initiatives were also the most effective in relation to the objectives proposed.

On the other hand, actions for developing training, vocational qualification and updating, specifically oriented towards the theme of equal opportunities, are much less undertaken.

When the problems related to equal opportunities are discussed during collective bargaining (**Diagram 5**), the issues for negotiation are above all on parental leave and maternity, while - although less common - the organisation of work, the integration of women in the technical occupations and wage parity are discussed less frequently.

A major issue involves the cases/complaints reported to the trade unions by women workers with regard to harassment or mobbing at work (**Diagram 6**).

One of the most common reports indicated by the trade unions is, as already mentioned previously, the penalisation in terms of career progress. In this case, 4 trade unions reported the issue as a priority and 7 as a secondary issue. When considering the priority issues, the most reported complaints regard the topic of wages (with 7 trade unions stating the 'wage' item to be the most common problem), and then mobbing (5 reports). A significant number of reports also involve working-hour flexibility (4 trade unions report this item as a priority and 3 as a secondary issue).

On the specific topic of mobbing and harassment, many trade unions state that they have received reports (**Diagram 7**): 10 out of 17 in the case of mobbing and 12 in the case of harassment.

How do the trade unions behave when they receive reports on complaints of mobbing or harassment? In most cases (11), intervention took place in the enterprise and rarely the 'Equal Opportunities' Committee having jurisdiction was involved (5). In a few cases, a criminal report was lodged (5) and legal assistance was duly provided (4).

With regard to information on equal opportunities, the trade unions were asked which initiatives they had adopted to improve knowledge on these issues (**Diagram 8**).

Most of the trade unions reserve specific space for articles on this issue in the trade-union newsletter (with 14 responses), dedicate space on the official trade-union website (12) and organise specific forums (11). The dissemination of reports with updates on legislation in this sector is quite widespread (8), and less often specialised books are published, or specialised meetings with experts are organised.

More in detail, the trade unions have been asked to indicate on which contractual aspects regarding equal opportunities there is the worst information, distinguishing between men and women.

Among the women, wage aspects, training pathways and the duties of the 'Equal Opportunities' Committees seem to be the contract items in equal opportunities about which the trade unions report a most widespread lack of information. As regards the men, there are fewer reports of poor information on wages and training, while there is little information on the duties of the 'Equal Opportunities' Committees and on laws protecting the family and career.

Among the initiatives/projects planned by the trade unions for the current year (2004) with regard to equal opportunities, the range of the reports is rather broad: targeted training projects (e.g., continuing training to bridge the gap of job re-entry by women and men after parental or other leave), creation of 'mobbing desks', meetings with specialised experts on specific topics, thematic conferences, guidance centres for the job insertion of women, local babysitting initiatives, the setting-up of a specific female section and other projects. It should also be highlighted that 4 trade unions reported they have not planned any specific action and 4 others failed to respond.

Finally, for the assessment of the weight formally assigned to the topic of equal opportunities in trade-union statutes, a body has been envisaged in the statutes in 10 out of the 17 trade-union organisations participating in the survey.

DIAGRAM 1

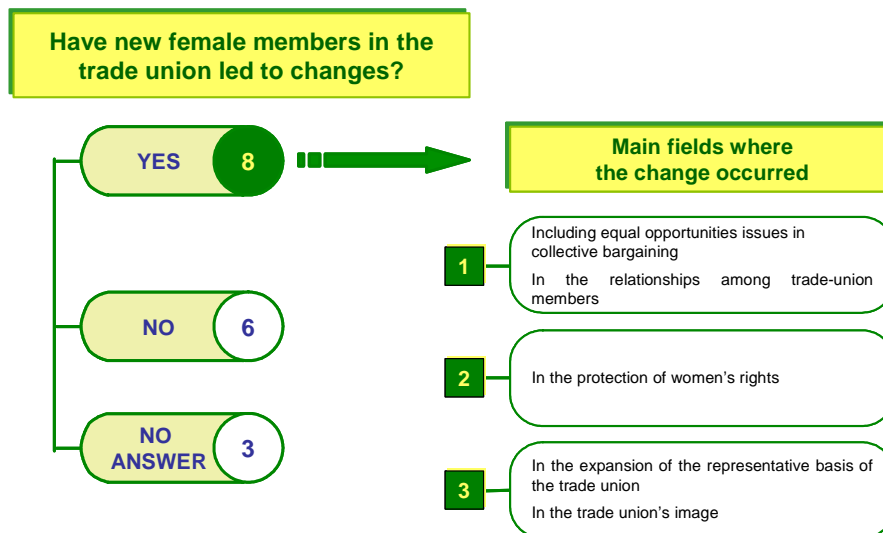


DIAGRAM 2

Indicate which initiatives are promoted by your trade union in order to allow for a better reconciliation between working life and family life.

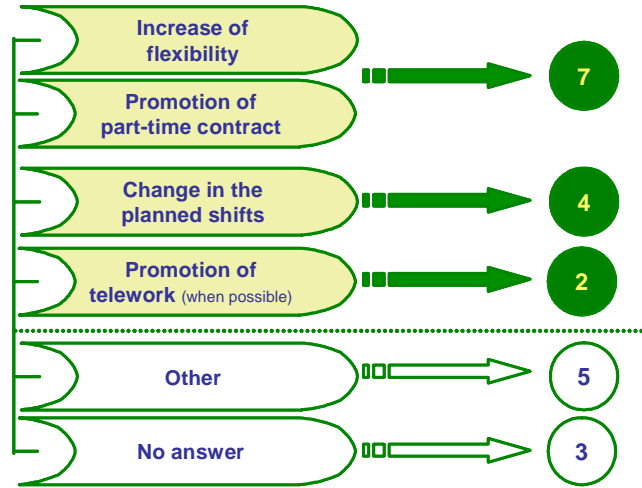


DIAGRAM 3

Has your trade union ever received reports/complaints concerning the inadequacy of the current legislative and contract laws regarding maternity and paternity?

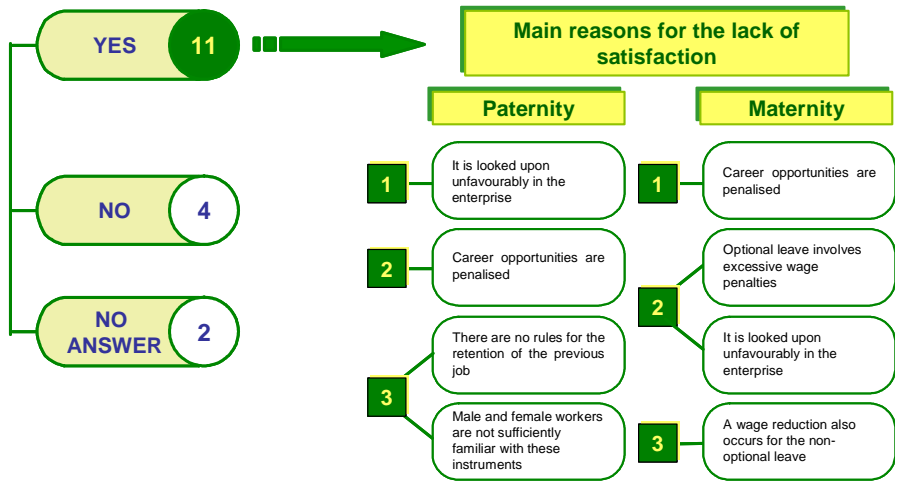


DIAGRAM 4

Social initiatives recently conducted by trade unions regarding equal opportunities

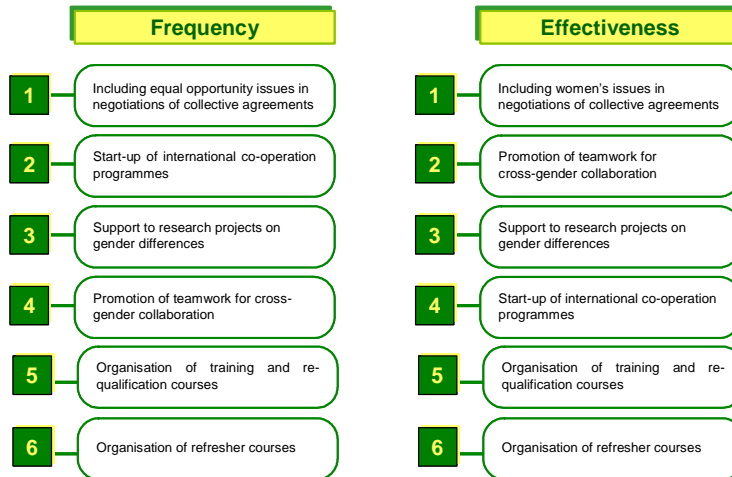


DIAGRAM 5

Women's issues included in collective agreements

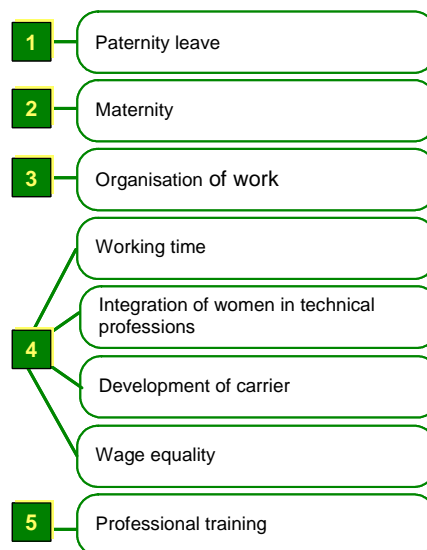


DIAGRAM 6

Indicate on which aspects the reports/complaints submitted to the trade union by female workers are mainly concentrated

	1 st Aspect	2 nd Aspect	Total
Career prospects	4	7	11
Wages	7	1	8
Relationships with colleagues and collaborators	2	5	7
Flexibility of working hours	4	3	7
Mobbing	5		5
Harassment	1	1	2
Opportunity for cultural growth	1		1

DIAGRAM 7

Did female workers report about issues of harassment and/or mobbing to your union?

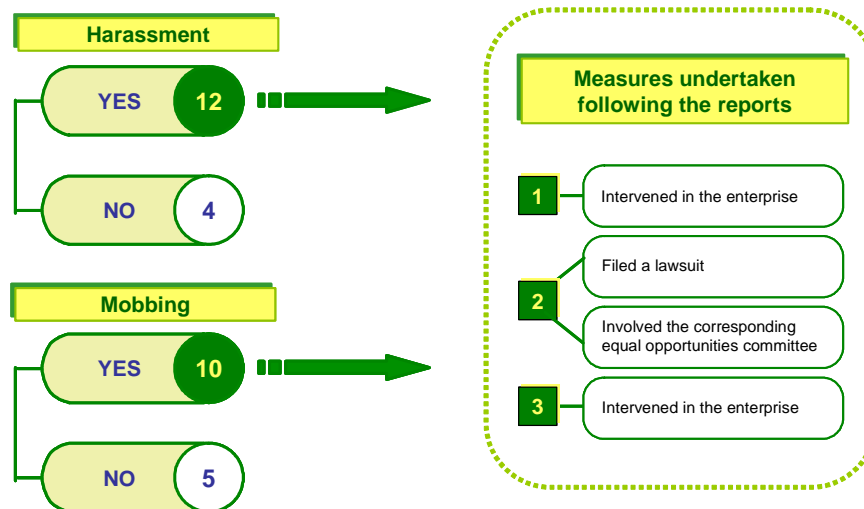
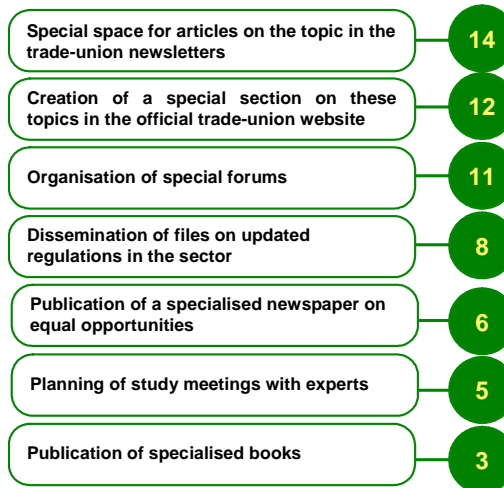


DIAGRAM 8

What initiatives does your trade union promote for correct information regarding equal opportunities



3.3. The Direct Survey: Corporate Policies for the Occupational Integration of Women

3.3.1. Introduction

This Chapter illustrates the results of the survey conducted on the European railways to know the policies pursued to increase the female component within the railway enterprise, to foster a better corporate integration and to promote equal opportunities.

A total of 13 completed questionnaires were collected, representing 9 countries (see details in the list below).

Questionnaires (*summing up*)

Country (10)		
1	Italy	Ferrovie dello Stato S.p.A.
2	Italy	Trenitalia S.p.A.
3	Italy	RFI S.p.A.
4	Italy	Italferr S.p.A.
5	Italy	Ferservizi S.p.A.
6	UK	Central Trains Limited
7	Lithuania	JSC Lithuanian Railways
8	Poland	PKP JSC - Polish State Railways
9	Slovan Republic	Zeleznicna spolocnost a.s.
10	Belgium	SNCB
11	Germany	Deutsche Bahn AG
12	France	SNCF
13	Austria	Osterreichische Bundesbahnen

Considering the relatively small number of questionnaires examined, the analysis is mostly carried out on the qualitative-quantitative data. For the same reason, sub-aggregations of data are not feasible (for example, by geographical macro-area of the trade unions), while an analysis in an overall aggregate form is conducted.

3.3.2. Occupations

The first section of the questionnaire is aimed at collecting information on the policies implemented to increase the female component within the railway enterprise.

A total of 10 out of 13 enterprises participating in the survey stated that no specific programmes were implemented to increase the number of women members. These 10 enterprises are located in 6 countries. Three railway enterprises (from 3 different countries) state that they have implemented specific programmes, in particular for middle managers and employees and in the "rolling stock and driving" sector. The problem of the under-representation of women in the workforce is thus not widely perceived in the European railway enterprises, despite the evidence of structural data. If the quantitative aspect is underestimated, it is probable that so are the cultural aspects and discriminatory practices, which in some cases underlie the lack of job insertion of women in the railways.

As for the skills/aptitudes now most widely acknowledged in the railway sector regarding the HR evaluation, for the development of career paths and wage entitlements, the aspects mostly reported by the railway enterprises regard, in order of importance, the resulted-oriented thinking, the degree of education, the problem-solving and the teamwork. Skills such as organisation, innovation and flexibility seem to be considered as less important (**Diagram 1**).

3.3.3. Working Hours, Leave and Wage

The second section of the questionnaire deals with the extensive subject of working hours and contractual aspects favouring the reconciliation between work and family life, and lastly with wage issues, in order to fully understand to what extent the railway enterprises use the instruments of work organisation and the related regulations to foster the occupational integration of women.

The first question regards work shifts, and in particular whether the railway enterprises have encountered difficulties or complaints with regard to the existing system. On the whole, only 5 railway enterprises belonging to 4 countries compared to the total of 13 responded affirmatively (i.e., reporting dissatisfaction). In some railway enterprises the difficulties were mainly reported by female workers, whereas in others, complaints were expressed to the same extent by male and female workers.

Among the main actions implemented by the railway enterprises to allow for better reconciliation between work and family life (**Diagram 2**), we can cite the promotion of part-time contracts (9 enterprises reported this initiative) and the change in shift organisation (7 enterprises). Only 4 railway enterprises reported the increase of flexibility and the creation of social services in the enterprise; and only one enterprise reported the promotion of telework. The actions undertaken by the railway enterprises thus involve the well-consolidated instruments for job flexibility. In some cases, these instruments - such as part-time contracts - are often proposed to women workers to satisfy corporate requirements (flexible and temporary jobs), more than to satisfy the needs of the female workers themselves.

With regard to employment contracts, and examining the other forms of flexibility to reconcile work and family life, part-time contracts are very widespread (priority stated by 10 enterprises as being a contract used for men and by 9 enterprises for women). Some answers refer to the so-called project-by-project and fixed-term contracts. No railway enterprise mentions telework, thereby confirming the results of the previous question, i.e., lack of resorting to more innovative forms by the enterprises in order to favour the reconciliation between work and family life.

With regard to overtime, 10 railway enterprises reported that female workers mainly do overtime work, while the other 3 enterprises state that male and female workers did overtime to the same extent.

Among the reasons for dissatisfaction reported in the railway enterprises, there is the resort to the maternity and paternity leave, with both male and female workers relating above all penalisation in terms of career opportunities. Other reasons for worker dissatisfaction in the railway enterprises include penalisation in terms of wage for the optional period (paternity leave) while the female workers reported the lack of rules for maintaining their job position previous to the period of leave.

Finally, most of the railway enterprises (8) believe that men and women use the systems for incentives and promotions linked to functions, occupations and shifts to the same extent. Only 4 railway enterprises, on the other hand, believe that men mainly exploit these incentives.

3.3.4. Career Paths and Evaluation Systems

The third section of the questionnaire involves both the paths for the enhancement and the occupational integration of human resources, especially for women, and the evaluation of any gender discrimination deriving from concrete career opportunities.

With respect to the latter point, the first significant aspect is that only 2 enterprises out of 13 reported significant career differences between male and female workers. In the evaluation of the enterprises, among the factors impeding career progress, the most common reports regard unwillingness to accept mobility (7 reports, of which 3 as the primary factor), insufficient technical know-how (4 reports, of which 3 as the primary

factor) and difficulty of reconciling work and family life (4 reports, but just one as the primary factor).

With regard to the main measures adopted by the railway enterprises to enhance the expertise of women, the primary reports regard participation in management training (4) and vocational refresher (4) courses. It should be stressed that no enterprise reported the introduction of a system to enhance women's skills.

The railway enterprises were then asked to indicate the typical profiles of the human resources (and related skills and aptitudes) most often considered in the evaluation systems (**Diagram 3**). Prevailing answers are concentrated on the "productivity" profile (9 reports, of which 5 as the primary factor), or on work performance measured in terms of quantity, constancy and work speed.

There follow the "quality" profile (also in this case 9 reports, but only 3 as the primary factor). Quality refers to the completeness and correctness of the work performed. Then, there is the "competence" aspect, i.e. the worker's know-how and skills for the work required (8 reports of which 4 as the primary factor).

The skills/aptitudes related to "organisation", "innovation" and "co-operation" are much less important in the corporate-evaluation systems. It can be observed that these topics are strongly characterised by some aptitudes - such as originality, creativity, teamwork, the spirit of collaboration, respect for deadlines - normally more typical of the professional and behavioural profile of female workers as compared to their male counterparts. However, these aptitudes are not sufficiently well enhanced in the evaluation systems for job insertion and career progress practised by the European railway enterprises.

With regard to the changes occurring in the selection/evaluation systems according to the requirements of equal opportunities, only 3 enterprises proved willing to change (for example, through the development of "innovation" and "co-operation" criteria highlighting the qualities of women workers), while 4 enterprises believe that the current evaluation systems are not discriminatory and therefore no changes are required. Finally, 6 other railway enterprises failed to respond to the question.

3.3.5. *Equal Opportunities*

The last section of the questionnaire specifically regards the topic of equal opportunities.

First of all, the railway enterprises were asked whether internal communication was used to provide information on equal opportunities (**Diagram 4**). Only 3 enterprises gave a wholly negative response.

The most frequently used channels for information on equal opportunities are internal circulars (reported by 6 enterprises), and then brochures (4) and corporate identity/charter of values. Furthermore, 11 railway enterprises stressed that corporate communication, both with respect to the image and vocabulary, is oriented towards the principle of equal opportunities between men and women.

As for the most significant changes occurring after the consistent inflow of female employees, the railway enterprises identified primarily more relationships within the working groups (7 reports) and to a lesser extent personnel management policies (4) and the corporate image (3). Only one railway enterprise reported changes in the production organisation (**Diagram 5**).

What programmes and initiatives have been undertaken by the railway enterprises with regard to equal opportunities over the past three years?

In the replies, 8 railway enterprises reported a wide variety of initiatives.

Among these initiatives, we can recall:

- surveys on the forms of contract and working-hour flexibility;
- projects for the safety of front-line and on-board female personnel;
- training activities to develop female professional profiles in the commercial sector;
- support to childcare and training specifically targeted to the corporate Management on the issues of equal opportunities.

To conclude, with regard to the prospects of change in the body in charge of protecting equal opportunities - where this body is envisaged -, the factor involved is above all to strengthen the collaboration with the equal-opportunity institutions and to implement work procedures agreed with the Social Partners (both 5 reports) (**Diagram 6**).

It should be stressed that the opportunity of converting this body from a mainly advisory and consulting function to a decision-making role occurred in only in 2 cases, confirming that while much progress has been made in the introduction of corporate instruments for the promotion of equal opportunities, a more decisive increase in quality has yet to occur in corporate culture in this sphere.

DIAGRAM 1

**Skills/attitudes currently most widely acknowledged in the railway sector in the evaluation of human resources
(for the development of career pathways and wages advances)**

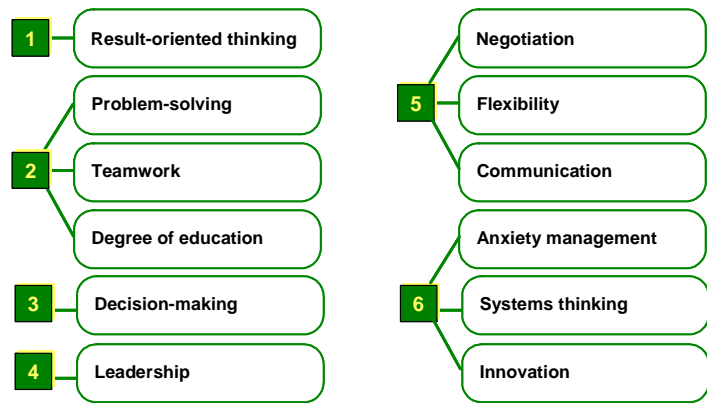


DIAGRAM 2

Initiatives implemented in enterprise in order to allow for a better reconciliation between working life and family life

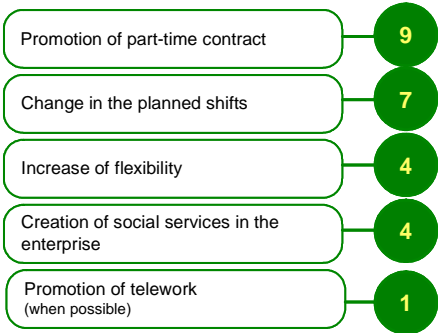


DIAGRAM 3

The aspects considered in the evaluation system mostly used in enterprises

	1 st Aspect	2 nd Aspect	3 rd Aspect	Total
Productivity (quantity of the work performed, constancy in work, speed of execution)	5	2	2	9
Quality (completeness or correctness of the work performed)	3	4	2	9
Competence (vocational preparation, possession of know-how and skills for the required work)	4	1	3	8
Initiative (sense of responsibility, time of autonomy, problem-solving ability, adaptability to new situations)	2	2	3	7
Co-operation (team work, collaboration and integration with other internal/external roles, organisational learning)	1	1	1	3
Organisation (planning of own work, respect for deadlines, reliability)		1	1	2
Innovation (originality, creativity, development of original and effective solutions)		1		1

DIAGRAM 4

Are there statements on behalf Your Enterprise regarding equal opportunities?

- Yes, in the internal circulars **6**
- Yes, in the brochures **4**
- Yes, in the mission statements, in the corporate philosophy **3**
- Yes, on the homepage **2**

DIAGRAM 5

In which context the new entries of feminine employees did bring about the most significant changes?



DIAGRAM 6

If there is a body in your enterprise in charge of protecting equal opportunities, indicate how they can work more professionally to reach the aim of having a better security for equality



3.4. Policies for Equal Opportunities

The direct interviews with the managers of the HR departments in the various enterprises and with the members of the 'Equal Opportunities' Committees represented a valuable source of information on corporate policies for the occupational integration of women. Furthermore, this information was supplementary and complementary with respect to the data collected in the questionnaires and emerging during the targeted meetings. In particular, the direct meetings with these privileged stakeholders made it easier to understand the motivations linked to the specific features of the social, political and economic context of the railway enterprise as well as to the strategies implemented by the corporate Management determining the current corporate structure, the female component of personnel, the existing critical problems and the policies implemented for equal opportunities.

List of the interviewees

<i>Italy:</i>	Mr. Francesco Forlenza – General Director of Group of Human Resources, <i>Group FS</i> Ms. Daniela Belotti – President of the National Equality Opportunities Committee, <i>Group FS</i>
<i>Austria:</i>	Mr. Wolfgang Moldaschl – Personnel Dept. Director, <i>ÖBB</i> ; Mr. Wilhelm Haberzettl – President of the Trade Union, GdE
<i>Germany:</i>	Ms. Birgit Reinhardt – ‘Equal Opportunities’ Dept. Manager, <i>DB</i>
<i>France:</i>	Mr. Alain Cahen – Director-General of Human Resources, <i>SNCF</i> Ms. Françoise Holbrook – Manager of Human Resources Employment Department, <i>SNCF</i>
<i>Budapest:</i>	Ms. Zsiros – ‘Human Resources Planning’ Dept. Manager, <i>MAV</i>
<i>Poland:</i>	Ms. Lucyna Roszyk – Board Office Director Headquarters, <i>PKP</i> .

According to the interviewees, the problem of the under-representation of women in the European railway enterprises historically derives from a general culturally-based discrimination, and on the other hand on the exclusion policies implemented by the railway enterprises.

Although much has changed compared to the past, it is nevertheless considered necessary to revise the personnel-selection methods, so that just the technical and professional profiles alone are evaluated, thereby eliminating any form of discrimination.

In particular, the average educational degree of women has risen considerably, thus eliminating (or reducing as far as possible) the criteria of selection based on physical requirements. In the medium term, there could be a significant increase of the female component in the railway enterprises. This would lead to the removal of constraints "ghettoising" women in some sectors, with all the related consequences (wage differences, career limitations, etc.).

The interviewees thus considered co-ordination with the Social Partners to be a pivotal factor so as to highlight the willingness to change, thereby overcoming personal interests to the advantage of workers' benefits.

There is likewise common agreement on the need to implement a marketing and communication policy in order to improve the public image of the railway enterprise. Future women employees must be motivated not only by occupational needs, but must also consider work in the railways to be desirable. The improvement of working conditions for women is also required in order to prevent dissatisfaction from spurring women to abandon occupations in the railways. In other words, the policies aimed at developing female employment in the railway enterprises should not only be concerned with fostering the hiring of personnel, but also with ensuring acceptable working conditions. In this regard, the instruments for reconciling work and family life are absolutely fundamental.

The interviewees have also pointed out that in many cases the percentage increase of women in the railway enterprises is due to the massive retirement of men. This process, if too fast, may lead to a failure in transferring know-how from one generation to the next, which is fundamental for ensuring the continual growth in the enterprise.

Further targeted meetings and direct interviews regard relationships between the general context of social, economic and legislative developments on the world of women's work and the specific responses adopted in the railway sector.

The feminisation of the labour market, as an instrument of social inclusion, represents one of the main characteristics of the modernisation process currently underway in all the countries concerned in the survey.

The European Community has often called on Member States to adopt social policies guaranteeing the equality of citizens in their particular individual conditions, a protection which also extends to their work and family life. Nevertheless, one of the main problems emerged during the meetings was the significant persistence of cultural prejudices on equal opportunities leading to the lack of or difficulties in adopting mainstreaming and empowerment policies for women.

Following the issuance of the European directives, all the railway enterprises and the trade unions interviewed have, in different ways, set up suitable bodies to facilitate, organise and safeguard a corporate policy for women and to counter discrimination. The setting-up of these bodies highlights the awareness demonstrated by the European railways on the topic of equal opportunities.

In Italy, there is an 'Equal Opportunities' Committee (*CPO*), operating since 1989 - anticipating national legislation for implementing the European directives - as a 'bilateral joint observatory' whose members include women representatives of the railway enterprises and the trade unionists signing the agreement. The role of the body has grown over time, providing an innovative model of co-ordination between the Social Partners, though the latter retain the exclusive prerogative for bargaining at the workplace. The functions of this body - with regulations forming an integral part of the National Labour Contract (on the two different levels, pertaining both to the sector and the railway activities, signed in April 2003) - basically involve consultation, proposals and participation.

The Austrian experience has shown that some measures or actions of the equal-opportunity policy are ineffective as long as many sectors continue to lack the awareness of the significant relevance of this specific policy. It is necessary to start up a process of cultural development to make the various actors more aware of the need for these actions. In Austria, there is a body dealing with equal opportunities where its female representative works in close collaboration with the trade union. In the Austrian experience, the national guidelines have proven to be essential. In 1992, a law was approved to govern the guidelines of the equal-opportunity policy such as the criteria for recruitment and hiring, job opportunities, sexual

harassment and mobbing. Since 1 January 2004, a further law has come into effect for the Austrian railways providing for the possible signing of a corporate agreement to reconcile work and family life.

Since 1991, Germany has also had a women representative, i.e. a person safeguarding the interests of women workers. This position is recognised in the corporate-organisation chart, and is thus a recognised corporate role. Initially, the task of this profile was to promote female employment, seeking to improve women's skills and guarantee better access to all the corporate occupations. Since 1996, the main function of this profile has been mainly centred on the dissemination of equal-opportunity policies.

In France, *SNCF* has complied with the 2001 national law by setting up internal commissions guaranteeing and protecting the role of women in the railways and in the trade unions. In order to solve the problem of the under-representation of women in *SNCF*, the railway enterprise has implemented a detailed policy by objectives and sectors to foster the hiring and integration of women. In this regard, each year *SNCF* adopts a 'Qualitative Plan on Hiring' to pilot the various production divisions with regard to policies on the job insertion of women. Currently, some technical and professional (drivers and workers) occupations are involved in the job insertion of women, but also in those occupations related to on-board services and security (women are particularly suited for conflict management).

With regard to Hungary, the policy adopted by the *MAV* railway enterprise is very interesting, for a country with a past as a member of the socialist area. In Hungary, as in the rest of Eastern Europe, the high percentage of women workers reflects the employment policies implemented by the former government. The current national policy, following the recent membership of the European Union, has begun compliance with the European directives, involving - especially for the equal-opportunity policy - an activity aimed at raising awareness on female employment. Consequently, the Women's Sections of the railway trade unions were set up in the early 1990s, and only recently the Women's Council has been established in Parliament. The railways have recently created the 'Bilateral Joint Commission' to deal with the implementation of the operational plan for equal opportunities so as to include all those who might be subjected to discrimination on the job. Currently, the equal-opportunity policies have two main objectives: to favour the reconciliation between work and family

life, and to improve the working conditions of male and female employees. The latter objective requires large investment for the modernisation and re-qualification of the railway infrastructures.

Finally, in Poland, although there is not yet a specific law on equal opportunities, the principle of parity in the world of work is explicitly contained in the Labour Code, while the topic of work flexibility is not yet subject to regulation.

Chapter 4

THE BENCHMARKING

4.1. Introduction

This Chapter illustrates some cases of “good practices” experimented or being experimented in Europe in relation to the policies for equal opportunities, for the enhancement of female employment and for the occupational integration of women.

The cases analysed vary considerably, although all contain some significantly interesting characteristics.

The first case is focused on the transport sector and specifically regards the ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group. This is perhaps the most significant example analysed, and involves a complete action project designed for the enhancement of the female workers in the enterprise. It is also very valuable since this project was completed several years ago (1995-1996) and therefore the results of the positive actions implemented were also evaluated. The second case involves the chemical and pharmaceutical sector and regards Solvay Italia. This example also dates back to several years ago (2001-2002) and the results of the action can be equally evaluated. This project is however much more targeted and limited, as it refers to experiments on telework for a small number of women workers on voluntary maternity leave. The third case is again in the transport sector and regards London Buses. The main aim of this project, structured in various “action points, is to increase the number of women in the sector; however since the project has started in 2004, the results are not yet available. The fourth case entails a very special example in the construction sector, and regards the presentation of a Memorandum of Understanding in France signed between the various Ministries and the Federation of Industrialists of the sector to promote access by women to the building occupations.

The first two examples, ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group and Solvay Italia, in which an evaluation of the effects of the initiatives is available, can be considered as successful cases. The positive results refer to the specific objectives of the project (e.g., the increase of women in the “male”-

dominated occupations as in the case of the ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group or the satisfaction of women workers and corporate managers for the experimentation of telework as in the case of Solvay Italia), as well as to the indirect effects on the broader cultural attitude to the world of women’s work.

With regard to the latter case, we should stress the importance of communication in the project, both internal (also to other Group enterprises) and external, thereby ensuring an adequate coverage in the press and other major areas (other enterprises, institutions, etc.). On the whole, this successful initiative, though originally limited to very specific corporate sectors, tends to amplify its effects because this case arouse widespread interest and consideration and can circulate as “good practices” to apply in other corporate and sectoral contexts.

The cases analysed also seem to indicate that when the project derives from significant agreement among the actors involved (male and female workers, corporate management, the ‘Equal Opportunities’ Committee (*CPO*), as is this the case of both the ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group and Solvay Italia) the implementation takes place according to the time periods planned without many organisational and technical problems. Moreover, the latter are faced with a constructive spirit, with the final satisfaction for the results of the initiatives being very high. For the success of a project targeted to increase the female personnel in the enterprise, to overcome the existing discrimination, to highlight the working contribution of women and to improve the professional integration between male and female workers, it is thus essential to create a basis for agreement and dialogue. In this respect, the role of the ‘Equal Opportunities’ Committee is highly important for the promotion and the monitoring of the project.

4.2. Italy: The ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group

THE DEFINITION OF POLICIES FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF WOMEN WORKERS IN THE ENTERPRISE

4.2.1. The Basis

The ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group, controlled by the Lombardy Regional Authorities, represents the most important enterprise for integrated transport in Lombardy, and the most significant non-government owned railway enterprise in Italy. The Project for the enhancement of women workers in the enterprise was implemented during the mid-1990s, together with a project for corporate restructuring which led to remarkable changes in the overall organisation of the ‘Ferrovie Nord Milano’ Group.

When the Project was started up, the enterprise showed a strong, traditional male-dominated workplace culture, although in the previous 10 years Italy, and particularly in Milano and Lombardy, a massive influx of women on the labour market was recorded. The basic aim was to link the issue of the enhancement of women workers to the restructuring project, since the corporate management believed that the planned reduction in the workforce might have been concentrated in the corporate sectors numbering most women employees, i.e. headquarter offices (in particular, the administration, HR management and the secretarial jobs), level-crossing staff (abolition planned with the introduction of the automated technology or remote-control measures), station staff (abolition of personnel solely dedicated to ticket sales in most stations and in general the partial or total elimination of personnel in many facilities), cleaning squads (outsourcing to external firms), staff in the Network and Transport sectors, and on-board personnel (through the introduction of a new professional profile: the convoyer).

Simultaneously, the restructuring project involved important opportunities, with the enhancement and the increase of female personnel such as:

1. The planned creation of a pool of ticket inspectors to check travel tickets, together with the introduction of the new ‘convoyer’ profile, with good opportunities for inserting female personnel and for experimenting highly flexible working hours;

2. The corporate interest in promoting the maximum internal horizontal mobility;
3. The corporate decision in favour of an extensive vocational training and updating, indispensable for supporting mobility processes;
4. The corporate decision to extend part-time work.

4.2.2. Summary of the actions proposed and consequent methods

ACTIONS	METHODS
<i>Admission of more women to core positions</i>	Revision of calls and announcements for personnel selection. A brochure to present the Enterprise from a “female viewpoint”. Changes in the means of publicising job-offers, also utilising places (schools) with a significant female component. Insertion of women in selection commissions. Review of some typically male professional profiles.
<i>Promotion and support of the transition of women from positions in decline to positions that are more strategic for the Enterprise</i>	Provision of guidance to female workers. Awareness-raising initiatives, specifically targeted to the middle management, on gender issues in operational HR management.
<i>Extension of the flexibility</i>	Introduction of part-time work in the Operating Department. Extension and application of part-time work. Experimentation of new options in the management of non-typical working hours.
<i>Support to re-entry from maternity and to the return to work</i>	Specific role of management within the HRM sector. Tutor to facilitate re-entry in the enterprise. Dossier on “Maternity/Paternity and Work”.

4.2.3. *The Results*

Starting from the situation highlighted by the survey, a number of objectives have been identified to extend and enhance the women workers, on whom the 'positive action' phase of the project is concentrated such as:

1. to increase the presence of women in job positions close to the core business;
2. to encourage and support the transition of women workers from roles in decline to more strategic ones;
3. to reposition women workers currently employed as level-crossing staff, to be gradually phased out in connection with the technological modernisation of railway lines;
4. to support the return to work after maternity;
5. to estimate the conditions for promoting flexible working hours (in particular with regard to shift work).

The results achieved can be summarised as follows:

With regard to Point 1):

- the development of a new model of announcements and competitions, with the language and corporate image highlighting the interest of 'Ferrovie Nord' in hiring both men and women, also in traditionally male-dominated occupations;
- a review of the characteristics requested for some professional profiles, which have proved to hinder the participation of women and are unjustified by the actual contents of the job;
- development and distribution of a brochure to present the Enterprise, called "Un sorriso di donna per il cambiamento del Nord" (A woman's Smile to Change the *Nord*), designed to act on the popular cultural image of the roles and professional profiles working in the railways and to disseminate the current equal-opportunity experience;
- the concrete results: in train-driver selections 10 women applied in 1995 and 20 in 1996; for the first time in the history of the 'Ferrovie Nord Milano' Group, some women have become train drivers.

With regard to the Point 2):

- the development and implementation of a guidance and awareness-raising course lasting two days for all the women workers in the Enterprise, involving 190 women out of 296. A significant number of women who participated in the course changed their job position;
- the development and implementation of two awareness-raising meetings lasting a day each for middle management and HRM staff in the Operating Department, which represents the corporate area with the greatest problems in equal opportunities for men and women. The initiative, though limited in numbers and duration, has proved to be a very important means to disseminate practices for the enhancement (or in any case to avoid penalisation) of women workers.

With regard to Point 3):

- the analysis of the personal characteristics of women workers employed as level-crossing staff;
- the development and implementation of a 1-day seminar designed specifically for these women, using the tool of “professional balance” to stimulate debate, motivations and potentials;
- the proposal was made to these women workers to participate in a training course in order to be able to undertake the planned examinations as station staff. Ten women of the level-crossing staff actually took the exam for transition to the 7th level position, though unsuccessfully.

With regard to Point 4):

- the printing of a booklet entitled “Maternity/Paternity and Work”, distributed to all employees, both women and men;
- the introduction in the Personnel Directorate of the ‘Consultant for Reconciliation’ between work and family life, with the task of providing mothers and fathers with all the information on regulations for maternity and parental leave applicable in this Enterprise, of maintaining contacts with the absent male or female worker in order to attenuate the negative effects of absence from work and its evolution, and of organising better conditions for re-entry;

- the appointment of a middle management-level male or female worker, concerned with the topics of reconciliation between work and family life, with the task of tutoring the persons who re-enter work in order to facilitate their re-insertion;
- the scheduling of updating and reception meetings for those re-entering work in order to illustrate the changes occurring in the Enterprise during their absence.

With regard to the Point 5):

- the 'Equal Opportunities' Committee, after an initial feasibility analysis, has decided to dedicate attention to the topic of equal opportunities and insert it in the new 'positive action' project presented pursuant to Law 125/91.

4.2.4. Difficulties and the Positive Action Impact on Consolidated Corporate Practices

No significant difficulties have occurred in the development of the Project, and timing has substantially been respected.

The 'Equal Opportunities' Committee has met regularly and followed the activity of the female experts assiduously and closely. Corporate management has been increasingly involved in the Project and has made it one of the innovative factors of the Enterprise. The contribution of the female experts has been positively combined with the work carried out by the Committee, with a very fruitful skill exchange.

The most significant impact of the Project is embedded in the general awareness on the topics of female employment raised within the Enterprise. This problem - previously underestimated - has become a corporate issue considered necessary and useful for focus, above all by corporate management.

As for corporate practices, there have undoubtedly been changes in the mechanisms of selection and internal career progress, with the consolidation of procedures more focused on gender differences, such as announcements, competitions, requirements, etc.. Other corporate practices undergoing a changing process regard the entire management of maternity, and a general rethinking of this problem from a corporate point of view.

The personal situation of the women occupying “male”-dominated positions has more likely been improved. Various executives and managers (whatever their view on the “female issue”) have raised new awareness of the problem and its implications, which over time can positively affect the internal relations system.

4.3. Italy: Solvay Italia

‘ARMONIA’ PROJECT FOR TELEWORK

4.3.1. The Pathway of the Project

The Solvay Group is a chemical and pharmaceutical multinational operating in over 50 countries. The ‘Armonia’ Project, promoted by Solvay Italia in 2001, had the aim of experimenting, and eventually implementing, the telework as a means to promote reconciliation between work and family life.

The Project regarded male and female workers in the period of voluntary maternity/paternity leave.

The beneficiaries of the project were allowed to carry out their work at home through an adequately equipped workstation, after verification of the possibility of applying telework in the job position involved, and after an agreement with the person’s manager in the company. A total of 7 women workers were involved, with a variable duration of the experiment ranging between 3 and 9 months according to the cases. Two applications for admission to the experiment were not accepted since the tasks were not considered as being suitable for telework. The Company’s ‘Equal Opportunities’ Committee provided direction and supervision of the Project.

4.3.2. The Overall Evaluation: Satisfaction of the Actors

At the end of the experiment, there was observed considerable satisfaction among the women workers involved (average evaluation 4.84 on a scale from 1 to 5).

In particular, relationships with the workers' managers and colleagues received the highest approval. Some extra problems arose with regard to reconciliation between work and maternity, an aspect depending on whether the women have outside care support and on particular stages of children's growth. In some cases difficulties were reported due to their absence from the office. The importance was stressed for clearly identifying the tasks to be performed during telework, and on how to undertake evaluation.

Management satisfaction was also very high (average evaluation: 4.25). In general, no substantial management or organisational problems were reported. In some cases, however, it was stressed that telework is closely related to the type of work to be performed, or to specific phases of a project.

With regard to the technical aspects, the planning of actions was effective, and efforts were made to concentrate the connection of the line and the installation of the workstation in a single visit. Efforts were made to customise the workstations, thereby choosing various technical and logistical solutions (router or dial-in, notebooks or fixed PCs, etc.), according to work requirements. No serious problems were reported. In fact, the problems were solved by telephone through the help-desk, and in just one case there was an extra intervention.

With regard to the overall functional aspects, opportunity for access was handled by a female member of the Project Team and by a *CPO* representative, who was contacted in the initial phase to obtain greater information and to solve any problems concerning women workers related, for example, to the definition of the agreement with their managers (definition of availability hours and re-entry). During the phases of study, start-up of experiments and monitoring, members of the Project Team together with consultants provided assistance and support to both the manager and the worker.

4.3.3. The Overall Evaluation: General Aspects and Conclusion

The project was endowed with considerable visibility and promotion in the enterprise: a dedicated Intranet website, articles on corporate newsletters in Italy and in other countries, the publication of a brochure with the testimony of four female “teleworkers”, public presentations at the Milan, Rosignano and Grugliasco branch offices, the interest of other international companies in the Group, and lastly the participation in the ‘Innovation Trophy’. The experiment also aroused external interest with an invitation to participate in a Rome Conference organised by the National Committee for Equal Opportunities, and through articles on local and national newspapers as well as articles in trade-union and specialised reviews.

To conclude, the experiment was successful, but it should be stressed that it was “protected” and managed by the Project Team and more precisely by persons working in the enterprise and consultants, who provided assistance to the female workers and their managers.

The experiments highlighted that the rules formulated proved to effectively work. In case of extension on a regular basis, it would be necessary to:

- develop a corporate procedure to regulate the use of telework; confirm the additional agreement;
- identify the managers in the Company who will supervise telework, thus guaranteeing the role played by the Project Team and consultants;
- envisage to maintain a monitoring procedure;
- confirm the role of the *CPO* as a third actor, in addition to the company personnel and related managers.

4.4. France: The Promotion of Female Employment in the Construction Sector

Memorandum of Understanding for access by women to the building occupations, between the Ministry of Transport and Housing, the Ministry of Labour and the Solidarity, the Ministry of National Education, the

Ministry delegated for Vocational Training, the Secretariat of State for Housing, the Secretariat of State for the Rights of Women and Vocational Training, and the French Building Federation

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in February 2002 and aims to promote professional equality between men and women in the construction sector.

The duration of the agreement is 5 years. A national steering committee consisting of the representatives of the signatories co-ordinates the implementation of the national agreement and conducts an annual evaluation of the results. The Committee can also be organised on the regional level.

The initiative falls within the context of the overall government policy in favour of equality and equal opportunities between women and men, both young and adult, in the educational system, and follows on the agreement signed on 25 February 2000 between the various Ministries involved in these issues; it is a challenge to the whole of society.

Today, the European Union is actively committed, on the legal level and in specific Community action programmes, to eliminate discrimination in all sectors and to promote equality between women and men. The Member States must be approached to ensure increasing progress towards the equality of rights.

In France, women represent 45.4% of the active population (compared to 34% recorded 35 years ago). In the construction sector, the percentage of women workers is rather low, just 8.4% of the workforce in 1998, though slightly higher than 1991 (7.8%). With regard to the socio-professional categories, the female percentage is higher among clerks, technicians and "agents de maitrise" (*ETAM*) totalling 38.9% of the workforce, mainly in the administrative sectors, compared to 1.2% in the category of labourers and 9.8% among engineers and equivalent middle management.

For some time, the issue of the access by women to building occupations has not been discussed; these occupations, based on a consolidated view of the operation of building sites, have traditionally been male. Today, however, nothing justifies the small female component in this sector. Technological development, the growing interface functions and the corresponding technical and administrative tools to implement them as well as the raising of the required qualifications have all contributed to change

the building occupations. Furthermore, construction firms likewise need increasing manpower.

Starting from this observation, the search for more balance in the building occupations can contribute to make the construction sector more dynamic, taking into account the interest and benefits on working conditions, on the evolution of trades and on the overall image of the sector as a result of the presence of women.

The Memorandum of Understanding is a new stage in the long pathway aimed at integrating women in the construction sector. It has six points, each corresponding to the relevant objectives of the agreement:

1. Changing the social representation of the sector to promote the integration of women and to create conditions of positive guidance for young women in the building occupations and in the required training pathways. The signatories have agreed on research to study social representation in the sector as a whole, and in particular the conditions of acceptance, by customers, of the female component in the operational functions.
2. Encompassing the integration of women in a prospect of professional equality. In order to improve the conditions of job insertion of young women and integration in the building occupations, the partnership will undertake a joint action of training/awareness targeted to the professional and institutional actors about the issues and instruments aimed at the promotion of equal opportunities.
3. Promoting the local co-ordination. The regional delegations for the rights of women and equality, university chancellors, regional Directorates for Employment and Vocational Training, regional Directorates, local branches of the French Construction Federation all contribute to the implementation of the initiatives according to their jurisdiction.
4. Ensuring the monitoring of the feminisation process in the building occupations. There are statistics on the female situation in the construction sector, however these statistics are often incomplete and lack a systematic basis. The signatories of the agreement have thus opted for a detailed, regular monitoring of the feminisation process in the sector, both for vocational training and for the workforce.

5. Ensuring the dissemination and visibility of the actions. The signatories will monitor the transparency of the initiatives launched. They will keep one another informed on the initiatives undertaken within the context of the guidelines defined in the agreement and in the relative projects within their jurisdiction. The information available will be networked for an easier access to all, especially through the use of IT technologies.
6. Activating institutional co-ordination. In the period of validity, the agreement may be amended if requested by a signatory, according to developments occurred in the context. A national steering committee, consisting of the representatives of the signatories, shall provide national co-ordination on the implementation of the actions accurately defined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

4.5. Action plan to increase the number of women in the bus industry

4.5.1. Background

This Action Plan has been produced by London Buses as a result of the work undertaken by a Working Group on Women in the Bus Industry. London Buses will take the lead in initiating the actions, in conjunction with the bus companies and the Transport & General Workers Union.

London Buses established a working group in December 2003 to examine the reasons behind the low representation of women within the bus industry. The focus concentrated, for the most part, on issues relating to women working as bus drivers as it is drivers who make up most of the bus industry's workforce (over 80% of bus company staff in London are drivers). The working group included representatives from: Transport for London (TfL) (London Buses, Equality and Inclusion and Dial-a Ride), three bus companies that operate London Buses route contracts (Arriva, Stagecoach and Hackney Community Transport) and Transport & General Workers Union (TGWU).

The Terms of Reference of the Working Group were to

- establish the obstacles to attracting women bus drivers, and develop strategies or how these can be broken through;
- review previous research undertaken by/know to the members of the working group;
- gain an understanding of current practices adopted by the bus operators and their success rates, including outside London;
- gain an understanding from the TGWU on their experiences and initiatives throughout the country;
- determine and commission further research. This might include discussion with other large employers of women in like industries;
- draw up a “best practice” guide, which would be made available to all bus operators in London;
- develop an Action Plan for Communication and Implementation.

4.5.2. Action Points

This Appendix sets out specific Action Points which are grouped under four main headings, although there are areas of overlap, such that actions referred under one may impact on another. Each heading includes an overview of the issues reviewed by the Working Group for the aspect, together with the specific Action Points that have been developed.

A. Recruitment and Training

Action point 1: The HR group will develop “best practice” guidelines for bus companies on recruitment. These will include:

- ensuring advertising of vacancies is well targeted;
- clearly stating in recruitment material that an increase the number of woman drivers is needed;
- information provided to Job Centres;
- the use of open days for recruitment;
- the possibility of companies sharing recruitment events – on an area or London wide basis.

Bus companies will continue to be encouraged to take into account the need to increase representation from minority groups for both male and female drivers, in areas where these groups are under represented.

Action point 2: London Buses will establish funding sources to specifically target training of women in the bus industry. This could cover women who do not hold a driving licence, women who need language and/or basic numeracy training, and women from under-represented groups. The bus companies will be encouraged to provide match funding and partnering for training.

Action point 3: The HR group will develop “best practice” guidelines for training women bus drivers. This will cover aspects such as grouping women during training where possible, and use of female instructor for at least part of the course.

The bus companies will be encouraged to increase the number of female instructors in the longer term.

B. Working in the industry

Action point 4: The HR group will develop “best practice” guidelines for bus companies on the provision of flexible options (rotas/shifts) and part-time working, for both men and women. These will include ensuring that the bus companies have more sensitive to peoples needs, and that managers adopt a consistent approach at all the company’s garages.

Issues in relation to training of local union representatives will be addressed in partnership with the TGWU.

Action point 5: The HR group to develop “best practice” guidelines for bus companies on childcare. This will include reviewing what opportunities exist for childcare vouchers, the feasibility of sourcing schemes which operate out of the normal daily hours, and consideration of school holiday schemes.

Action point 6: London Buses and the bus companies will develop a training course for garage staff who have regular dealings with bus drivers, including management, supervisory, training and duty allocation staff.

Action point 7: The HR group will develop “best practice” guidelines for bus companies to ensure there are adequate and clean toilet and other facilities for women at garages, including consideration of the provision of shower facilities.

Action point 8: Support will be given to the work of the joint London Buses, bus company, TWGU working group relating to on-the-road bus driver facilities. In particular it will be emphasised to the local authorities (planning and equality sections) the need for them look favourably at applications for the provision of toilet/rest room facilities for bus drivers. London Buses will continue to ensure that toilet facilities are available on all bus routes, assessing this when new routes are proposed or existing routes altered.

Bus companies will be encouraged that when determining locations for driver changeovers (eg for meal reliefs) the availability of toilet facilities should be prioritised, including consideration of the need to alter changeover points on existing routes where necessary.

Action point 9: The HR group will share “best practice” to ensure that there are women’s mentors/buddies at each garage. The larger bus companies will be encouraged to have more senior women advisor(s) from the management grades.

C. Retention of drivers

Action point 10: The bus companies will be asked to regularly monitor the progress of women recruited in the 12 month period from July 2004, and to establish the reasons for any staff leaving during this period. This will also cover drop-out rates during training. The findings will be reviewed by the HR group so that any further improvements can be identified and followed through.

D. Image of the bus industry

Action point 11: TfL will continue the marketing/promotion of the bus business, with a generic advertising campaign to improve the image of the bus industry, featuring women drivers, highlighting the important social

role of bus drivers, and the aspects of the job relating to dealing with passengers.

Action point 12: TfL and the bus companies will promote by way of media coverage, the image of the industry and the role of the driver with a view to it being regarded as more female friendly. When appropriate the opportunities will be taken to cover the longer term career opportunities of the bus drivers – eg progression to supervisory/managerial posts.

The Bus industry in the United Kingdom has traditionally been a male dominated one and, in London, only in the past 15 years have women started entering the industry as drivers in significant numbers.

The first post World War II female bus driver in London began in 1976 in Kingston. Nine years later, London Buses Limited (the largest operator in London at the time) had 50 female drivers. This had increased to 295 three years later. By the end of 2003, across all London bus operator there were 1211 female drivers – 5,7% of all London bus drivers.

While the proportion of female drivers at the end of December 2003 was 5,7%, at that point 18,8% of conductors were female. This is an indicator of women being willing to work in the bus industry with its shift working and “cultural” aspects.

Chapter 5

TARGETED MEETINGS

5.1. Objectives and Effects of the Targeted Meetings

In accordance with the spirit of Social Dialogue, where this project originates from, the meetings between the Joint Study Group and the Social Partners of the partner countries play a fundamental role in the work plan.

These appointments are the very core of the project, not only because they are an integral component of the research study, being an occasion for in-depth study and greater information on the situation in the various EU railways, but mainly because the meetings represent the real implementation of the work method and the Social Dialogue purposes applied to equal opportunities.

The objectives of these targeted meetings can be summarised in three basic points:

1. enabling the Working Group to have a closer and more detailed knowledge of the situation in the various EU railways. This aim embodies various opportunities, such as obtaining more information on the specific context, on the corporate policies for personnel management and on the country's trade union guidelines; extending and better interpreting the information extrapolated from a questionnaire-based survey; interacting directly with the employers' and employees' representatives, thereby stimulating specific discussions on the topic; direct observation - by the ways of organising meetings and actions - of the dynamics concerning general interaction as well as contract and relationship management typical to the industrial relations of the host organisation;
2. stimulating the exchange of positive actions and experience. Accordingly, the meetings have highlighted both the critical points regarding personnel management - especially female resources -, and the strengths, i.e. the effective experiments leading to satisfactory

results in the context of gender mainstreaming. The basic idea of this exchange is not to simply export actions and measures from one geographical area to another, but rather to provide incentives to joint commitments, to stimulate ideas and lastly to foster and implement networking;

3. supporting the dialogue between the Social Partners both in the partner countries and within the European Union. This important objective, promoted and sustained by the Community institutions in general and more specifically through the important instrument of Social Dialogue, allows for the creation not just of occasional projects but of a stable, effective and widespread network between the social, national and European actors.

This is why most of the budget resources are allocated to organise meetings with Social Partners, thereby involving each time a preliminary and a follow-up meeting.

The meetings with the Working Group have boosted dynamics of cooperation and collaboration between the Social Partners in each country, since these latter have considered themselves to be involved as direct actors in the preparation of the meetings and in the processes of change being called for. This positive feedback from the meetings can be observed in the remarkable positive implications on the local level, especially in the media. This has occurred both in the partner countries, directly contributing to the project with their representatives in the 'Equal Opportunities' Working Group, and in the countries visited for the exchange of good practices, also considering the particular 'historical' context of the project, underway during the EU extension to 25 members.

In particular, the organisation and co-ordination for the meeting with the Joint Study Group has enabled us to interact with the Social Partners specifically on the topic of equal opportunities, though often not considered to have top priority in the institutional activity of the Social Partners concerned, and with the support of women experts, to better focus on the specific topics in transversal terms in order to effectively understand the situation on policies, guidelines and prospects for a better integration of women in the railway sector.

The exchange was fruitful and has highlighted some needs, ideas and new stimuli, affecting both the social and occupational railway-related sectors.

5.2. The Working Group

The organisation of the Working Group responds to the needs and to the spirit of the work method typical of the Social Dialogue. The Working Group thus originates as a Joint Study Group counting on the same number of employers' and employees' representatives.

With regard to the central European representative bodies, the Working Group features: Sabine Trier and Jean-Paul Preumont, representing ETF and CER respectively.

On the employers' side, in addition to the project Rapporteur, Daniela Belotti representing the Italian *Ferrovie dello Stato*, the Working Group encompasses Birgit Reinhardt for the German *DB AG*, Catherine Hingrez for the French *SNCF* and Traude Kogoj for the Austrian *ÖBB*.

On the employees' side, in addition to the Chairperson of the Working Group, Claudia Bergesio representing the Italian *FILT-CGIL*, Danielle Sinoquet of the French *CGT* and Lena Moberg-Lindwall of the Swedish *ST* are effective members.

The tasks of the Joint Study Group have been to plan, manage and support all the phases of the project: from its creation to the field surveys, from the active participation in the meetings to the drawing-up of the final report; this latter contains a separate chapter describing proposals and recommendations for the future of equal opportunities in the European railway sector.

The Working Group also boasts of a project staff, the costs of which are listed in the project budget, and includes two staff members from the Italian *Ferrovie dello Stato*, namely Antonella Alfonsi for administration and accounts and Silvia Cataldi for the secretariat and methodology.

Finally, support for the survey and accounting was made available by *ISFORT S.p.A.*, an Italian company of the *FS S.p.A.* Holding which has handled the research study and provided support to the Working Group throughout the project. The Project's technical staff include Carlo Carminucci, in charge of the research study together with Laura Castrucci and Gianluca Nera, as consultants.

This Working Group, as planned, conducted six visits in the partner countries and held four organisational meetings (in occasion of the start-up, intermediate and final monitoring and the presentation of the survey results) in Rome and Brussels, some of which were funded externally by the European Commission.

5.2.1. The Meeting in Italy

The first opening meeting of the project was held at *Ferrovie dello Stato S.p.A.*, which also signed the agreement with the European Commission and received funds specifically allocated to the project. This meeting marked the launching of the Project's works where a total of six visits were envisaged in the programme.

There follows a brief summary.

<p><i>Rome, 18 May 2004 (9-15)</i> <i>TAV, Via Mantova 24, Conference Room.</i></p>	
<p>Speeches by Corporate Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Giuseppe Depaoli (Director of Industrial Relations-<i>FS Holding</i>) - Italo Inglese (Manager of Industrial Relations-<i>FS Holding</i>) - Riccardo Pozzi (Director of Human Resources-<i>RFI S.p.A.</i>) - Francesco De Deo (Manager of Industrial Relations-<i>Trenitalia S.p.A.</i>) - Lorenzo Sartorelli (Director of Human Resources-<i>Italferr S.p.A.</i>) - Ines Giangiacomo (Manager of Human Resources-<i>Ferservizi S.p.A.</i>) - Daniela Belotti (Chairperson of the National 'Equal Opportunities' Committee-<i>FS Group</i>) 	<p>Speeches by Trade Union Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Franco Nasso (National Secretary-<i>FILT-CGIL</i>) - Rosalia Luce (National Secretary-<i>FIT-CISL</i>) - Mauro Di Giovanni (National Secretary-<i>UILTrasporti-UIL</i>) - Umberto Nespoli (National Secretary-<i>UGLFerrovie</i>) - Moreno Polo (National Secretary-<i>SMA/FAST</i>) - Claudia Bergesio (Chairperson of the Joint 'Equal Opportunities' Group in the Social Dialogue)
<p>Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - focus on the research study: methodological contribution by <i>ISFORT</i>; - short presentations by the personnel directors of the 5 railway enterprises of the <i>FS Group</i>; - short presentations by the representatives of 5 major trade unions; - focus on equal opportunities; - debate; - adjournment of meeting. 	

The meeting was specifically organised to ensure that the trade unions and employers' organisations participated at the same time, in order to experiment the dynamics of managing industrial relations in the varied Italian context. The Italian railway situation is characterised by a variety of railway enterprises pertaining to the *FS* Group as well as by several trade unions.

In particular, the Italian railways have recently completed a process of significant reorganisation leading to the establishment of a holding which controls the two main enterprises, one designed for the management of transport services (*Trenitalia S.p.A.*) and one for the management of the railway network (*RFI S.p.A.*), as well as some other smaller but highly specialised enterprises (*Italferr S.P.A.* for the design sector, *Ferservizi S.P.A.* for the management of services, and several other subsidiary enterprises).

For a long time, *Ferrovie dello Stato* was a body equivalent to a branch of the Civil Service, practically an integral department of the Ministry of Transport. In fact, the Chairman of the *Ferrovie dello Stato* was the Minister of Transport.

Subsequently, the *FS* railway enterprise was converted into a body governed under public law, separated from the Ministry, and then in 1992 the public company was set up, of which the Ministry of the Economy and Finance is still the sole shareholder. In the subsequent 10 years, the reorganisation process went forward, with the consequent organisational breakdown into several business units until the creation of separate enterprises and a main Holding Company with centrally-managed direction and control functions.

The trade-union representation is provided through various organisations. The main trade unions, signatories of the National Collective Labour Contract, recently renewed on two contractual levels (16 April 2003), are as follows: *FILT-CGL*, *FIT-CISL*, *UILTrasporti-UIL*, *UGL-FERROVIE* and *SMA-FAST* and *OR.sA*, where the first three belong to the country's most representative trade-union confederations.

Considering the complexity of the structure, the first section of the meeting was focused on the presentation of the Working Group to the Social Partners and on the description of the objectives and procedures for

the development of the project, with methodological and technical support for the research study being provided by *ISFORT S.p.A.*, through some explanatory slides.

After an initial discussion of the critical points and characteristics of the present status of equal opportunities in Italy, and more specifically in the railway context, valuable contributions by the personnel managers of the 5 main enterprises of the *Ferrovie dello Stato* Group were presented.

The panorama of the specific situations has enabled to better define the *mission* and the *FS* structure as well as the status of female personnel together with the equal-opportunity policies developed in the specific job context. While there is shared lines of action in personnel management, each enterprise has its own specific features and a certain management autonomy.

It is interesting to note that the interpretation of some recent statistical data has revealed the under-representation of women, which is especially critical in the core business-related occupations where the percentage is under 10%. Recently, however, there has been a reversal trend with a significant increase in the hiring of women, though not supported by specific policies.

The second section of the meeting focused on the trade-union position, which is quite complex, above all in relation to the composite nature of the trade unions themselves, including general trade unions and trade associations. The contributions pinpointed the various critical points regarding the condition of male and female workers (especially train drivers) and the obstacles hindering the choice of entering certain occupations, above all in relation with the need to reconcile work and family life.

It is also important to mention that positive lines of action for undertaking training and raising awareness on the equal opportunities for younger workers have been discussed.

The debate after the contributions highlighted some basic aspects. In particular, the Working Group stressed the motivations and social reasons that should induce the enterprises and trade unions to promote equal-opportunity policies, thus stimulating the interest and motivation to change among all the Social Partners.

Very noteworthy was the valuable speech by the Chairperson of the 'Equal Opportunities' Committee, who stated that the Study Group's Joint Committee, the ideal body for discussing the development of concrete proposals for bargaining, has the main task of promoting the equal opportunities in the *FS* Group enterprises by targeted measures as well as by specific projects and actions. On this occasion, the Committee well rooted on the local level through its regional widespread network, presented the main results of its work; these results also include some critical points and difficulties emerging throughout the years from the experience in bargaining, especially with regard to the accreditation by the Study Group and trade unions for the recognition of an incisive and consolidated role.

The main positive actions in the field of training, occupational safety and female skills for the enhancement of human resources were accurately examined. Other items discussed included the surveys promoted by the 'Equal Opportunities' Committee for better knowledge and an accurate mapping of the needs, qualities and demands of women workers.

5.2.2. The Meeting in Austria

The second meeting was held at the Austrian railway enterprise *ÖBB*. The meeting was an important occasion for discussion between the Social Partners.

There follows a brief summary.

The meeting provided better information on the Austrian situation which, according to the experts of the Working Group, was highly dynamic and undergoing change, especially in relation to the restructuring processes currently under way.

The organisational process of the Austrian railways has two major historical stages: in 1993 with the Federal Railways Act, the Austrian Federal Railways (*ÖBB*), an economic entity founded as a branch of the Federal Business Administration, became a corporation as an independent legal entity. In 2004, with the Federal Railways Structure Act, the process for restructuring the Austrian Federal Railways was completed, thereby establishing the current *ÖBB* Group.

<p>Wien, 9 July 2004 (9-15) European Commission - Representation in Austria Karntnerring 5-7.</p>	
<p>Speeches by Corporate Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wolfgang Moldaschl (Director of Human Resources / Administration / Services, ÖBB) - Michael Hlava (Head of Corporate Communication, International Relations, ÖBB) - Sylvia Berndorfer (Head of Environmental Management , ÖBB) - Ursula Zechner (Human Resources, ÖBB) - Gabriele Bech (Head of Human Resources Team , ÖBB) - Traude Kogoj (Head of Corporate Communication/Public Relations, ÖBB Planung & Engineering) 	<p>Speeches by Trade Union Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wilhelm Haberzettl (Chairman of <i>GdE</i>) - Elisabeth Vondrasek (Gender Equality Officer, GdE)
<p>Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - short presentation of the railway enterprise by the Personnel Director; - the trade-union viewpoint: speech by the chairman of <i>GdE</i>; - speeches by representatives of the Human Resources, Communication, Sustainability, Planning and Equal Opportunities sectors; - focus on the research study: methodological contribution by <i>ISFORT</i>; - debate; - adjournment of meeting. 	

At present, the *ÖBB* Group includes 6 main enterprises with related subsidiaries, and more precisely: the *ÖBB* Holding Corp; *ÖBB* Infrastructure Construction Corp. (consisting of the following: Brenner Eisenbahn Corp., *ÖBB* Real Estate Management Corp.), *ÖBB* - Infrastructure Operation Corp., *ÖBB* Passenger Transport Corp., Rail Cargo Austria Corp. (consisting of the following *ÖBB* - Traction LLC *ÖBB* Technical Service LLC), and *ÖBB* Services LLC.

There is a single trade union, precisely *GdE*.

Considering the organic corporate and trade-union structure, the meeting - after the initial section dedicated to some valuable contributions - was characterised by an overall analysis of equal opportunities in the various corporate sectors, especially from a general approach.

The initial section of the meeting was a turnover with main contributions including the introductory speech by the Austrian female representative of the Working Group, who organised the meeting, and by speeches from two employers' and employees' representatives. All participants highlighted the need to really implement equal opportunities, thus ensuring the aware and responsible management of the processes of change currently under way.

In particular, it has been stressed that although the percentage of female resources currently in the enterprise totals only 6%, many efforts of the Social Partners are focusing on the issues of equal opportunities for an occupational sustainability. The aim is thus to create the overall conditions to improve both the working conditions and the reconciliation between work and family life, through crèches, flexible working hours and the implementation of the existing reconciliation instruments.

There followed speeches by the representatives of various corporate sectors. In the communication field, in particular, there was observed an effort to apply gender mainstreaming in the respect of diversity and the neutrality of language. With regard to communication, inside and outside the railway enterprise, concern for gender differences was considered as a basic principle of the Corporate Identity. This indicates the need to raise the awareness among public opinion on the topic of equal opportunities, also based on the monitoring of language, taking into due account the relevance of the name of *ÖBB* in Austria, i.e. the country's sixth largest group.

In the planning and engineering sector, the key-concept highlighted is the principle of sustainability which must include not only respect for the environment and nature, but must also focus on personnel management as an internal reserve of resources to be enhanced. It is a cultural change - widely desired - for a better corporate impact on the social level as well as for the environment. In this regard, an annual sustainability report is drawn up in this sector, gaining international consensus and approval.

In the training sector, some successful experiments of vocational updating and qualification were recalled, including one course for aspiring train drivers, aimed at recruiting new female resources and enhancing the technical and mechanical skills of women.

The equal-opportunity representative primarily focussed on two main working fields: personnel selection and the prevention of harassment. With regard to the personnel selection, the current processes of restructuring have led to the block of hiring, so that the only sectors where investment is currently taking place regard train drivers, the commercial sector and freight transport. As for the prevention of harassment, the work method is applied by setting up specific working groups to affect corporate culture in a bottom-up process.

During the discussion, another important aspect concerned the female career progress was accurately analysed. The various corporate and trade-union actors, when requested by the Working Group, confirmed their commitment at supporting women in reaching positions of responsibility so as to foster the empowerment and the combination between processes of bottom-up action and promotion, and processes of top-down female integration and decision making.

5.2.3. The Meeting in Germany

The third meeting was held at the German railway enterprise *DB AG*. The meeting was an important occasion for discussion between the Social Partners.

There follows a brief summary.

The specific features of the German context derive from a complex history marked by profound changes. In particular, the restructuring process occurred in the German railways was characterised by two main phases. The first one was in 1994 with the merger between *DB* (German Federal Railways) and *DR* (German Empire-Railroads), followed by the transformation of the structures and the consequent assignment of responsibilities. The second fundamental phase was in 1999, when the *DB AG Holding* was set up, with the different business units being structured in various enterprises.

<p><i>Berlin, 16 September 2004 (9-15)</i> <i>DB Cargo.</i></p>	
<p>Speeches by Corporate Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Olaf Mette (Person in Charge of International Design and Reference Person for Social Dialogue) - Uwe Herz (Person in Charge of the 'Communication' Sector) - Maika Jachman (Editor of Bahn-TV) - Andrea Sulzer ('Personnel Management' Division - <i>DB Reise&Touristik AG</i>) - Cornelia Noak (Person in Charge of Personnel - <i>DB Station&Service AG</i>) - Elke Werthmann ('Personnel Management' Division - <i>DB Netz AG</i>) - Carola Hennemann (Manager of the 'Vehicles' Division) - Frank Dievernich (Person in Charge of the 'Staff for Passenger Traffic Development' Division) - Gabriele Kleinicke ('Total Equality Controls' Commissioner - <i>Station&Service AG</i>) - Birgit Reinhardt (Person in Charge of Equal Opportunities) 	<p>Speeches by Trade Union Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erika Albers (Person in Charge of the Women's Section - <i>TRANSNET</i>) <p>External Contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Haslo Hünig (Professor at the Free University of Berlin)
<p>Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - the trade-union viewpoint: speech by the <i>TRANSNET</i> representative; - speeches by the representatives of the International Projects, Human Resources, Communication, Customer Services and Equal Opportunities sectors; - focus on the research study: methodological contribution by <i>ISFORT</i>; - debate; - adjournment of meeting. 	

The trade-union representation is provided through three German organisations, but the most important trade union accounting for over 90% of the workers is *TRANSNET*, which participated in the meeting with the Working Group.

Besides the corporate policies and trade-union guidelines, the meeting also highlighted the single positive experiments evidencing the potential change in the cultural and personnel-management aspects.

The German female representative of the Working Group thus opened her speech by highlighting that the various contributions would cover not only experiments from the various corporate sectors, but also the personal experiences of women managers, in order to understand the *DB* commitment to an equal-opportunity policy on the macro and micro level.

The trade-union viewpoint, on the other hand, highlighted a process currently under way to raise the number of women members by increasing the female representation. The *TRANSNET* statutes have recently called for the participation of women in all the trade-union bodies, in addition to the setting-up of a special Women's Section. This has led to an increase of women in the trade union, and they have now reached a percentage totalling 21% of membership.

After the initial explanations, the representatives of the various corporate sectors presented their contributions, purposely starting from the international design and social dialogue. In this regard, the need was stressed to reserve greater space to the work method typical of the Social Dialogue, in order to implement the European network and give greater emphasis to the corporate, trade-union and social policies. These latter have also resulted to be an able instrument to incentivate the right of initiative by male and female workers. In addition, it was also stressed the need to reserve greater attention to the 'equality' and 'equal opportunities' bodies.

With regard to the information sector, the importance of internal and external communication was marked as a major cultural tool to improve the corporate image and to provide information on the new employment prospects for women.

Various demonstrations were presented at the meeting. Concern for images and language, for example, has turned into an interesting publishing experience: with a gender mainstreaming approach, a magazine

selling 500,000 copies a year promotes the equal-opportunity criteria, starting from the covers reserving equal space to photos of male and female workers.

Another example is *Bahn TV*, a television channel created by the railway enterprise for its employees. It is a useful connection and information instrument for the employees, not only providing an opportunity for a continuous vocational updating, but also acting as an important means of aggregation which concomitantly bestows a strong sense of corporate membership and identity. In fact, the various railway stations and personnel offices are equipped with monitors transmitting the channel 24 hours a day, in order to facilitate continuous information to personnel and to enhance the quality of relationships with customers. It is also worthy to mention the numerous initiatives on equal opportunities. In this case as well, there is a specific focus on gender differences and on the female emancipation messages, which are considered to provide stimulus and support to cultural change. The latest example reported in the communication sector is the organisation of 'Girls Day', an open house of the railways where the young schoolgirls are invited to experience and observe at close range the life of railway workers undertaking the various technical occupations. The aim of this annual initiative is to foster the dissemination of an equality-oriented culture in the public opinion and the opening of technical occupations to women. There are highly positive effects observed above all in the creation of relationships between the world of production and the world of education; these are highly positive partnership relationships, and are particularly important with regard to the necessary cultural change needed to achieve equal opportunities.

It is worthy to point out a positive, though isolated experience in flexible working hours. A manager, transferred to Portugal for family reasons, told her story: she maintained her own level by choosing telework. This example can, in some way, be considered as a vanguard experience in the sector.

With regard to the services sector, the contributions by the managers illustrated the various opportunities for support to families, from childcare facilities to services for the elderly, as well as summer camps and holidays for children.

From the structural viewpoint, the representative of the personnel-management sector highlighted some critical points regarding the number

of women in the railway enterprise. Although the percentage of women employees is among the highest in Europe, the concentration of female resources can be recorded in sectors not belonging to the core business units, such as the commercial sectors, call centres and passenger division.

Consequently, during the processes of political unification between the former GDR and GFR, the effects of the merger of the two railway enterprises triggered a particular problem for women employees who - though with some exceptions - represented the weak link of the “chain of change”. This was substantially the position of the external collaborator of *DB AG*, a professor at the Free University of Berlin. During the debate, responding to the Working Group, he illustrated the impact of the unification processes on German society, and in particular for women.

5.2.4. The Meeting in France

The fourth meeting was held at the French railway enterprise *SNCF*. The meeting provided an important occasion for discussion between the Social Partners.

There follows a brief summary.

As a result of the specific aspects of the French context, the meeting was structured in a highly peculiar way. First of all, a meeting was held with the trade-union representatives (ETF members), who expressed the various trade-union viewpoints. Subsequently, a separate meeting was held with the employers, who illustrated in particular the equal-opportunity policies. Finally, a mixed meeting was held to enable the Working Group to interact with the Social Partners and to reach common views on specific topics.

This choice reflects the characteristics related to the complexity in the railway enterprise and the plurality in the trade unions typical of the French context, as well as the specific dialectics of the relationship between the Social Partners.

With regard to the enterprise, it is worthy to stress that recent history has been marked by some important stages. Before 1937, the French railway transport was managed both by private and public enterprises. In 1937, the enterprises were merged and *SNCF* was set up, entirely under the State control.

<p><i>Paris, 14 October 2004 (9-16)</i> <i>European Commission – Representation in France.</i></p>	
<p>Speeches by Corporate Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alain Cahen (Director-General of Human Resources) - Christine LAUTHREY (human resources department) - Didier Javazzo ('Recruitment' Department) - Francine Antoni (Director of the 'Locomotive' Plant) - Marie Paule Froment ('Social Policies' Division) - Elisabeth Schumacher (Paris 'St Lazare' Station) - Renaud Pichon ('Management of Middle-Manager Careers' Division) - Catherine Hingrez (HR Division) – reference person for the joint Equal opportunity social dialogue group 	<p>Speeches by Trade Union Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elisabeth Fiorentino (<i>CGT – Intervention Commune</i>) - Maryse Thaeron (<i>CGT – Control on Board Trains</i>) - Nelly Magnie (<i>CGT – Social Activities</i>) - Marie-Andre Puossin (<i>FO – Equipement</i>) - M.A. Poussin (<i>FO</i>) - Rosy Suchail (<i>UNSA – Job Positions</i>) - A. Potier (<i>CFTC</i>) - M. Blondel (<i>UNSA</i>) - Emmanuelle Devaux (<i>FGAAC – Train Drivers</i>) - J.M. Namy (<i>FGAAC</i>) - Danielle Sinoquet (Reference Person for the Joint 'Equal Opportunities - Social Dialogue' Group)
<p>Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - speeches by trade-union representatives; - Second Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - speeches by corporate representatives; - Third Meeting (plenary assembly): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on the research study: methodological contribution by ISFORT; - debate; - adjournment of meeting. 	

The reorganisation of the French railway enterprise followed two main phases.

The first phase provided for the transfer of the infrastructure management to a public body (*RFF*), while *SNCF* retained contracting powers.

The second phase regarded the railway-enterprise structure. A single corporate organisation was maintained, with an internal division by sectors or by specialised industrial lines.

The trade-union representation is actually provided through various organisations. The main trade unions are CGT, CFDT, FO, CFTC, UNSA, , FGAAC (all ETF members), CGC and SUD Rail, of which CGT, FO, CFTC, UNSA and FGAAC participated to the meeting with the working group.

Following the contribution by the French trade-union representative belonging to the Working Group, the first meeting focused on joint considerations as to the status of women in *SNCF*, from the point of view of the trade-union women's sections (i.e. the 'Equal Opportunities' Commission in the *CGT*; the Women's Commission of the *FO* trade union; and Women's Sections of the *UNSA* and *FGAAC*). Female representation in the trade unions reflects the presence of women in the railway enterprise, but is specifically considered by the trade unions themselves as qualifying, and thus it is enhanced through specific instruments for equal-opportunity actions and initiatives.

In particular, the following issues were furthermore discussed: reconciliation between work and family life; the subject of transversal negotiation, with incentives through the experiment of new instruments, such as inter-corporate crèches and bonuses for the families choosing to use a baby-sitter or to send their children to another crèche; the flexible working hours, which are promoted through experiments of innovative forms of part-time work (vertical, horizontal, occasional etc.), for which the same individual productivity was recorded, almost constant with respect to full-time work; and lastly maternity, which is considered by the trade unions to be an additional social value to be followed by an adequate policy for job reinsertion and management of higher risk duties.

Thereafter, there was specific focus on the topic of sexual harassment. Every year trade unions receive claims and reports on negative experiences, and stated that they are willing to undertake a joint action to exercise pressure on the corporate choices and occupational-safety policies for both men and women.

The aim of the second meeting was to directly discuss the corporate point of view. After the introductory speech by the French employers' female representative of the Working Group, some key initiatives were illustrated for an in-depth understanding of the *SNCF* policy guidelines aimed at better enhancing the female resources.

First of all, the Director-General of Human Resources stressed the need for a mixed working team composed of female and male members. He stated that there were three types of important corporate policy actions to be implemented: 1) a hiring policy orientated towards equal opportunities; 2) the implementation of reconciliation between work and family life; 3) the improvement of all working conditions, including health and hygiene, and also working relationships between men and women.

With regard to the first point, an excellent action is the hiring policy subdivided by objectives. Eradicating the old principle of hiring by quotas, the aim is to promote the hiring of women and the integration of the existing personnel in order to improve the position of women. With a view to solve the problem of female under-representation on its personnel, the French railway enterprise has implemented a detailed objective-based policy, and every year the enterprise adopts a Qualitative Plan on Hiring to guide the various corporate business units towards job-insertion policies, through specific recommendations that must be followed for hiring new personnel. Current guidelines are directed towards the implementation not only of technical and professional occupations, but also of commercial and customer-related occupations such as those linked to on-board security services and assistance services for train crew.

Other corporate initiatives regard the job insertion of newly hired women for the enhancement of resources and for the promotion of a productive, neutral and non-conflicting labour climate.

On the corporate level as well, there has been observed concern for the problems related to the reconciliation between work and family life. In this regard, besides commitment to allocate subsidies and benefits for families with young children, there are various facilities for the care and assistance of the elderly and employees' children.

We should note a constant increase of parental-leave applications by the workers. This indicates a positive trend towards a cultural change leading to a major balance between work and family commitments.

With regard to career progress, the person in charge of the sector for the professional growth of middle managers stressed that there is a “highly potential programme” providing for approximately 30% of women workers. As a result of this programme, in the coming years there is expected to be a substantial increase in the number of women managers. Some critical points in this field regard the promotions of women for the ‘Plant Manager’ profile. The constraint of not renouncing the position in the subsequent three years leads many women not to accept it at all, thereby preferring other more specific, but less significant positions such as the ‘Project Manager’ profile.

The third section of the day was dedicated to debate.

The Working Group suggested four main topics of discussion. The first topic regarded communication: examining the experiments conducted in the other three partner countries, the participants were asked to reflect on how to manage language, and to assess the principle of neutrality for a better external image and a more acceptable internal working climate. This led to a new conclusion accepted by both the Social Partners, who agreed on this specific aspect, particularly fundamental for the railway enterprise, agreeing with the suggestion by the Working Group to utilise, as an example, the UNESCO guidelines for gender neutrality.

The second topic concerned the recruitment of new employees. In particular, the discussion regarded the difference between hiring policies subdivided by quotas and concrete objectives, with specific reference not only to the need to establish initial hiring criteria, but also to consider the general public so as to maintain a continuous direct contact with job-seekers themselves.

Another closely related aspect is the relationship between the country’s training and education institutions and the operational situation of the railways. The employers’ and employees’ representatives stressed the need for a continuous dialogue with the world of education, especially in relation to a new equal-opportunity culture, which should ensure that the new generations have positive benefits affecting the common mentality and the world of work.

Before adjourning, the meeting discussed the improvement of working conditions and the reconciliation between work and family life together with general aspects involving an extensive debate. In this regard, the

employers' representatives quoted the results of a recent study confirming their motivations in the choices by the railway enterprise on newly hired young male and female workers; these motivations are the mobility and the possibility of choosing between different work environments (being a major enterprise with remarkable job opportunities), the opportunities for reconciliation, and lastly occupational safety. All the above indicates that although the path towards equal opportunities is still uphill, the joint commitment of enterprises and trade unions can be considered as moving in the right direction.

5.2.5. *The Meeting in Hungary*

The fifth meeting was held at the Hungarian railway enterprise *MAV*. The meeting was an important occasion for discussion between the Social Partners and for the exchange of good practices.

There follows a brief summary.

<i>Budapest, 12 November 2004 (9-15)</i> <i>MAV.</i>	
Speeches by Corporate Representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Vass (International Department) - Mr. Szűcs ('Human Resource' Directorate) - Ms. Zsiros (Person in Charge of the 'HR Planning' Directorate) 	Speeches by Trade Union Representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Varga (<i>VSZ</i>) - Ms. Hercegh (<i>VSZ</i> - Person in Charge of the Women's Section) - Ms. Tooth (<i>VDSZSZ</i>) - Ms. Tamás (<i>VDSZSZ</i>)
Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - speeches by the corporate representatives; - speeches by the trade-union representatives; - focus on the research study: methodological contribution by <i>ISFORT</i>; - debate; - adjournment of meeting. 	

The meeting was organised jointly with the trade-union and corporate representatives. The climate of the meeting was very positive and enabled the Working Group to come into close contact with a situation undergoing substantial change since the end of the communist period, the affirmation of the Western free market model and the new entry of Hungary in the European Union.

The Hungarian State-owned Railways underwent a significant restructuring process throughout the 1990s. Until the fall of the communist regime, the railways were managed on the basis of autarchy and centralisation, as was the case for all the State-owned enterprises. Since the period 1989-1990, a major role has been attributed to the market principles, and work was rationalised and made more productive, with a consequent sharp reduction of personnel (in 1989, the workforce in the Hungarian Railways was three times the current level). It is also worthy to mention the launching of a process centred on the outsourcing of those activities not strictly connected with the railway transport (i.e. railway-network maintenance).

MAV is a State-owned enterprise organised in centrally-managed specialised business units. Currently, a regional organisation of the railway enterprise is being considered, however the plan has not yet been completed.

The trade-union representation is provided through various organisations. The most important trade unions are *VSZ* and *VDSZSZ*, which participated in the meeting with the Working Group.

The meeting provided an opportunity to survey a situation completely different from the one observed in the countries already visited, and on this occasion a panorama characterised by the current changes, the resources and the problems related to this highly important transition phase was accurately depicted.

The first section of the meeting was dedicated to information on the corporate situation. The corporate representatives, with a detailed report using audiovisual material, showed the Working Group the peculiarities of the Hungarian employment situation together with the situation of the personnel working in the railway enterprise.

From the structural viewpoint, it was observed that the high percentage of women employees was not accompanied by a fair female presence in the various corporate departments. As in the rest of Europe, the presence of

women workers is concentrated in non-core business units and involves the intermediate professional levels where the wages of women are lower than the wages of men.

In 2002, the 'Equal Opportunities' Commission was set up, operating since 2004 under a national law. The objectives of this body are: 1) to suggest instruments for the reconciliation between work and family life; 2) to improve working conditions for all employees, both men and women; 3) to aim to remove any gender discrimination, either direct or indirect; 4) to aim to promote cultural change through various training and promotion instruments.

The critical points regarding women workers, illustrated by the speakers participating in the meeting, can be grouped into two main fields. First of all it is worthy to mention the problems regarding the application of new contractual forms: flexibility, in fact, still produces a number of negative effects in the calculation of pensions and leads to the rigidity of the instruments for reconciliation, which lack adequate contributions and forms of basic protection.

Secondly, the participants furthermore discussed on the problems related with the corporate restructuring process which, leading to a high number of dismissals, especially female, and to the reorganisation of personnel and careers, is not taking into due account previous experience and individual needs.

The path being followed by the Hungarian railway enterprise is very complex and has led to the dismantling of all the services and opportunities previously offered to the male and female employees. Crèches, facilities for assistance and leisure time as well as family benefits were an integral part of the accessory services providing for a better reconciliation between work and family life.

The same situation was illustrated by the trade-union representatives, who expressed some urgent needs: 1) to promote the reconciliation between work and family life by a specific plan of flexibility actions; 2) to protect women who return after pregnancy through occupational-integration courses to counter the tendency of many women workers to leave work after having children; 3) to make changes and promote the culture of equal opportunities at all levels, not only for women, but also for all the minorities and the disabled.

Upon request by the Working Group, the debate was opened to highlight other important critical points.

First of all, there is the difficulty in access to the technical occupations by women workers. According to the selection procedures, but above all to safety regulations, women cannot easily enter the technical occupations. Whereas instead, a restructuring process is currently under way in the infrastructure and mechanical sectors, leading within a reasonable amount of time to the modernisation of rolling stock and railway network, with the consequent improvement of overall working conditions. This will also apply to the technical occupations, which should become more easily accessible for all, both men and women.

Secondly, the meeting discussed the problems common to all the personnel living with very low salaries and at the risk of further reductions due to strict economic conditions. The trade-union battle to obtain a minimum wage has much broader social repercussions, and directly affects the standards of living of average Hungarian families. In the common view, in fact, work in the railways is only an opportunity for women to earn the second salary in their family, and cannot be the sole source of family earnings. This entails evident repercussions on the opportunities for female economic independence, above all for single-parent families.

A number of joint actions emerged from the debate, including the commitment by the Railway's 'Equal Opportunities' Commission - also supported by the new rules currently in effect - to actions aimed at raising the awareness of corporate social responsibility with the support of the trade unions.

5.2.6. The Meeting in Poland

The last meeting was held at the Polish railway enterprise *PKP*. The meeting was an important occasion for discussion between the Social Partners and for the exchange of good practices.

There follows a brief summary.

The meeting was held at *CS*, the *PKP* training enterprise, with a highly interactive procedure that involved the Working Group in a constructive dialogue with the Social Partners.

<p><i>Warsaw, 26 January 2005 (9-15)</i> <i>CS Training & Consulting LTD.</i></p>	
<p>Speeches by Corporate Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Barbara Stachurska (Representative of CS – PKP Group) - Ms. Lucyna Roszyk (Board Office Director of PKP Headquarters) - Ms. Teresa Hebda Synowska (Deputy Director of Human Resources - PKP CARGO S.A.) - Ms. Barbara Rozenek (Director of Human Resources – PKP Intercity) - Mr. Szczesniak (Director of Human Resources – PKP Energetyka) - Mr. Tadeusz Renclawowicz (Director of Human Resources – PKP Information Technology) - Ms. Ewa Gabryjonczyk (Person in Charge of the HR Department - PKP) 	<p>Speeches by Trade Union Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Kedzierski (President – Federation of PKP Employees) - Ms. Berenhard (Vice-President - Federation of PKP Employees) - Ms. Grażyna Kędzierska (Person in Charge of the Regional Section –Federation) - Mr. Zawadzki (Person in Charge of the Regional Section – Solidarnosc) - Ms. Grażyna Sadowska (Person in Charge of the Regional Section – Solidarność)
<p>Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming speeches; - speech on the general situation by the CS representative; - focus on the research study: methodological contribution by ISFORT; - debate (in two sections); - adjournment of meeting. 	

The Working Group was informed on the difficulties of the Polish situation, the efforts, weaknesses and local resources in this delicate period of change.

PKP Group was established in 2001 as a result of restructuring of the State-Owned Enterprise “Polish State Railways”. The company *PKP* S.A. plays a dominant role in *PKP* Group apart from operating enterprises that as parts of *PKP* Group serving markets of both passenger and freight services as well as these related to rail infrastructure. Main operators dealing with passenger services are *PKP* Intercity Ltd, *PKP* Regional Services Ltd, *PKP* Fast Regional Rail in Tri-City Ltd (*PKP* SKM Ltd), *PKP* Warsaw Commuter Rail Ltd (*PKP* WKD Ltd), while in case of freight services these are *PKP* CARGO Joint Stock Company (*PKP* CARGO S.A.) and *PKP* Broad-Gauge Metallurgical Line (*PKP* LHS Ltd). Finally such enterprises as *PKP* Polish Railway Lines Joint Stock Company (*PKP* PLK S.A.), *PKP* Power Engineering Ltd, *PKP* Information Technology Ltd and Railway Telecommunication Ltd are connected with rail infrastructure.

Regarding property, fixed assets in kind (total) owned by *PKP* Group amounted to PLN 20.5 bn at the end of 2003. Railway lines, structures together with attached land and rolling stock to perform passenger and freight services represented their core part.

In 2003, the employment restructuring process was continued within *PKP* Group aiming at adjustment of its level to current tasks assigned to the enterprises of *PKP* Group in connection with changing market and quality demands. Employment size in the enterprises of *PKP* Group as of 31 December 2003 decreased by 3.5 % in comparison with figures for 31 December 2002.

The trade-union representation is provided through various organisations. Currently, the *PKP* Group boasts 28 trade unions. They account for approximately 75% of total employees. The largest trade unions are as follows: *Federation* (33,200 members) and “*Solidarność*” (32,000 members).

The first section of the meeting was thus dedicated to the presentation of the *PKP* employment situation by examining the corporate structural data subdivided by gender. It can be observed that the large number of women in the railway enterprise is not balanced between the sectors, occupations and levels: besides a consistent female representation in the services, marketing, customer relations, training sectors as well as in the personnel-management company (holding), the women mainly occupy medium-low positions and are older than their European female colleagues due, probably, to a significant fall in the number of new women employees.

In other words, the same phenomena pointed out in all the meetings emerged with different procedures and more precisely: the under-representation of women in some geographical areas, the so-called “glass ceiling”, the difficulties in reconciling work and family life, and the existence of a gender wage gap.

The process linked to restructuring and the sharp reduction of personnel, however, is affecting women to the same extent as men. The only difference regards retirement: women are obliged by law to retire at a lower age than their male colleagues, and thus have a lower pension. This means that in older households there are real economic difficulties, often due to an insufficient pension, especially for widows and widowers.

After the methodological and technical presentation with a focus on the Project’s results, the meeting was largely devoted to the collective debate. The European female experts asked the trade unions to intervene and indicate to the Working Group the procedures by which the trade-union organisations take part in bargaining and in defending workers’ rights with regard to the position of women. A representative of the trade-union *Federation* evidenced two priorities regarding the weaker and more at-risk categories. These latter are: young women workers with young children, since the low wages in the intermediate positions occupied by most women often require them to undertake a second job in order to add to their income; and the older women obliged to retire early with lower pensions.

The trade unions thus have major objectives to sustain the rights of women workers: the reconciliation between work and family life and flexible working hours together with wage claims.

With regard to the first point, the debate highlighted the lack of legislation for flexible working time: the lack of adequate rules does not provide for an increase in hiring, nor the possible reconciliation between work and family life. In order to set forth guidelines to enhance the institutional pressure for the regulation concerning flexible working hours, the Working Group explained the positive and negative experiments regarding the introduction of new types of employment contracts, thus highlighting the risks, and not only the opportunities, for women.

The exchange of experience was extensive in this regard, and all the participants aspired to govern the processes of change with a gender mainstreaming approach.

With regard to the second point, the Social Partners agreed on the principle of corporate social responsibility, especially in view of a common European path leading to a gradual reduction of the welfare state. In this regard, we should recall the experience accrued in recent years by the *PKP* 'Re-employment' Division for the requalification of dismissed personnel. This highly positive experience consists in mapping the skills pertaining to the dismissed personnel and in creating a tailor-made path for growth, updating and training in order to re-employ skilled personnel. The activity proved to be successful for 47% of the dismissed personnel.

Chapter 6

FOCUS ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1. Positive Actions (good practices)

In recent years, the European labour market has been characterised by a greater pressure "for entry" by the female component, thus producing a constant increase of both the activity and employment rate. Despite this general trend, the increase in the female component and women's participation in the production system are still characterised by the exclusion and discrimination phenomena in some particular occupations. The career paths of women lack "equal opportunities" with respect to men, especially because the choices of women are still seriously conditioned by the contrast between work and family life. In particular, women continue to face specific problems in *access to the labour market, in career progress and in wage parity*.

The implementation of the European directives dealing with the 'status of women' has led the enterprises to plan a series of internal actions for the development and integration of female employment. Although this initiative has not completely eliminated the existing barriers, the results are in any case interesting, not only to identify the critical areas but also for the definition of future measures for integration and equal opportunities.

The analysis of the activities currently planned to achieve the objectives of equal opportunity and occupational integration of women in the European railways is undoubtedly a suitable launching pad to identify the most effective common strategies in the sector.

On end we show the cases of four significant railways enterprises of the represented Countries of the project working group.

Fact-sheet of ITALY

Actions, activities and organisms to realize equality opportunities in Ferrovie dello Stato Group.

As a result of a variety of circumstances, the Italian Railways have historically been a male-oriented enterprise, with regard to both the type of work (highly technical and based on shifts) and the image of the railwayman.

On the one hand, this leads to the under-representation of women from the quantitative point of view, limited to 10% of total employees, and on the other to the organisation of the work which fails to take into account the needs expressed, above all by women workers, specifically for the reconciliation of work and family life. To this aspect, we should add the need to overcome cultural factors and education, which even today negatively influence young women in their approach to the railway world.

With the inclusion in the National Collective Labour Contract (*CCNL*) of EEC Recommendation 635/84, in 1987 the Railway Enterprise established an Observatory on the Status of Women, consisting of management and trade-union representatives.

With the 1991 National Law (Law 125/91) setting up equality organisations at all public and private workplaces, the Railway Enterprise established the first 'Bilateral Equivalency Committee' ('Equal Opportunities' Committee - *CPO*) organised on a regional basis, with the task of defending and enhancing female employment and promoting positive actions for women.

The various *CCNL* contracts applied over time have brought about some changes in the Committee. Under the most recent National Collective Labour Contract signed on 16 April 2003, there are now two contractual levels: the first one for railway activities, and the second one for the 'FS Group' enterprises. In Art. 3 of this latter contract, the *CPO* must have a balanced representation of the signatory *FS* Group enterprises and trade unions, and must remain in office for the duration of the contract.

According to the functional regulations, every year the regional *CPO* committees must draw up an activity plan with the co-ordination of the national *CPO*, which forwards it to the Social Partners together with its own plan.

Every year, the *FS* Group assigns a budget and some hours of leave to undertake these activities, considered as service time. In recent years, the *CPO*'s activity has focused on:

- information. An information brochure has been disseminated to all the railway personnel, and to the women only (approximately 10,000) a more detailed text on the topic of equal opportunities has been distributed with a floppy-guide. Periodical meetings have taken place to present the *CPO*'s activities, while the corporate and trade-union magazines reported all the activities implemented;
- training. In the context of ordinary in-company training, courses have been undertaken on equal opportunities for newly-hired men and women and specific initiatives have been implemented under projects co-financed on the national level. Similarly, on the trade-union level the topics of equal opportunities have been deeply covered in specific courses;
- positive actions. A series of local and national projects have been designed and implemented upon proposal by the *CPO* Committees, largely with the support of public funding. These projects are focused on various fields, including research, training, communication, IT, safety, as well as the design of actions eligible for funding through the EU Funds, and lastly, skills audit. In particular, these positive-action projects have promoted the insertion of women in technologically advanced professional sectors (“The Development of New Professional Female Profiles for the Future Railways”); endowed on-board female employees involved in the more risky work situations with legal skills, psychological and physical abilities and operational instruments to best face critical situations (“Security and Self-Confidence”); developed information on occupational safety with particular reference to regulations so as to protect women’s health (“Alice I and II”); and promoted reconciliation between work and family life through a ‘crèche’ project (“Gicolavorando & Lavorogiocando”) and a project designed for the reinsertion of male and female workers who are absent for paternity/maternity leave.

Remarkable national and local research projects have been conducted to analyse the status of women in the job context; among these projects we can recall “L'altra metà delle Ferrovie” (The Other Half of the Railways), “Libero Transito” (Free Transit), “M&M – Sicurezza,

mobbing e molestie” (M&M - Safety, Mobbing and Harassment), “L.O.V. – Lavoro-Orario-Vita” (Employment, Working Hours and Living Conditions), “Competenze per Competere” (Skills to Compete).

The project has had particular impact and received European funding through the “Leonardo da Vinci” Programme, considering the extensive involvement of women in the bargaining phase. To this, we should add the participation of the CPO Committee in a corporate initiative to identify innovative ideas among personnel [“Innovare per Migliorare” (Innovate to Improve)]; the latter initiative received a prize as the best proposal.

Currently, in the context of positive actions also aimed at protecting mental and physical health, an initiative will take place throughout 2005, involving a campaign for cancer care and prevention for male and female workers entitled “Opportunità Salute” (Health Opportunity);

- the defence of workers’ rights. The Equal Opportunities Committees (CPO) work for the respect of national law and collective agreements for male and female workers in working environments, to carry out european directives, such as parental leaves;
- the ‘equal opportunities’ network. The CPO Committees participate actively on the local level in the networks of the equality organisations and institutions to make proposals, to set up partnerships for multi-actor projects, and to exchange good practices.

Fact-sheet of AUSTRIA

Basic principles for the implementation of equal opportunities in the company:

- procedure on the equal treatment of female and male employees at the Austrian Federal Railways;
- guidelines on the legal treatment of part time salaried employees at the Austrian Federal Railways;
- guidelines on the granting of parental leave.

Corporate particularities influencing the equal treatment of female and male employees in the Austrian Federal Railways:

Maternity Protection Act:

- unconditional employment prohibition (maternity protection limit) for pregnant women eight weeks before and eight weeks after giving birth (twelve weeks in case of a caesarean or multiple birth);
- upon notice of pregnancy, employees working in transport vehicles may no longer be engaged in that activity. They must be offered substitute work;
- during unconditional employment prohibition, the mother to be receives a weekly allowance (ÖBB employees with civil servant status continue to be paid their regular salary by the employer, other ÖBB employees receive a weekly allowance from the health insurance) of the amount of the average payment of the 13 weeks prior to beginning of maternity leave.

Maternity leave according to the Maternity Protection Act and the Paternity Leave Act

- Legal entitlement to maternity leave up to a maximum of two years from the birth of the child.
- Parents are free to decide when and which parent goes on parental leave, it is subject to a minimum period of three months, and the parents may take turns twice. When taking turns for the first time, both parents can go on parental leave together for one month. Furthermore, a so-called shifted paternal leave can be mutually agreed on, i.e. that three months can be deferred until the end of the child's seventh year or until the child starts attending school. The duration of parental leave is consequently reduced to the 21st month after the birth of the child.
- A parent is entitled (there is no legal entitlement, an agreement with the employer or through the labour court is necessary) to part time work until the end of the child's fourth year. If the parent also goes on parental leave or shares parental leave with the other parent, the duration of parental leave is reduced correspondingly (two years of parental leave = four years of part time employment). Reduction of the working time to a minimum of 2/5 of ordinary working time.

- The guarantees that the job position of the parents is safeguarded after the end of parental leave or part time employment.
- Protection against dismissal during parental leave and the subsequent four months thereafter.
- Child rearing allowance (since 2002 the family allowance is not linked to prior employment) of the amount of € 14.53 per day up to the 30th life month of the child. There is an extra income limit of € 14,600.

Equal Opportunities – positive actions

- ÖBB Planung & Engineering (technical division of the Austrian Railways) was awarded with “Equality Inside” in December 2004. “Equality Inside” is a special award in Total E-Quality/Gender Mainstreaming based on the key data in business processes. “Equality Inside” guarantees the permanent work with equality and Gender Mainstreaming topics in monitoring and controlling systems. The Gender Mainstreaming-Management is part of the Quality Management System. ÖBB Planung & Engineering is the biggest business division with an “Equality Inside”-Award in Austria.
- The Austrian Railway is the first Railway in middle Europe with a report in sustainability. The report was established from the ÖBB-Umweltmanagement, the environment division of the Austrian Railway, in 2004. One of the main focus of this report is the chapter about sustained staff management (human resource management) based on Gender Mainstreaming. Beside: ÖBB-Umweltmanagement was the first division of the Austrian Railways with a Total E-Quality analyse work in 2002.
- At least the enterprise Austrian Railway takes part on the “Girls day” since 2003. The idea and initiative of the “Girls day” is coming from U.S.A. On this day enterprises have the possibility to give schoolgirls a picture of the enterprise (see also: “Girls day” in Germany).

Fact-sheet of GERMANY

Measures to support the opportunities of women at Deutsche Bahn AG

Deutsche Bahn AG has been actively supporting equal opportunities since 1991. Since we were (and are) convinced of our measures, we were one of the first companies in Germany to subject ourselves to external certification. We are proud to have been in possession of the Total E-Quality rating since 1998. It has been possible to regain this successfully every three years since then.

In addition to equal opportunities for men and women, we actively pursue a diversity policy. We wish to reflect the diversity of society in our company. It is only in this way that we are able to respond to our customers' requirements. Deutsche Bahn AG's staff therefore comprises "young" people and "old" people, men and women, disabled persons and non-disabled persons, people with different religious orientations, people of different nationalities, homosexuals and heterosexuals. We received the Max-Spohr Prize for our diversity programmes in October 2004. This means we are the third-largest company in Germany with this certification.

(1) Part-time work and teleworking

The possibilities of making working hours and the place of work more flexible can provide a very considerable contribution towards the compatibility of profession and family. For the majority of members of DB AG staff, it is only more flexible working hours that can be considered since all operations-related activities such as those of train-attendants, service, ticket sales or train drivers cannot be performed as teleworking. Since 1998, there has been a legal claim in the collective agreement to an individualised reduction of working hours and a right to return to full-time working. Also the collective agreement concerning teleworking was signed in 2001.

Part-time work was subject to prejudices in Germany as well. In order to increase acceptability, all internal jobs with reduced working hours have been advertised since 1998. In addition, there are numerous campaigns dealing with information and promotion. Individualised models and legal provisions form part of brochures and articles.

Although we know that the individualised reduction of working hours is predominantly taken advantage of by women, men also have the right to the reduction and this is in keeping with societal developments. Men no

longer wish to be responsible only for the financial security of their families. They wish to take an active role in the upbringing of their children. At the same time, part-time work gains greater acceptability when it is made use of by men as well.

Making working hours more flexible means that both sides must be flexible. Working particular days or weeks can also make compatibility more easy. Numerous, positive examples show that this can even be more sensible than working 4 hours a day when the journey times to the workplace are long.

(2) Support with childcare

For many families, childcare presents a particular challenge. Shift work and a lack of regional providers make the situation more difficult. We support our employees in looking for suitable childcare by means of a partnership with an external service provider. This service provider advises the parents individually concerning the most suitable form of childcare for them. In doing so, the necessary times of care, the ages of the children, the financial possibilities of the families and the regional conditions are taken into consideration.

When the family has decided on a particular care offer, our contract partner assists with the search. The advice provided and the search are free of charge for our employees.

We offer childcare for emergencies with the aid of service providers at eight major locations. This service is used when the childminder falls ill or prolonged periods of care are necessary because of business hours/trips.

In the school holidays, our Bahn-Sozial-Werk [Railway Staff Social Services] has offers for looking after schoolchildren. These offers address the children's interests and are affordable for the parents.

(3) Looking after family members in need of care

We also offer support from external service providers to members of our railway staff with family members in need of care. We arrange cleaning services, the provision of food, private care services and places in homes. Since predominantly women are responsible for the old and the ill in the family, we give them the opportunity in this way of actively remaining in their professional life.

(4) Girls' Day

Since 2001, Girls' Day has been held in Germany on a day in April. All companies are called upon to show girls aged between 10 and 16 technical professions. The objective is to arouse the girls' interest for professions with prospects. Deutsche Bahn has participated from the very beginning. In each of the years 2003 and 2004, 1,000 girls were able to have a look behind the scenes. They visited signal boxes, prepared timetables, drove in the traction-unit simulator, and visited maintenance depots and marshalling yards. They showed a great deal of interest and were quite able to imagine having such a profession.

(5) Conflict management

When people work with each other, they all bring along different opinions, objectives and experience. This can lead to conflicts. When women enter into so-called "male domains", conflicts can arise because of the handed-down understanding of roles and prejudices alone. We see conflicts as a challenge and are convinced that professional conflict management is necessary. For this reason, our internal service providers for education and health offer mediation, discussion leadership, training sessions and counselling. Our brochure published in 2004 provided explanations of the different forms of disagreement through to conflicts and also information on the supporting offers.

(6) Communications/Media

The media exert a very significant influence on people's opinions. By means of targeted campaigns for the equal status of women at DB AG, we achieve a higher acceptability of women in all DB AG professions. We use customer magazines, DB AG television, the staff newspaper, executive staff information, the Internet and our Intranet to portray women in atypical professions. We take care that women are depicted or get a chance to speak just as often as men. Anti-women or even sexist representations are prohibited.

Fact-sheet of FRANCE

Equal Opportunities in SNCF

For some years, *SNCF* has been increasingly involved in the promotion of professional equality between men and women within its railway services. Non-discrimination is an essential principle playing an active role in the *SNCF* HR management, and more precisely in hiring, continuing training, vocational promotion and wages.

Beyond this principle, increasing the number of female employees in the railway enterprise and in the various professional positions represents an important goal in the field of Human Resources. Likewise, in recent years the number of female employees on staff has grown considerably.

While female personnel formed 16% of the total people hired in 1995, this rate then reached 23% in 2003.

For an enterprise like *SNCF*, in which the role of the technical and operational professions is extremely significant, the intention for greater opportunities specifically for women is nevertheless in contrast with a number of difficulties linked to the very nature of the labour market, i.e. the small number of women attending State technical schools, the small number of spontaneous applications of young women outside the sales sector, and the small number of women willing to accept shifts (3x8) and 1- or 2-day transfers.

This is why in the year 2000 *SNCF* adopted a 'Quality Hiring Plan' defining the main guidelines for identifying both the profiles and characteristics adopted for hiring personnel.

An important component of this action plan is dedicated to the aim of increasing the presence of women in the various occupations in the *SNCF* Railway Enterprise and, where possible, to the search for a better balance between male and female workers. For this reason:

- there has been a marked rise in the number of women for the professional profiles related to the commercial sector (in stations and on trains);
- there has likewise been a significant trend towards the increase in the number of women in the professional positions more specifically linked to the railway sector such as “traffic personnel” (employees with the task of operating switches), with 18% of women hired in 2003.

On the other hand, some occupations remain a mainly male prerogative, such as those requiring greater physical strength (e.g., shunting activities).

Train driving also remains a mainly male-dominated occupation, with between 1% and 2% of drivers being women.

Despite the communication campaigns for hiring and for offering opportunities to both male and female employees, new actions are required to modify the perception of some job categories.

By way of principle, we will seek to provide better information on the diversity and interest of the *SNCF* professional profiles on the labour market and among students. This should take place as early as possible, e.g. throughout the student's general or vocational educational pathway.

This initiative falls within the context of partnerships encompassing both schools and public employment services.

The *SNCF* furthermore promotes its activities and jobs in the universities and in the “grandes écoles”. In this regard, it should be pointed out that the percentage of female employees in corporate management has risen over recent years (34% of women hired in 2003). Over the future years, this trend will involve a greater number of women in the various corporate levels.

With regard to the working conditions in the railway enterprise and the possible alternatives of managing them, *SNCF* has adopted two different approaches:

- the first approach aims to develop part-time work in the various corporate sectors. The collective contract signed with the trade unions in 2000 extended the opportunities for part-time work, which is therefore now possible outside the administrative and commercial sectors, i.e. the only sectors where this type of employment was long applied. It is useful to note that the formulas for the “choice of part-time work” allow employees to opt for rates of between 50% and 91.4% of the normal working hours, thus reducing the working day or offering additional “free” days. In most cases, part-time contracts are signed for a year and are renewable by an agreement between the employee and the employer;
- the second approach, undoubtedly the more problematic, concerns a key issue for some occupations, mostly the technical ones, i.e. the adaptation of the work environment, including the items of comfort available on the job, developed by the railway enterprise through

appropriate programmes so as to improve the working conditions (e.g., renovation of lodgings for on-board staff, sanitary facilities, modernisation of work uniforms, etc.).

The railway enterprise intends to continue its efforts for gradually increasing the number of female staff. These efforts are based on the conviction that both diversity and greater parity between personnel can contribute to improve the professional relationships in the enterprise and the quality of the relationships between the railway enterprise and its customers. Substantially, this also means the improved quality of the services offered.

In accordance with the law, the topic of professional equality between men and women is discussed every year with the trade unions:

- in the Corporate Works Council at the *SNCF* top management level;
- in the 23 Regional Corporate Works Councils.

As for 2005, the dialogue with the trade unions has already been planned in view of the negotiation of a Corporate Collective Contract on balanced gender participation in the workforce and on professional equality.

Finally, in October 2004, Louis GALLOIS, Chairman of *SNCF*, together with 40 other corporate managers, signed a “Charter of Diversity” to confirm his commitment in favour of a cultural, ethnic and social diversity.

6.2. Critical points (obstacles to be removed)

The first obstacle to overcome is cultural. There is a lack of full awareness that a greater female component in the railway enterprise could lead to the improvement not only of the working conditions, but also of corporate efficiency together with the quality of products and services. We need only to analyse the final reports of the railway enterprises that have adopted equal-opportunity policies to recall the improvements that could be implemented, improvements which could benefit all the workers, without gender discrimination.

The second most widespread problem observed in the experiments analysed regards the low number of women workers in the technical occupations (drivers, shunters and maintenance personnel, etc.). The railway enterprises justify this aspect first of all by stressing the "male" characteristics of these occupations, involving physical and professional requisites that women seldom possess. Technological developments (e.g., in rolling stock) and a better work organisation actually enable us to overcome most of the physical requisites which now discourage or completely prevent access by women to these occupations. An updating of the selection criteria, adjusting these to the female characteristics, would thus be desirable to foster future women workers for these jobs as well. Secondly, it has been stated that there are not many women, for example among drivers, due to the working hours and shifts. However, it is also true that the percentage of women involved in on-board tasks, which are subject to most of the same organisational constraints as drivers, is actually quite good. The topic is thus controversial, however it has been suggested that a specific survey can be conducted.

A third highly problematic area emerged during the targeted meetings regards wage discrimination, which affects the job satisfaction of women workers and leads to eventually leaving the job. The different wage levels between male and female workers are often caused by additional items in the worker wages, linked to overtime, night shifts, etc. (women workers are less willing to accept this flexibility due to the problems of reconciliation with family life).

It is actually a sort of "vicious circle". Until we manage to overcome "sector distinction" in the occupations, it will be hard to achieve wage equality. Women will continue to undertake administrative and office tasks, which usually do not include the additional wage benefits typical of the more "difficult" train jobs, and this wage gap may not be overcome.

The fourth critical point common to the various countries is the difficulty - often mentioned - encountered by women in reconciling work and family life. In some cases, the enterprises have jointly planned and regulated flexibility instruments, which are, however, considered 'harmful' for career progress and for gender equality rights. Women do not want to be forced to choose between professional gratifications and opportunities on the one hand, and the possibility of dedicating the necessary time to their family and children on the other. Furthermore, there is also the issue which many existing contracts do not actually solve it in practice, because

the enterprises believe that these contracts negatively affect work productivity and thus corporate efficiency as a whole. Even where there is a contract guarantee, there is a concealed but real discrimination. For example, parental leave does not guarantee that women workers maintain their original job once they return to work. Moreover, women workers often fail to use the flexibility instruments aimed for a better reconciliation of work and family life due to the fear of being penalised in their career paths or even in maintaining their job. This perception is especially marked in the enterprises currently undergoing a restructuring process, as it leads to the reduction of personnel.

Finally, further serious critical points have been identified as to mobbing and sexual harassment. During the meetings, various trade unions have stated they have received reports by women workers who affirmed they have undergone mobbing and sexual harassment. As a result of these reports, there is an obvious need to guarantee means for support and protection of the victims.

In general, the forms of discrimination that still exist - sometimes due to lack of regulations and contract clauses, and sometimes due to poor application of regulations and contracts - do not only regard women but also the weak and disadvantaged categories. Therefore, the women workers in the European railway enterprises aim to promote equal-opportunity and job protection policies extendible to all workers. The female workers do not consider themselves to be a "category to protect" and do not ask for privileges, but demand the same professional chances and opportunities that even today are in large part provided for male workers.

6.3. Proposals and Suggestions of Equal Opportunities Path

During the meetings, various proposals emerged to ensure the occupational integration of women and to promote equal opportunities in the railway sector. The new European guidelines on equal opportunities have only been partly implemented in the railway sector, where - as we have

observed - there are still cultural stereotypes and systems of rules (e.g., physical requisites and *educational qualifications*) that discourage or even prevent access by women to some occupations with a high technical and engineering content. There is actually much room for improvement for real equal opportunities at work within the railway enterprises and this regards the various aspects of training, organisation and communication.

The starting point in these proposals is the widespread awareness of a low level of self-esteem among the *young women, and, for some occupations, the absence of a "female reference model"*, and consequently the need to intervene, in general, in family education. So, educational choices often originate in parental conditioning where the real abilities of the person and *individual preferences* are completely ignored. More often the parents choose their children's school or work. Cultural advancement, called for *unanimously*, should involve the families, starting from the education provided to their children.

Three stages have been identified to act on the self-esteem of women workers: first of all, recognising the differences of individuals, then creating or facilitating the conditions for real gender integration, and finally defining the specific needs of women.

In order to implement this path, various actions have been identified and proposed, with two basic levels of approach.

- firstly, a "system-based approach", focused on the so-called "gender mainstreaming", i.e., the principle that the topic of equal opportunities is not a separate issue to be limited to a sector, but must *be* an integral component of the work organisation and employment policies *in general, and must be integrated* in corporate organisation and policies (training, communication, professional growth, organisation, personnel selection and so on);
- secondly, there is the "targeted" approach in the context of instruments *to be created* and specific "things to do", in order to reach a certain objective (instruments for the elimination of wage inequality, instruments to support the reconciliation of work and family life, the objectives of increasing female employment in the enterprises and so on).

There follow some lists of the potential "things to do", distinguishing between the two levels, according to the indications emerging in the *debate unfolded during the project in the Working Group and during the meetings*

with the partners. This is a sufficiently long, but certainly not exhaustive list of the actions to be undertaken. In particular, some implementation paths are required to render the suggestions made here operative.

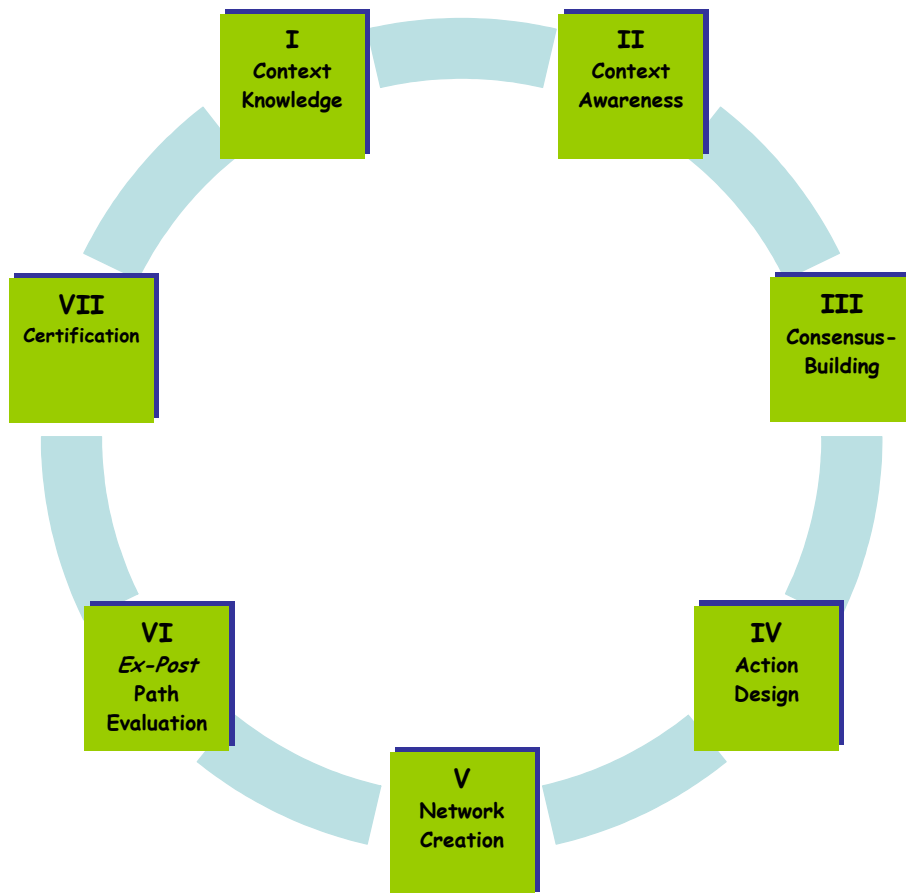
- *Communication and Language* as marketing instruments aimed at improving the corporate image, both external and internal, thus overcoming the male-oriented stereotype. In some countries, actions have been promoted for raising awareness in a language so as to achieve gender mainstreaming, and communications activities have been also fostered to disseminate the image of female railway workers.
- *Training and Updating* of workers to allow them equal conditions and career opportunities as well as to improve the culture of equal opportunities. The corporate representatives have encountered a common difficulty in attracting young university or post-secondary education graduates since they have a negative opinion of railway work and of the railways themselves, often because they are dissatisfied customers. It is widely believed that forming a link with the upper secondary schools/universities and the railway system could solve the problems concerning personnel selection. The young people would be able to acquire initial work experience before completing their studies, effectively assessing the corporate situation and thus contributing to improve the corporate image among young people.
- *Bargaining* as regards the enterprises and trade unions must not only acknowledge the basic role of collective contracts to guarantee flexible working hours and the parental rights of workers, but must also guarantee that the contracts are actually implemented. In particular, it has proved to be a valid idea to insert equal-opportunity guidelines common to all the sectors in the *CCNLs*, in order to have an equal initial basis. This could be a “Guide for Equal Opportunities” for all workers at whatever level they are employed.
- *Personnel Management* is another fundamental field of action, aimed at fostering horizontal and vertical as well as numerical policies regarding the female presence in the enterprises. An example is being able to set equal-opportunity objectives to be achieved within a certain span of time.
- Fostering the creation in the enterprise (where not provided for) of specialised bodies designed to handle the equal-opportunity issues (*focal point*), in order to ensure a constant *monitoring* in the various

business units of the corporate organisation and in the definition of the *application of the principle* of the management policies reflecting on the equality of rights and on the opportunities between men and women.

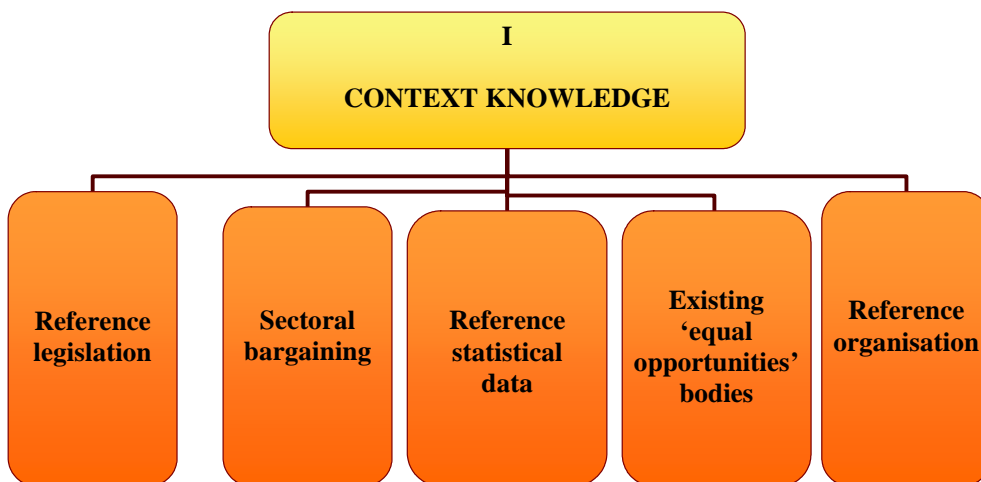
Targeted actions

- Increasing the percentage of women in the enterprise, highlighting some sectors, by developing non-discriminatory criteria for access to the railway professions, and also by internal training to allow or favour internal corporate transfer and the criteria for access to the railway professions mainly occupied by men.
- Designing and developing corporate organisational models and policies for personnel in order to ensure equal opportunities in career paths.
- Eliminating real wage inequality between men and women in the same occupational roles.
- Ensuring the insertion and successful use of contract instruments (part-time, parental leave, telework, etc.).
- Promoting social-assistance tools within the enterprises in order to favour the balance between private and working life (company crèches, bonuses for babysitting services, assistance and support to elderly parents, etc.).
- Designing a total quality certification system and favouring its implementation in the corporate quality evaluation parameters (together with the existing types of certification, such as total quality, environmental certification, ethical certification, etc.), in the participation in calls for proposals, etc. or in the *granting of benefits*.

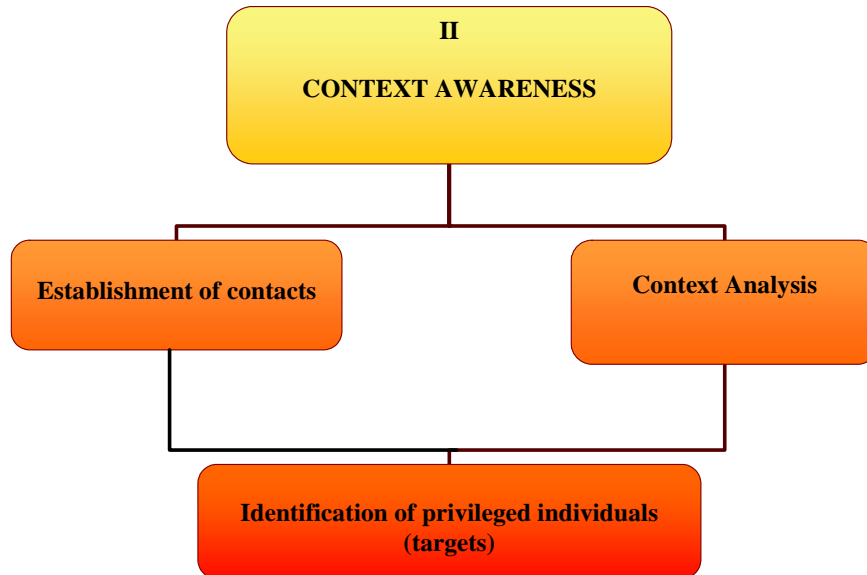
Tab. 1 - The equal opportunities path



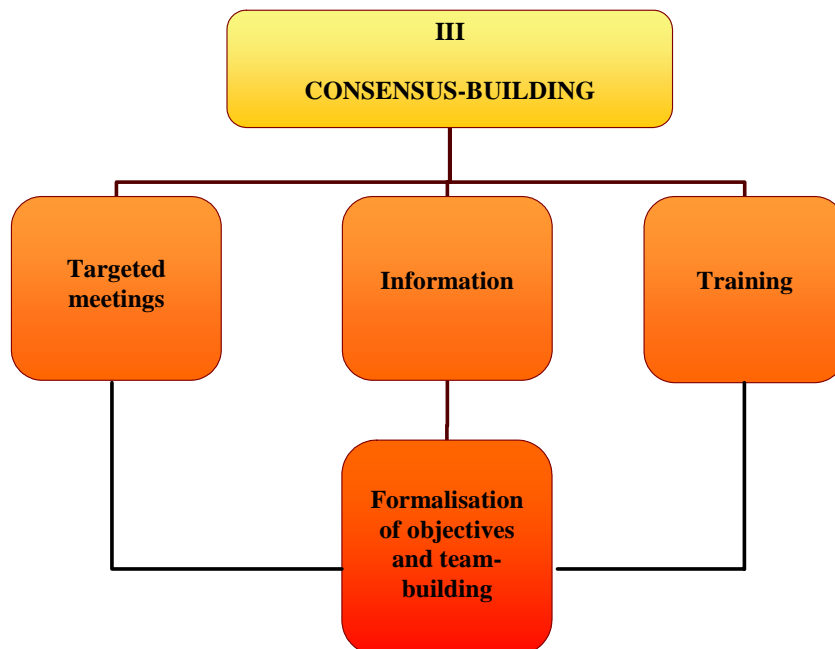
Tab. 2 - Focus on the first path area. The context knowledge



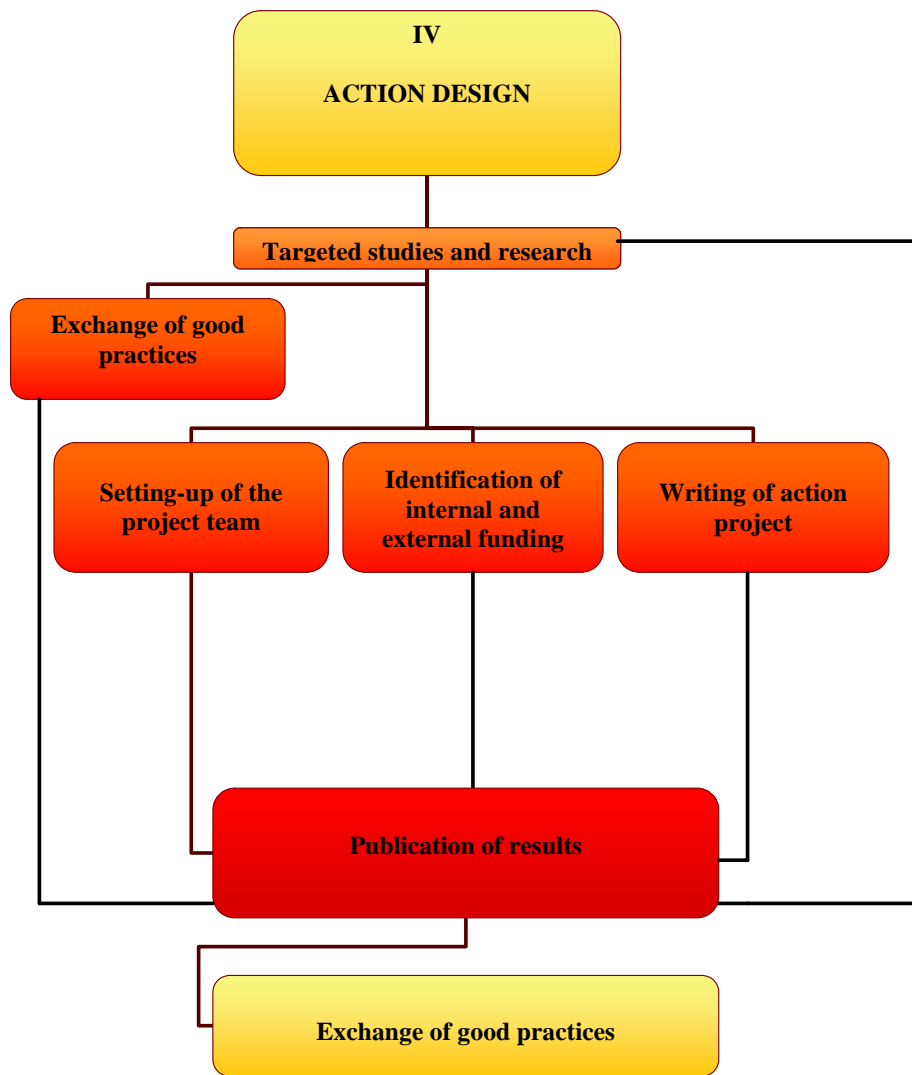
Tab. 3 - Focus on the second path area. The context awareness



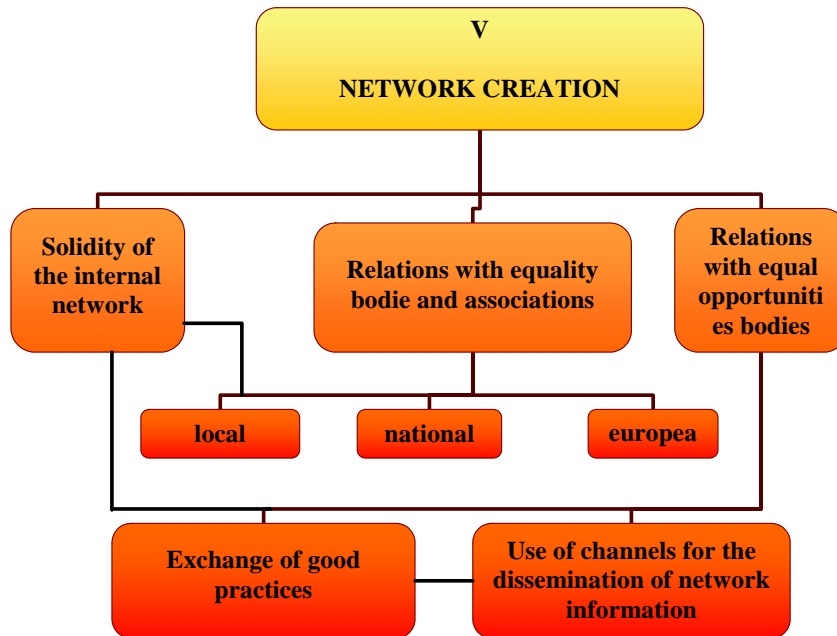
Tab. 4 - Focus on the third path area. The consensus-building



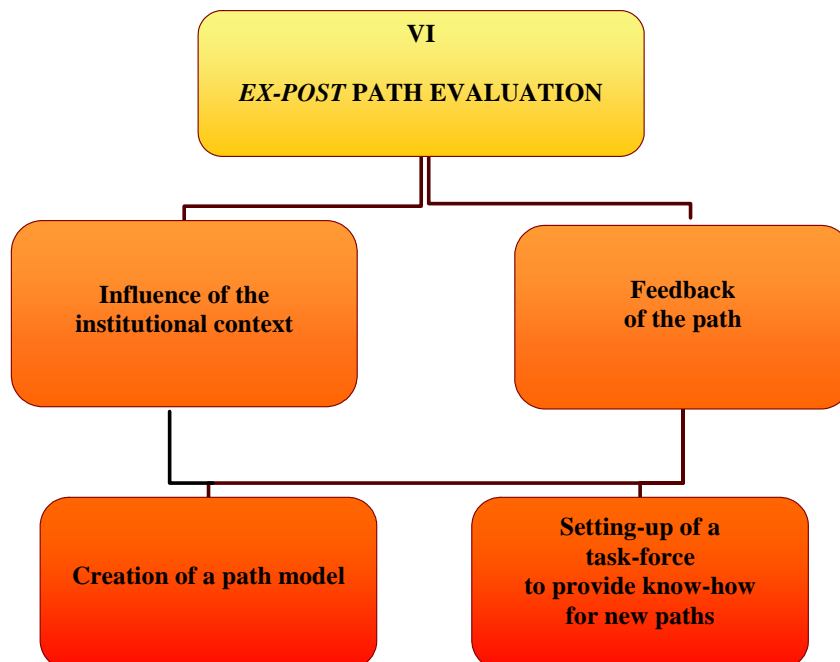
Tab. 5 - Focus on the fourth path area. The action design



Tab. 6 - Focus on the fifth path area. The network creation



Tab. 7 - Focus on the sixth path area. The ex-post path evaluation



Tab. 8 - Focus on the seventh path area. The certification and accreditation

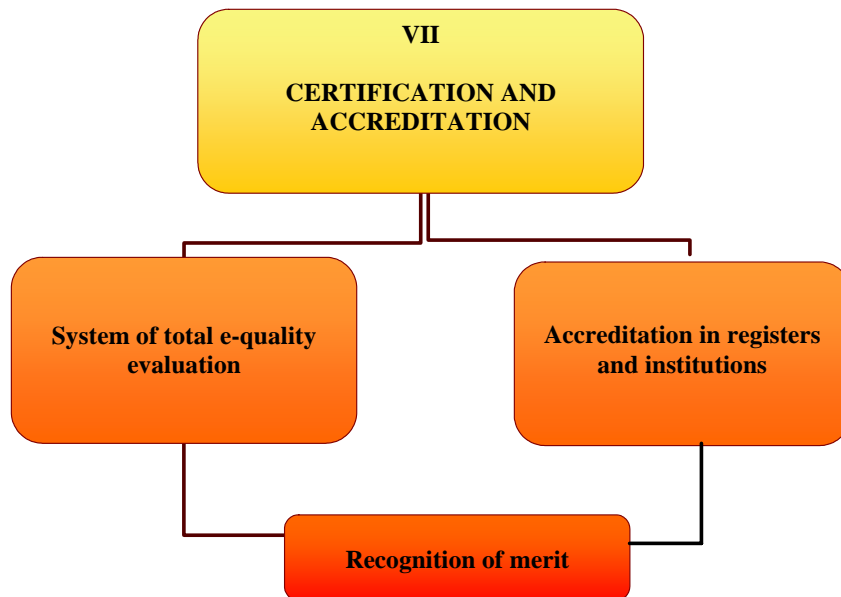


Table 9: Overview of the ‘Equal Opportunity’ Path: Areas, Activities, Actors and Timing.

PATH AREAS	ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES	ACTORS	TIMING
<p>I Context Knowledge</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reference legislation 2. Sectoral bargaining 3. Reference statistical data 4. Existing ‘equal opportunities’ bodies 5. Reference organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (lawyers, contract consultants, statistical specialists and organisation experts) ✓ Representatives of gender organisations ✓ Social Partners concerned 	1 month
<p>II Context Awareness</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of contacts 2. Context analysis Context analysis 3. Identification of privileged individuals (targets) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (consultants, researchers, organisation analysts) ✓ Representatives of gender organisations ✓ Social Partners 	1 month
<p>III Consensus-Building</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted meetings 2. Information 3. Training 4. Formalisation of objectives and team-building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (trainers, communicators, project managers) ✓ Representatives of gender organisations ✓ Social Partners involved 	2 month
<p>IV Action Design</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted studies and research activities 2. Setting-up of the project team 3. Identification of internal and external funding sources 4. Writing of action project 5. Publication of results 6. Exchange of good practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (sociologists, project managers, social psychologists) ✓ Representatives of gender organisations ✓ National and European bodies ✓ Social Partners involved and supranational associations 	6 months
<p>V Network Creation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solidity of the internal network 2. Relations with ‘equality’ bodies 3. Relations with ‘equal opportunities’ bodies and gender associations 4. Use of channels for the dissemination of network information 5. Exchange of good practices within the networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (sociologists, project managers, social psychologists) ✓ Representatives of gender organisations ✓ Social Partners involved and supranational associations ✓ Institutions 	5 months
<p>VI Ex-Post Path Evaluation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence of the institutional context 2. Feedback of the path 3. Creation of a path model 4. Setting-up of a task-force to provide know-how for new paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (evaluators, impact analysts) ✓ Representatives of gender-promoting organisations having jurisdiction ✓ Social Partners involved ✓ National and supranational institutions ✓ Organisations involved 	3 months
<p>VII Certification And Accreditation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. System of total e-quality evaluation 2. Accreditation in registers and institutions 3. Recognition of merit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technical partners (evaluators) ✓ Representatives of gender organisations ✓ Corporate partner ✓ Institutions and associations for certification 	3 months