

Promoting Employment and Quality of Work in the European Rail Sector: COUNTRY REPORTS





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1 Country report - Belgium

The following report is based on information of the Belgian Railways (SNCB, Infrabel and HR Rail). SNCB (public company) is the main provider for regional and long-distance passenger rail transport. In Belgium, other train companies access the rail network to provide for international passenger transport such as Deutsche Bahn, NS, SNCF, Thalys and Eurostar. However these enterprises will not be subject to this analysis as they do not typically recruit workers in Belgium

In addition there are some foreign cargo operators active in Belgium (list can be found below) however their recruitment in Belgium is rather marginal. It shall be noted that B-Logistics is the main cargo rail operator in Belgium (market share of approx. 84% in 2012)¹.

Attention shall be drawn to the fact that currently in Belgium reforms are foreseen for Belgian railways operations and thus affecting SNCB rail passenger transport working under a contract directly awarded by the Belgian Federal Ministry of Transport. These reforms are needed to comply with European legislation (Regulation 1370/2007 and EU railway packages) but also to meet the demands of the wider public to improve the transport offer, the security and transparency of the Belgian railways. It is expected that regional rail passenger transport will be opened for competition in 2019/2020.

The Ministry of Mobility and Transport is responsible for the operational contract with Infrabel and SNCB. Currently, the SNCB contract is governed by ad-hoc measures prolonging the actual contract for the period 2008-2012 for each year, as the government is still discussing the long-term perspective and reflecting on more profound reforms of the Belgian railways. A new contract is currently negotiated and expected to enter in force in early 2016.

1.1 Analysis of employment and sectoral data (2010 – 2014)

1.1.1 Employment in the railway sector

The following figures provide the detail for employment numbers in the different parts of The Belgian Railways as for the 1st January 2015:

- SNCB – more than 21,776;
- Infrabel more than 12,464
- HR Rail: +- 900
- More than 700 employees are “hired out” to external organisations such as B-Logistics, TUC-Rail, Syntec etc.)
- B-Logistics has about 1,900 employees

Overall number of employees within The Belgian Railways is 35,009 employees in January 2015.

It shall be noted that the number of employees at The Belgian Railways has continuously decreased over the past 5 years (38,105 in 2010; 36,985 in 2011; 36,851 in 2013; 35,898 in 2014). This is due to retirement of personnel. The number of employees will further decrease as current new hires are replacing only those positions where persons either left the company or retired and that are considered as necessary or fill entirely new positions.

Though a considerable number of positions will not be replaced once a person retires. It is estimated that approximately 55% of current personnel will retire in the next 10 years to come. Thus the company faces a challenge to adapt to rail reforms and to remain an efficient and attractive company.

¹ Van de Voorde, E.; Vanelslander, T. (2014), Development of rail freight in Europe – Belgian case study, Centre on Regulation in Europe – accessed at: http://www.cerre.eu/sites/cerre/files/141211_CERRE_RailFreight_BE_Case_Study_Final.pdf

It is not clear what the number of workers is for foreign rail companies for passenger rail transport and cargo rail transport. It can however be assumed that their employment numbers is marginal in Belgium and thus not relevant for this study.

It shall be noted that The Belgian Railways and the Belgian Army and Bpost are the largest employers in Belgium (taking into account all companies but excluding international institutions).

1.1.2 Gender and age in the railway sector

The following section will further analyse the share of workers by gender, diversity and look further at age.

■ Share of workers by gender

The following figure has been provided by The Belgian Railways on the share of female workers (1st January 2015)

Table 1.1 Employment figures, share women and men at The Belgian Railways

	SNCB	Holding & CSS (only 2012) then HR Rail (after restructuring) ²	Infrabel	External org.	Total
2012					
Women+Men	19127	4247	12033	799	36206
Women	2176	1002	971	62	4211
% Women	11,38	23,59	8,07	7,76	11,63
2013					
Women+Men	21572	974	12564	788	35898
Women	2826	478	1020	63	4387
% Women	13,10	49,08	8,12	7,99	12,22
2014					
Women+Men	20854	922	12464	769	35009
Women	2880	469	1088	67	4504
% Women	13,81	50,87	8,73	8,71	12,87

Source: *The Belgian Railways*

The figures show that the number of women employed by The Belgian Railways has increased over time in particular when considering overall staff at SNCB (train conductors, client services, support jobs) and HR Rail. However, when looking at the more technical professions within Infrabel there was only a slight increase.

If further analysing the number of females in the more specific operational units within The Belgian Railways it can be observed that the highest shares of females can be found in the commercial, marketing and HR units. The lowest rates can be found in the technical units and train station management units due to the type of functions and the nature of the work.

The operational contract 2008- 2012 (and prolonged) between The Belgian Railways and the Ministry of Transport has foreseen to increase the share of women within the company, and that new hires shall be at least up to 20% women at The Belgian Railways. This target was largely satisfied for the years 2009/2010 however in 2011 female new hires represented only 17%, in 2012 19,5%, in 2013 15,38 and in 2014 it was 15,87% thus remaining below the

² The figures are not comparable between the Holding and HR Rail.

target. This decline of female new-hires was related to the types of profiles that have been recruited in recent years and that were rather technical driven.

- Share of workers with a migrant background and disability

The operational contract also obliges The Belgian Railways to hire persons with a migrant background (at least 10% per year) and persons with disability (3% per year).

It shall be noted that currently the data collected by The Belgian Railways does not allow for the analysis of the recruitment of workers with a migrant background (only by nationality). Thus at this stage it is not clear whether The Belgian Railways could stick to the target as set out in the contract. Information from the union side highlights that the number of workers at SNCB with a migrant background is rather marginal.

The statistics of The Belgian Railways show with regard to the share of persons with a disability (this englobes persons with a handicap but also persons re-employed with a medical certificate of definite inability to work) employed is at around 5%. In recruitment processes the target was achieved and for 2014 was at 11%. In most cases The Belgian Railways hires or internally recruits persons that have been certified a definite inability to carry out their work (or work within their operational unit). This means that these persons do not necessarily have a handicap. There are no concrete figures available distinguishing between those that have been classified by an occupational medical service inapt to carry out their work and those that are disabled.

Within The Belgian Railways it was agreed with the trade unions that a certain amount of positions shall be used to re-employ those considered medically inapt to work in their profession. It has been however highlighted by the unions that these type of positions have been reduced.

- Age distribution

When further looking into age distribution among newly recruited staff for 2014 it can be seen that the majority of staff hired was between 20 and 29 years. Still 17 % of newly hired staff was aged between 40 to 49 years and when comparing the figures of those recruited below 20 (3% of all new recruitments in 2014) to those recruited aged between 50 and 59 years (5%) the share of the latter group was slightly higher. It can be estimated that the Belgian Railways is considered an attractive workplace for older workers and that recruitments are carried out disregarding the age. It shall be noted that older new hires were mainly male.

Table 1.2 Overview age distribution newly recruited staff

2014	Total	Men	Women	% men	% women
< 20 years	52	51	1	98,08	1,92
20 to 29 years	817	653	164	79,93	20,07
30 to 39 years	482	422	60	87,55	12,45
40 to 49 years	297	260	37	87,54	12,46
50 to 59 years	88	74	14	84,09	15,91
60 years and over	3	3	0	100,00	
Total	1739	1463	276	84,13	15,87

Source: *The Belgian Railways*

The figures from 2015 show that the current median age is 44 years. Workers aged 18 to 29 represent about 12% of the workforce; workers aged 30 to 39 about 23,8%; workers aged 40 to 49 about 17,2%; workers aged 50 to 59 about 42,2% and finally workers aged 60 to 65 represent about 2,9% in the overall staff. These figures show that currently there is an imbalance of generations and workers aged 50 and above are overrepresented. It can be

estimated that in the coming 10 years quite an important number of staff will leave the company due to retirement.

1.1.3 Rail Enterprises in Belgium

The Belgian Railways – comprises SNCB, HR Rail and Infrabel. B-Logistics is a private company of which Belgian Railways holds 33.4% and Argos Soditic 66, 6% since early 2015. There are smaller external companies that belong to the group such as IFB (Inter Ferry Boats that is part of the logistics multi-modal chain); Sibelit (part of the rail fret organisation); Syntigo (IT company for infrastructure management); TUC –Rail (international infrastructure and construction agency) and Xpedys (fret cargo management).

Other passenger train operators are active in Belgium such as Thalys, Eurostar, DB, SNCF and NS – however these operators do not typically recruit staff in Belgium. Eurostar has the opportunity to recruit only since recently staff on its own – before there were international agreements between rail operators to “hire out” staff temporarily. Thalys does not hire workers independently – it has to recruit personnel among its shareholding rail companies (SNCF, SNCB, NS, DB) according to an agreement. Now the actual rail company THI Factory that operates Thalys since 2015 is solely detained by SNCF and SNCB. In fact, it has been mentioned that the possibility to work with Thalys is seen in particular as a promotion for workers within SNCB and SNCF. However in the near future also Thalys may recruit personnel outside the shareholding companies (for rail specific professions).

Other rail operators having licences to operate in Belgium are rail cargo companies. These companies have to apply for licence with Infrabel. Currently there are 12 rail cargo companies that have a licence: Captrain Belgium (daughter company SNCF Fret); CFL Cargo (LUX); Crossrail Benelux (CH); DB Schenker Rail (DE); Euro Cargo Rail (FR); Europorte France (FR); SNCB Logistics (BE); Railtraxx (BE); Rotterdam Rail Feeding (NL); SNCF Fret (FR); Trainsport (BE); PKP Cargo (PL)

1.1.4 Infrastructure

- Length of rail line – 3.631 km (2014) – the number of km have slightly increased over time.

1.2 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

1.2.1 Attractiveness of the Belgian Railways in comparison to other sectors

The study that is most recognised to measure employment attractiveness in Belgium is the Randstad Award Study that is carried out each year.³

The 2015 study highlights that the Belgian Railways belongs to those top 10 companies that was able to improve most their attractiveness rank over the past ten years (more than 13 percentage points). On the other hand the Belgian Railways cannot be found among the top 10 most known employers for 2015 (ranked 22nd) in Belgium.

There is no further comparison available for other rail companies (due to the fact that there is no comparable enterprise in Belgium) in this ranking.

The passenger transport by rail (The Belgian Railways) seems to be more attractive than cargo rail companies due the fact that only The Belgian Railways provides for a civil servant type of employment status (based on opinion by employers and unions). When looking at the results as well from the Randstad Award study which compares the Belgian Railways to the other companies in passenger transport this assessment was shared by the persons surveyed (for all indicators such as job security, salaries, training, general professions,

³ For further information : <http://web.randstad.be/award/nl/>

atmosphere and environment). For the criterium job security it was ranked highest for The Belgian Railways (compared to other passenger transport operators) but overall the biggest passenger transport companies in Belgium are public companies thus this aspect does not change so much (apart from cargo see above). The aspects that scored less was the management and the current financial situation of The Belgian Railways (increasing company debts). Comparing the attractiveness of The Belgian Railways to the other transport passenger operators (STIB, TEC, DeLijn, Keolis) The Belgian Railways scores much higher.

When comparing the Belgian Railways to the top 50 company's average of the Randstad survey it shows that the Belgian Railways is lower ranked for aspects such as salary, future perspectives or training and atmosphere but ranked better with regard to job security. Again SNCB was ranked well below the average score of all Belgian companies for its management and financial situation and atmosphere at the workplace. Thus overall, The Belgian Railways ranked only on place 68 of all enterprises that participated for the criteria assessed. Compared to other big Belgian (ex) public employers the attractiveness development was positive for The Belgian Railways as stated earlier but is behind Belgacom/Proximus (Telecom) but ahead of Bpost.

There is no other literature specifically discussing the attractiveness of the rail sector (passenger or cargo) in Belgium. Press review has shown that the main operator The Belgian Railways is often in focus when strikes are announced or customer satisfaction is discussed. In general customer satisfaction seems to be a critical point in the past in Belgium in particular with reference to punctuality of trains. While the media is rather negative about The Belgian Railways it however applies less on The Belgian Railways as an employer.

1.2.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

The Belgian Railways employs around 85% of its staff as civil servant type agents, the others are contractual agents (meaning that they are hired on the basis of an employment contract just as in the private sector for either a definite or indefinite period). Civil servant type agents cannot be laid off for economic reasons (only for disciplinary reasons) and have thus a guarantee to remain employed in the long term.

It shall be noted that when commencing a position there is a relative long intensive training phase (6 to 12 months for certain professions) and for civil servant type agents there is a one year probationary period before being hired on a permanent basis.

As highlighted by the Randstad Award survey and interviewees – jobseekers appreciate the most the job security by the Belgian Railways provides. This is also due to the labour market situation for young people in particular from the region of Wallonia where unemployment rates higher and employment perspective is less promising compared to the region of Flanders or Brussels. It was also noted that for specific job profiles in particular in the technical fields (e.g. technicians) which are generally difficult to recruit on the Belgian labour market, the Belgian Railways has difficulties to fill its positions due to the fact that salaries at bachelor level were not considered as highly attractive compared to the private sector.

Generally, from the point of view of the interviewees the training possibilities and training policy of The Belgian Railways was seen as interesting for job seekers to apply for a position with The Belgian Railways. Nevertheless, these training possibilities strictly relate to the professional profile of one particular job.

Other attractive criteria for job seekers to work with The Belgian Railways is the possibility to carry out a profession that serves a wider public purpose attracts a number of job seekers. The employers side highlighted that many people prefer to be work in companies that can serve a wider utility to the public and have a meaningful task within society. In addition, the overall job security and the atmosphere is seen as very attractive. The Belgian Railways is known for its “rail family” atmosphere – which is inter-generational and characterised by fellowship and loyalty.

The benefits (excluding salary) such as specific medical health insurance or the possibility to travel free by train (also with family) in the Benelux region, were also seen as an attractive advantages by job seekers. + work life balance!

On the other side it is known that working hours can be late or at odd times and some professions within The Belgian Railways are known as arduous (e.g. mainly within infrastructure).

As mentioned above the rail sector is facing some reforms in the near future and it is known that The Belgian Railways has high debts to manage. Thus, in July 2015, the current liberal/centred- right oriented Belgian government presented some further strategic reforms concerning the Belgian Railways. These reforms foresee due to an alleged estimated increase of the debts of The Belgian Railways to make economies of about 20%. This has been interpreted by trade unions as an indication that staff will be further reduced. It is considered as unacceptable because on its impact on the operational side (those workers directly affected to make the train circulate) this creates already certain short-comings and delays taking necessary compensatory rest of workers. Thus the CGSP, the major representative trade union at The Belgian Railways, has carried out since several strikes.

The strategic plan for The Belgian Railways by the Ministry also included to focus more on the professionalization, performance and training of staff at The Belgian Railways; to negotiate a new agreement with staff, build an academy to improve the knowledge management specific to the railways sector and to improve the productivity of staff by automatization of administrative tasks and flexibilisation of working hours and more performance driven remuneration (thus a review of the current system of bonuses). The communication from the Ministry also highlighted to improve internal communication and to put in place more HR generation management strategies to help the younger workers find their place in the company; and to improve communication between colleagues by introducing new technologies.

These plans have however created concerns among newly hired employees and it was claimed by the union side that the number of workers that can work under the contractual status will increase (this has partly to do with the restructuring of different daughter companies of The Belgian Railways that can organise their own recruitment just as any private company without having to employ new hires under a civil servant type of status).

Despite the reforms it shall also be mentioned that in 2014 the company received more than 32.000 applications online which is a high number for a company in Belgium. The number of applications has strongly increased compared to 2013. The HR representative also highlighted that while during days of strike the number of visits to the Belgian Railways recruitment page is decreasing compared to days where no strike occurred but was still high. This could also be interpreted that the strong presence of trade unions is rather seen as an attractiveness criteria for applicants and is only negatively valued by job seekers in Flanders.

1.2.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

It shall be noted that the sector of passenger transport ranks overall 23rd in terms of attractiveness (21.3%) in the classification (after metal industry but before industrial cleaning and environmental and security services). The sectors that represented the highest attractiveness in Belgium are the international institutions (e.g. European Commission) followed by the pharmaceutical sector and media. However in terms of employment security the passenger transport sector was ranked 3rd which most probably relates to the fact that once employed at The Belgian Railways the worker benefits of a civil servant type status and cannot be laid off for economic circumstances

The employers view was that overall the rail sector was more attractive than the other transport sectors in Belgium – in particular when compared to the road transport sector and maritime transport sector but also more attractive than urban transport sector. One of the reasons was that the work was seen as less strenuous and providing for better working

conditions. This was only partly confirmed by the Randstad Award attractiveness study (see above). The goods transport sector was classified 12th (28,5%) just behind the energy sector but The Belgian Railways compared to other passenger transport operators (such as urban public transport) the Belgian Railways is the far most attractive employer.

It is difficult to assess the rail sector on its own in Belgium it is almost impossible to detach the Belgian Railways and the rail sector due to the fact that only a few other operators (specifically in cargo) exist.

1.2.4 Examples of good practices employer branding

- An example for good practice could be the online train driver simulator – so that applicants can test how it feels to conduct a train and to get a better idea about this profession.
- “Club des Ambassadeurs” – a club of employees that highlight the positive side of their profession and to explain to applicants what their profession is about. This initiative has started in 2010 and includes now more than 280 members.
- Picture diary – an initiative that asked all employees to take a pictures of their daily work – the best pictures were placed on the The Belgian Railways facebook page and the one that got the most likes received a gift (IPad/GoPro).
- The specific website for recruitment at The Belgian Railways with different videos about the professions within The Belgian Railways – www.lescheminsdeferengagent.be
- Refer a friend: the internal referral program. Employees could introduce someone for a shortage job, if that person is hired; the employee receives a bonus of 500 euros. Our shortage jobs are: train conductor, train driver, engineer, technician and computer scientists.

1.3 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

1.3.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

One collective agreement is concluded for the entire company for all professions. There is currently no “social protocol” in place which is an agreement between management and the trade unions over wages and working conditions (similar to collective agreements).It has a specific name due to the fact that it concerns public type agents. Thus since 2011 workers at The Belgian Railways could only benefit from the inter-sectorial salary increase that is given to all employees. Currently, there are negotiations on-going to conclude a new “social protocol”. This “social protocol” however does not concern the contractual agents as there should be a specific collective agreement for workers under this status in place. This may be possible in the near future to conclude such an agreement with HR Rail and the trade unions.

The situation of having two different type of contracts creates from time to time issues as contract agents are sometimes used to offer less favourable employment conditions (notably with regard to company specific benefits) or they are used to in particular for management type of professions to provide for more favourable employment conditions (in particular with regard to pay) compared to those employed under the civil servant type of contract.

Overall the employment conditions have been rated by employers and unions’ side as fair and attractive working conditions. There is a good work-life balance due to the fact that all supplementary hours worked are accounted for and staff can take off extra hours worked. However these achieved benefits could come under threat with staff reduction measures as it was noted due to the fact that workers in particular from operational units (necessary to have the train circulate) cannot take their compensatory and annual leave days anymore within an acceptable delay.

1.3.1.1 Pay and conditions

According to the information from employers and workers pay has remained stable as well as working hours (36 hours average). Salaries did not considerably change over the past 5 years. There are important increases for those that have a number of years of work experience (typically every 4 years). In addition there is a type of bonus system in place that considers the productivity of every month. It is an appreciation system that takes into account the team performance.

In the future (as explained above) a system of objectives shall be introduced in addition and evaluations of the performance will take place times a year only. It shall create rankings in terms of production levels and efficiency. Fears have been expressed that this type of evaluation could lead to higher stress levels and may make jobs less attractive.

The Belgian Railways provides a number of other benefits, such as:

- Restaurant tickets (lunch vouchers)
- Company specific sickness insurance
- Travel for free in the Benelux region
- Interesting pension scheme
- Company owned children day care
- Support to conclude loans/credit
- Reductions at specific shops

1.3.1.2 Company culture

Overall the company culture was characterised as “family-like” and inter-generational.

The company culture is seen as “traditional” employer that provides equal opportunities. It is a public service tradition where all type of workers from different social background work together. Providing a public service is seen as a mission and a central role in society. Workers are aware of the different political questions that are discussed currently about the future of the Belgian railways service.

There is a plan to competitively tender the Brussels regional passenger railway network. This would imply less train accompanying staff and if given to another operator workers would have to change to other geographical areas or units.

This debate has generated fears and worries among employees that the services become privatised and weighs on their motivation. The restructuring measures within The Belgian Railways concern employees and question management strategies to provide an effective public transport service to citizens.

1.3.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

The worker – manager relationship has been characterized by a strong social dialogue structure in the company. Since political discourse tends to favour competitive tendering options and management has changed in 2013 it was reported that the relationship has been impaired. It was felt that management in place was nominated to carry out specifically restructuring measures and was not open for employee negotiations.

In recent years the pace of work has increased and in particular in management type functions the risk of stress and other psychosocial risks has increased.

Staff motivation was characterised to be high. However, the on-going restructuring measures and the uncertain future about possible changes at the company has spoiled recently levels of motivation. Nevertheless, the company’s absenteeism rate is generally below average – compared to other private companies. One of the reasons for this was seen in the extended policies of occupational health and safety that are applied within The Belgian Railways.

There is a prevention strategy in place to reduce absenteeism due to health reasons. In addition if a worker is absent for health reasons he must also see the internal occupational health service.

1.3.2 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

The Belgian Railways does not encounter as such recruitment difficulties for the main functions such as drivers or accompanying train personnel.

There are differences in term of attractiveness between the Walloon and Flanders region. While The Belgian Railways is very attractive on the Walloon side, it is more difficult to recruit in Flanders. The reason for this is the different situation of the job market. While employment opportunities are scarce in Wallonia there are more employment opportunities in Flanders. Thus it is more difficult to fill job openings in Flanders region.

Job profiles have remained more or less the same. Some new professions have been created in particular related to IT or in the cargo rail segment. On the other hand a number of jobs do not longer exist (infrastructure segment). However the content of the job has changed. The company demands more flexible profiles and polyvalent job seekers. The introduction of technology and IT also demands new types of skills and has led to a greater job intensity.

Currently there are difficulties to recruit in particular technical profiles and technical engineers. In order to make technical professions more attractive the Belgian Railways carries out the Belgian Railways Competition for Technicians (BERT) – in which students in their third year of technical education at secondary school can put forward their ideas on a pre-defined topic. In 2014 the topic was "Creating a "green" power supply for train-driver-assistance equipment". This competition aims to strengthen links between company practice with the world of technical education, and is contributing to helping young people understand that, in order to tackle these various challenges, railway staff are constantly required to research and develop innovative and effective technological solutions. This competition might therefore encourage these future graduates to apply for a job at The Belgian Railways

1.3.3 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

1.3.3.1 Employment for young people

The Belgian Railways' recruitment strategy aims to address all groups of workers not regarding gender, age or skill level. The main functions (accompanying train personnel, train drivers, sales and ticketing) are functions open to all groups and an image of diversity and non-discrimination policy is established.

However the Belgian Railways invests also time and budget in making the professions in the rail sector attractive in particular to young people. The company participates in specific actions organised by schools to attract more young people to technical professions and vocational training schools to inform about railways specific technical occupations.

The Belgian Railways organises as specific competition for young people to get them interested in technical questions related to railways and to drive innovation. There is the SmartestTrainBrain competition for engineering students– where a specific task/exercise is provided by The Belgian Railways and young people have to build a team to solve the task and make a proposal. In 2014 24 such teams were created.

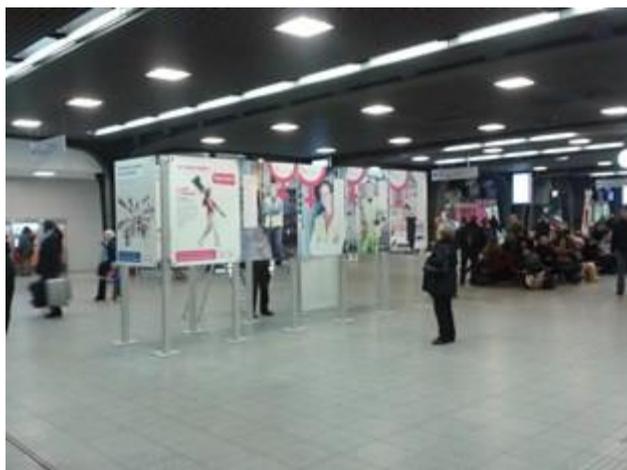
In addition there is the BERT – Belgian Railways Competition for Technicians which is addressed at those undertaking studies in technical or engineer fields. Also for this competition the company provides for the exercise that has to be solved by the teams. In 2014 more than 20 teams participated.

Both types of competitions are organised to show the different technical fields in the railway sector and to attract indirectly young people's interest.

1.3.3.2 Employment for women

The Belgian Railways does not want to target in particular women in recruitment campaigns directly. However in order to de-mystify the technical professions within The Belgian Railways for women, the company started an exposition in the biggest Belgian train stations (such as Brussels, Liege, Gent, Courtrai, Antwerp and Namur explaining more about the different job profiles in the companies using as example women that work for the company. This expo could be seen by all passengers using the train and has contributed to make different professions at The Belgian Railways more attractive for women.

Figure 1.1 The Belgian Railways exposition – women in railways



Source: The Belgian Railways Diversity Report 2015



1.3.3.3 Recruiting and internal training

In general initial training to the profession of the Belgian Railways is provided. Overall training measures are widely appreciated by workers. The union is involved in the annual training plans and training strategy. It has been highlighted that while the company has its own training centres with an extensive training offer to remain updated in a specific professional field there are less training opportunities that could help workers to diversify their skills (to other professional profiles) or to choose for specific training outside of the company.

The Belgian Railways has a specific website for recruitment and demonstrates in short films its professions. There is a considerable budget used to design communication strategies. All communication means are used (radio and print and online) including all channels of social media. It does not seem that one of these communication streams outperforms the others. The mix of several types of media is necessary to have better campaign results.

1.3.3.4 International cooperation

SNCB has agreements with other European rail companies to “hire out” their train drivers. This is a voluntary programme for SNCB employees. In general a train driver can conduct trains outside Belgium after 2 years of experience.

Working for Thalys or Eurostar is seen in particular as a promotion opportunity for train drivers or train service personnel. This has been also subject of an internal agreement between the unions and management.

1.3.4 Identify areas for job creation

The recent economic crisis has impacted the state’s budget for transport and currently there is no intention to create more jobs. Currently all those that leave the company because they

enter pension age are not replaced. This has led to a reduction of more than 1,000 employees in the recent past.

Taking into account the current age pyramid inside of the company it can also be expected that in 10 years about 55% of staff will retire. This creates rather a pressure for the company to replace current staff to keep efficient performance of the railway network.

1.3.5 Examples of good practices

In recruitment:

- Job Train – this is a measure that invites job seekers on a special trip by train where a special tour is given to the job seekers, the professions at the Belgian Railways are further explained and the job testing occurs on the train ride itself, as well as doctors visit (for aptitude for some professions)
- The method that has worked the best to recruit (compared to communication and job days) is the referral programme – employees refer someone to HR – in case of a successful recruitment a bonus is paid. Since 2010 more than 240 workers have been hired via this method.

1.4 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

One of the factors that seem most important for workers within The Belgian Railways is the job security that is guaranteed by the civil servant type employment contract. This is more and more an attractive factor due to the increasing instability of the national labour market and unemployment. It is considered as a company where one can find a job for a life-time. Something that creates motivation among employees is to carry out a job that has a utility in society – transporting people is seen as providing a useful service and environmental friendly service. Carrying out a useful job in society is a highly motivational factor. Over decades a “family-like” atmosphere has been created making the railway transport a unique workplace. In fact, the technical and job specific content is quite unique and has a high notoriety in society. The specific know-how gained in the operation of railway networks is seen as highly specialised and is seen as an investment by employees contributing to the modernisation of passenger transport.

Due to the fact that the actual operation is seen as public service any changes to the overall set out of railway organisation is seen as a change to the actual content of workers everyday work. Customer satisfaction has a central role for railway employers. The fact that media only picks up negative impacts or operational issues creates pressure on workers and devalues also their work. Thus a positive attitude in society towards rail transport and high customer satisfaction plays also an important role for the workers to keep their motivation.

In this overall context, it is important that say and opinion of workers is valued within management and in the overall strategy. The image of a strong social dialogue inside and outside of the company is also valued by job seekers.

The specialised know-how acquired over long years of experience is seen as an important technical skill value that should be reflected in promotion and evolution of careers. Career schemes that incite workers to progress and contribute their knowledge in innovation processes is highly valued among workers in the rail sector.

Training schemes that allow workers to progress and adapt to changes in technology or to change their professions within such an organisation as The Belgian Railways with hundreds of different job profiles is seen as an attractive factor.

At the Belgian Railways workers have however seen in recent years that their voice is not heard in restructuring situations. Social dialogue in the company has been stagnating impacting on wage evolution and improvement of working conditions. The restructuring of

the Group with the creation of different daughter companies using different employment conditions was not seen as positive by workers and increased frustration. Promotion and career management has suffered during restructuring and more and more “external” recruitment occurs for senior management positions rather than supporting staff internally.

No specific measure for good practice was proposed for retention policies.

1.5 Summary SWOT analysis

The following table provides a summary of the Belgian situation.

Table 1.3 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experienced workforce ■ Civil servant type contracts guaranteeing employment security ■ High staff motivation to provide an effective and good public service for all ■ Strong internal company culture and corporate identity ■ Well perceived employer branding ■ Internal training school ■ Extensive health and safety programme ■ Strong presence of trade unions – social dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Internal restructuring – re-organisation of the Belgian Railways - trust in management has decreased among staff ■ Two different types of employment contracts create inequalities between staff and working conditions ■ Career development plans for staff are not clear ■ Un-balanced age pyramid paired with a stricter operational budget could create staff short-comings in the future ■ Lack of generation management ■ Absence of knowledge transfer management in cases of retirement ■ Certain lack of attractiveness of working conditions of arduous and technical job profiles
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rail transport has a high notoriety in society ■ Modal split policies aim to support and increase passenger rail transport ■ Environmental friendly transport a highly valued factor in the future ■ Efficient transport valued by citizens using trains to commute to work ■ Due to new professions and retirement wave – a high number of recruitments are on-going increasing presence among job seekers and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public underinvestment for operation and infrastructure – due to debt crisis – leading to less innovation, lower investment in particular in human resources ■ Negative media attention ■ Competitive tendering that could lead to introduction to new operators in Belgium thus affecting employment security and potentially threatening working conditions ■ Increasing prices for passengers thus potentially leading to less passengers or lower acceptance among citizens leading to increasing public anger towards staff

Annex 1 List of sources and interviewees

List of sources

Ministry of Transport – railway sections - <http://mobilit.belgium.be/fr/traficferroviaire>

Randstad Award (Study on attractiveness) - <http://web.randstad.be/award/en/>

The Belgian Railways – related websites (Infrabel, B-Logistics, HR Rail, les Chemins de fer engagé) ; The Belgian Railways annual reports

Online media (major daily press) Le Soir, La Libre, Het Laatste News, De Morgen

Trade union material – CGSP – La Tribune, website; ACV Transcom Brochures

List of Interviewees

Mireille Protin – HR Rail – representative of the Belgian railways

Serge Piteljon – CGSP/ ACOD – National Secretary Railways (major representative trade union)

Marianne Lerouge – CSC Transcom – National Secretary Railways (2nd most representative trade union)

2 Country report – Bulgaria

2.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

2.1.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

A widespread opinion of the interviewed stakeholders is that the rail sector in Bulgaria is not attractive. (see factors listed in Section 2.3. below) With regard to the individual rail companies, the two largest players are the state-owned companies the National Rail operator 'Holding BDZ' (BDZ) and State Enterprise National Rail Infrastructure Company (NRIC) which are largely seen as unattractive employers. These two companies are successors of a single "Bulgarian National Railways (BDZ)" during the socialist regime in Bulgaria. In the past, employment in the rail sector was characterised with a sense of pride and belonging to "one family". This can be contrasted to the current state of the rail sector which is largely seen as unattractive. Due to a multitude of factors (including lack of funds for investment in infrastructure in the rail sector; lack of strategic direction for the sector and frequent changes in the management of the two state-owned companies), the working and salary conditions in the two companies have significantly deteriorated. The companies have been operating at a loss in recent years because rail transport seen as unattractive by passengers. This in turn has led to lay-offs and redundancies.

2.1.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

In Bulgaria, the main rail companies are two state-owned companies: Bulgarian National Rail (BDZ) and State Enterprise National Rail Infrastructure Company (NRIC). Holding BDZ consists of two subsidiary companies – BDZ passengers and BDZ cargo. In addition, there are about 12 private cargo companies operating in Bulgaria. One of them - Bulgarian private company (Bulgarian Rail Company) – has been interviewed as part of this study.

2.1.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

A widespread opinion of the interviewed stakeholders is that the rail sector in Bulgaria is not attractive. A negative tendency in the last 10 years can be observed in the qualified workforce in the sector.

A number of examples were given by representatives of the trade unions of qualified and talented employees leaving the two state-owned companies for private companies or leaving abroad.

The sector can be characterised by the following factors:

- A significant reduction of staff has been carried out in the period 2011-2014. In NRIC alone a total number of 3,500 employees were made redundant for the reported period.
- At the same time, there are significant labour shortages and the two state-owned companies have experienced significant recruitment difficulties in key professions and occupations.
- The sector is characterised by significantly low salary levels and is largely seen as unattractive.
- An aging workforce (with less than 5% of employees in NRIC being under 30 years of age) in the two companies is expected to result in even more severe labour shortages.
- Poor conditions of old trains and old rail infrastructure (average train speed of 40-50 km/h has been reported) has acted as a strong deterrent effect to the attractiveness of the sector as a service provider.
- According to the stakeholders interviewed, a major factor that contributes to these negative trends is the lack of a long-term government strategy for the sector and frequent restructuring and changes in management of the two state-owned companies.

Frequent changes in government have led to frequent changes in management and lack of long-term vision.

- Due to poor infrastructure, rail transport is seen as unattractive by passengers who prefer the automotive transport.
- This can be contrasted to a growing and strong automotive industry.
- The rail sector is not profitable – for 2014, a loss of 15 million leva (approximately EUR 7.5 million) has been recorded by BDZ.
- A high turnover of staff was seen in the case of train drivers, engineers and other technical and specialised staff. The metro system in Sofia has attracted engineers and train drivers from the two state-owned railway companies.
- Many of the professions in the rail sector (such as engineers, mechanics, etc.) in Bulgaria require a degree of technical qualification from a higher university (either a university degree or a college degree in this particular field). There are only a few higher education institutions which offer courses in these respective fields. Courses are offered free of charge in Bulgaria. The Higher University for Transport “Todor Kableskov” and the Technical University in Sofia have reported⁴ that there is a lack of interest from students to take on the courses related to the rail sector. The courses in the automotive sector were reported as much more attractive in the Higher University for Transport. Furthermore, courses in colleges (e.g. in the town of Karlovo) have been removed from the curricula due to lack of interest. With regard to train drivers, although some of them may have a higher university degree, this is not obligatory in all cases, It is possible to attend six-months’ courses which include theory and practice to obtain the qualification ‘assistant train driver’. After 3 years of practical experience as an ‘assistant train driver’ a further six month course is required to obtain the qualification ‘train driver’.

As suggested by stakeholders steps which could be undertaken to increase the attractiveness of the sector include:

- Longer-term vision and strategy, including less frequent changes in management and administration
- Investing in infrastructure and new trains
- Increasing the quality of rail travel as a service (both for passenger and cargo services) - Currently, companies are operating at a loss and focussed on reducing cost. More efforts should be made for the companies to be commercially attractive and increase revenues and profits.
- Forecasting of skill shortages and needs should be introduced as an on-going exercise
- Better quality of internal, on-the-job training and education
- Investing efforts in image, corporate culture, and employees’ motivation.

2.1.4 Comparison with other sectors

- **Salary level:** Compared to other sectors, the level of salaries is considered as significantly lower. According to one of the management representatives interviewed, the average salary level in the rail sector is below the average level in the transport sector as a whole. Moreover, the average salary level in the transport sector is below the average for the country across all sectors. Salary levels in the private company Bulgarian Railway Company are seen to be higher.
- **Working conditions:** In comparison to the Sofia city metro system, the rail sector is seen as less attractive. It was reported that a number of employees left the rail sector to join the metro system due to better working conditions (new trains and new infrastructure).

⁴ According to the representatives interviewed from the employers and trade unions based on their meetings with University staff

2.2 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

2.2.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

2.2.1.1 Pay and conditions

■ Pay conditions

As discussed above, the pay conditions in the state-owned companies are considered as significantly lower in comparison to the average salary levels for the transport sector and the average level across all sectors in Bulgaria. This has been confirmed both by representatives of employers and trade union representatives.

With regard to additional in-kind benefits, a free of charge card across all rail is part of the package negotiated in the Collective agreements. Specialised healthcare in so-called 'transport hospitals' is also available for workers in the public rail companies.

There is a perception, reported by private companies, that they pay employees higher salaries. These companies have attracted some of the workers previously employed in the state owner provider. According to the trade unions, however, although employees in the private companies receive higher salaries, they may work be required to work longer hours.

■ Working conditions

Working conditions are seen as poor in the state-owned companies due to old infrastructure and trains. Working conditions are seen to have further deteriorated in the last 5-10 years. A high degree of labour-intensive and manual labour is required in certain occupations. There are only a few train stations which are equipped with modern facilities and equipment.

There are currently ongoing projects to update the railways and railway infrastructure; however there is a lack of funds for investing in new trains. In the next years, a discrepancy is expected to be observed; whereby the railway system would be modernised, it would still operate with old trains.

2.2.1.2 Company culture

A frequent restructuring and changes in management and the administration in the two state-owned companies have acted as a hurdle to develop a long-term company culture. The culture of pride in working for the rail sector from the socialist era has disappeared due to the above mentioned factors. According to the trade unions, the companies need to invest more efforts in building a corporate culture and culture of trust between the management and employees.

2.2.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

Trade union representatives opined that new hires and younger employees usually have a greater chance to lose their job. In addition, according to trade union representatives there are no stimuli and motivators in place to retain new hires. There is a tendency to keep long-standing staff even if they have been subject to disciplinary measures. There is also a lack of clear communication from the management to employees. More efforts in communicating to employees are required.

2.2.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

According to the stakeholders' interviewed, the negative trends observed in the sector have, to a large extent, been due to the internal factors and factors due to lack of clear government policy towards the rail sector (i.e. frequent changes in government led to changes in the management and administration in the state-owned companies) as described in Section 2 above with the economic crisis only exacerbating this trend which pre-dates the economic crisis. The economic crisis had a greater effect on the cargo business rather than passenger services.

Stakeholders opined that the demographic decline has played a negative effect on the sector combined with the overall unattractiveness of the railway sector for the young segments of the population. An aging workforce (with less than 5% of employees in NRIC being under 30 years of age) in the two companies is expected to result in even more severe labour shortages. High levels of emigration resulting in a decline of the population have also played a significant role, although it is difficult to isolate the factor of overall unattractiveness of the sector.

2.2.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Acute shortages in the following professions have been experienced⁵:

- Train dispatchers
- Engineers and maintenance mechanics
- Electro-engineers and electro-mechanics
- Railroad engineers and train drivers

With regard to railroad engineers and train drivers, a turnover of staff has been observed with trained engineers leaving to join the Sofia metro system or even leaving abroad (example of 5 train drivers leaving for the London tube). Main factors for the turnover and loss of staff is accounted to low salary levels and poor infrastructure and old trains.

2.2.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

In both NRIC and BDZ, there has been a significant reduction of staff in the recent years. In NRIC, a total number of 3,500 employees were made redundant in the period 2011-2014. The process of reducing staff has now been completed and the focus is on filling in shortage occupations.

NRIC has developed a 5-year plan for optimisation of human resources (2015-2020) including the gradual reduction of the workforce which has been implemented by not replacing retiring employees who have reached the pension age and by reassignment of workers to different positions/roles.

The average monthly number of unfilled vacancies is 300-500 of key functional positions. The company is now focusing on filling these vacancies as this leads to additional burden for current employees and presents an obstacle to the smooth operation of daily work. The strategy envisages **the increase of highly qualified workers**; however, doubts were expressed as to its realistic achievement of this objective. The **development of skills of current staff and re-training** were seen as most successful measures to fill in key vacancies.

BDZ has developed a long-term **Strategy for the development of the company and reviving its image 2016-2022**⁶. The **Human Resources Strategy** is based on the above-mentioned strategy. Due to sharp mismatch between supply and demand of key positions and difficulties to fill in key vacancies, a pivotal measure envisaged in the Strategy is the 'development of specialists in the key areas'. A first step, which is still to be implemented, is carrying out an analysis of the needs and developing a more strategic vision for the staff for the next 7 years. This will include a quantitative analysis of the need for specialists; whether they will be recruited from the external labour market or re-trained internally and retention measures.

⁵ Occupations in Bulgarian language (Please note that the researcher has made efforts to translate the occupations accurately but due to lack of technical knowledge some professions might not be completely accurate translated from Bulgarian to English): ръководител движение, механици по осигурителна техника, инженери и техници по железопътно строителство, електроинженери, електро-механици, локомотивни машинисти, работници свързани с експлоатация и ремонт на подвижен състав)

⁶ Available at: <http://holding.bdz.bg/bg/info/plan-za-reformi.html>

However, the representatives of FTTUB have opined that further efforts are needed in developing a targeted Human Resources Strategy.

With regard to the private **Bulgarian Railway Company**, there is currently recruitment ongoing of new workers.

2.2.4.1 Employment for young people

The younger employees (under 30 years of age) are less than 5% of the staff in the State Enterprise National Rail Infrastructure Company (NRIC). Younger employees and new hires are seen to first lose their job while there is a tendency to keep long-standing employees. Additionally, there is a high turnover of younger staff due to low salary levels.

From 2014, mentoring system has been developed in NRIC whereby a mentor is allocated for 6 months. Mentors are selected from professionals with good communication skills, willing to share their knowledge and experience. A small additional remuneration is provided to mentors. As in BDZ, currently there are no special initiatives. A programme for identification and development of talent is planned to be developed.

The Bulgarian Railway Company reported that **younger workers** below 30 years old receive higher additional remuneration for the number of years stayed with the company (клас прослужено време) as a stimulus to attract and retain young workers. This strategy is seen to have yielded results in attracting young employees.

2.2.4.2 Employment for women

A separate chapter dealing with the gender equality and social conditions for women is included in the Collective Agreements for 2014. It includes flexible working hours for pregnant employees and female employees with young children up to 3 years old as well as additional training after returning from maternity leave. In NRIC, women are less than 1% of the total staff totalling around 120 women most of which at administrative jobs.

2.2.4.3 Employment for older workers

The Collective Agreements envisage in the case of redundancies significantly higher compensation for employees which are soon to retire. There are also provisions not to make redundant employees in pre-retirement age whenever possible.

2.2.4.4 Employment for less skilled workers

No particular measures were identified.

2.2.4.5 Recruiting and internal training

Evidence from stakeholders shows that the main recruitment channels used are internal channels - i.e. job openings are advertised internally.

Employers' collaboration with universities and other higher education providers: The two state-owned companies have been in contact with the main higher education institutions but more targeted efforts are needed to attract students and stimulate take up of courses in the field of rail. (As mentioned above, specific university or college degrees are required for specific occupations, such as train drivers, engineers, mechanics, etc.)

According to the trade union representatives, measures were proposed to employers for the introduction of a recruitment scheme for graduates/graduate placement (whereby the employer covers expenses for the student in the duration of the studies and in exchange after the completion of studies, the graduate spends a certain period of time working in the company). However, such scheme has not been introduced so far.

Outsourcing is seen as a new practice and has been adopted to a very small extent (in the parcel delivery business and cleaning services).

Agencies for temporary employment have not been used by the state-owned companies so far.

2.2.4.6 International cooperation

Recommendations of the European Social Partners are generally observed. According to the trade unions, the observance of recommendations requires great efforts from trade unions.

2.2.5 Examples of good practices

The Bulgarian Railway Company reported that they pay higher additional remuneration for the number of years stayed with the company (клас прослужено време) to younger workers below 30 years old as a stimulus to attract young workers. This strategy is seen to have yielded results in attracting young employees.

2.3 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

2.3.1 Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees

As highlighted in section 2.1.1 above, working conditions are generally seen as unattractive due to The Collective Agreements (3 for BDZ and 1 for NRIC) determine the package of salaries, benefits and working conditions. The draft Collective Agreements as proposed by the trade unions had equal terms of conditions; however, there are now minor differences which are due to the negotiation process.

2.3.2 Identify effective recruitment and retention measures

The Bulgarian Railway Company reported that they pay higher additional remuneration for the number of years stayed with the company (клас прослужено време) to younger workers below 30 years old as a stimulus to attract young workers. This strategy is seen to have yielded results in attracting young employees.

2.3.3 Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

With regard to corporate culture, there was an agreement among all interviewees that more efforts need to be undertaken in this regard. No Strategy for corporate social responsibility currently exists in the NRIC. The negative image of the rail sector is also fuelled by the media

With regard to sickness absence, this is seen to have increased steadily in recent years. Factors accounting for this increase include higher average age of employees (close to 60 years of age); poor working conditions (including requiring labour intensive tasks and manual labour)

2.4 Summary SWOT analysis

Table 2.1 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Active trade unions in negotiating the pay and working conditions in the Collective Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of a long-term government strategy for the sector and frequent restructuring and changes in management of the two state-owned companiesLow salary levels in the two state-owned companiesMismatch between supply and demand resulting in gaps in key occupationsAging workforce

Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poor conditions of old trains and old rail infrastructure (average train speed of 40-50 km/h has been reported) ■ Strong automotive sector competing with the railway industry ■ Turnover and loss of staff in key professions such as train drivers, engineers and mechanics ■ No interest from students to take up courses in the area of rail (required by employers) ■ Poor corporate culture and image of the state-owned companies
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Longer-term vision and strategy, including less frequent changes in management and administration ■ Investing in infrastructure and new trains ■ Increasing the quality of rail travel as a service (both for passenger and cargo services) - Currently, companies are operating at a loss and focussed on reducing cost. More efforts should be made for the companies to be commercially attractive and increase revenues and profits. ■ Forecasting of skill shortages and needs should be introduced as an on-going exercise ■ Better quality of internal, on-the-job training and education ■ Investing efforts in corporate culture, employees' motivation and image of the two state-owned companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High risk of lack of qualified workers due to lack of interests from students to take up courses in the area of rail (required for certain professions) and due to high average age of current workforce ■ Further risk of passengers using alternative modes of transport

Annex 2 List of Interviewees

- Employers' representatives
 - Human Resources Department, State Enterprise National Railway Infrastructure Company, interview held 7th July 2015
 - Human Resources Department, Bulgarian National Rail, interview held 7th July 2015
 - Bulgarian Railway Company, interview held 8th July 2015
- Trade union representatives, group interview held 8th July 2015

Annex 3 Employee Surveys

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	23
Negative	46
Neutral	19
Positive	16
Very positive	0
Unsure	1
(blank)	2
Grand Total	107

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	7
Depends on occupation	1
Very positive	8
Quite positive	35
Neutral	15
Quite negative	23
Very negative	15
Don't know	2
n/a	1
Grand Total	107

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	13
Quite positive	37
Neutral	22
Quite negative	14
Very negative	12
Don't know	6
n/a	3
Grand Total	107

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?

No, far lower level	3
No, lower level	9
The same level	33
Yes, a little higher	18
Yes, far higher	16
Unsure	27
Don't know	0
n/a	1
Grand Total	107

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	99
Improve benefits	75
Improve working hours	29
Provide a better work-life balance	38
Improve career opportunities	51

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	11
Quite satisfied	52
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22
Quite dissatisfied	13
Very dissatisfied	7
Unsure	1
n/a	1
Grand Total	107

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	35
Most days	40
From time to time	29
Never	1
Unsure	0
n/a	2
Grand Total	107

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?									
Rating	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
Job security	54	23	10	13	1	0	1	5	107
A good working atmosphere	50	26	11	10	3	1	0	6	107
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	48	22	13	10	5	2	1	6	107
Overall level of pay and benefits	52	24	13	8	3	0	0	7	107
Pension provision	37	33	18	10	4	0	0	5	107
Opportunity for career development and promotion	36	25	21	8	5	2	5	5	107
Access to training and education	23	33	24	8	5	2	3	9	107
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	31	25	22	14	1	4	3	7	107
My employer providing additional health benefits	23	26	21	14	3	4	7	9	107
International opportunities / working abroad	13	15	22	11	17	8	15	6	107

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	0	48	25	15	12	1	6	107
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	0	31	31	17	17	3	8	107
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	0	38	15	28	1	17	8	107

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	2	9	31	38	23	1	3	107
Benefits	4	12	26	33	21	3	8	107
Working hours	11	42	22	15	9	0	8	107
Work-life balance	10	33	29	12	11	4	8	107
Career development opportunities	5	24	34	20	14	2	8	107

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	7	21	34	24	10	5	6	107

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	47	33	7	8	7	0	5	107
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	24	29	20	10	14	3	7	107
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	29	42	12	11	8	0	5	107
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	33	32	14	5	16	1	6	107
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	22	31	17	16	10	5	6	107
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	17	27	18	12	23	4	6	107
Overall, My workload suits me	23	43	13	8	9	1	10	107

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	12	26	29	14	21	2	3	107
There is a sense of a "railway family"	10	22	33	17	16	5	4	107
My commitment to the company is very high	26	51	20	1	3	0	6	107

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people, older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds	14	34	24	15	14	2	4	107
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	6	21	32	17	24	1	6	107
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	8	37	20	16	19	3	4	107
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	6	28	26	18	20	4	5	107
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	6	33	26	14	21	3	4	107

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	24	43	19	7	9	1	4	107
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	28	43	15	9	7	1	4	107
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	27	38	20	10	9	1	2	107
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	13	30	28	12	12	7	5	107
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	10	28	27	18	12	7	5	107

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	38	30	14	5	15	1	4	107
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including	24	34	15	7	19	3	5	107

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
appropriate life-long learning and training								
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	30	34	15	7	16	1	4	107
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	30	27	15	14	16	0	5	107
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	29	28	19	8	14	4	5	107
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	31	25	17	9	16	3	6	107

3 Country report – The Czech Republic

Total employment in the state owned companies is 39,500 workers of which 15,300 work at České dráhy, a.s (passenger services), 7,000 at ČD Cargo and 17,200 work for the Railway Infrastructure Administration.

The two largest actors in the sector are the state owned companies: České dráhy, a.s. (Czech Railways - passenger rail national operator) and SŽDC, s.o. (Railway Infrastructure Administration which is responsible for maintaining the railway infrastructure. With market opening, new players have entered into the market, including RegioJet, Leo Express, GW Regio Train and Arriva.

3.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

This section assess both image and attractiveness at individual company and sectoral level based on data analysis, opinion of employer and employee representatives.

3.1.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

According to interviewees, the overall image of the railway sector is **biased by negative slanted mass media campaigns**. Private and state owned companies use similar means of external communication (see table below). These efforts are seen as important and effective in helping to improve the image in recent years.

In the state owned companies the external communication is conducted by specific communication department which does PR activities for all state companies (passenger and cargo transport). Despite various channels of communication (media campaigns, road and fire brigade shows, co-operation with schools / universities, presentation in conferences, cultural events, exhibitions, historical train trips, open days, sponsorships, etc.) the state companies usually get the negative media attention due to the scale of their operation. The closures and failures in transport connections are presented in negative light in media. They attribute these problems to the biggest state owned company (České dráhy, a.s), although another entity is responsible (the company SŽDC that maintains the railway infrastructure) for these shortcomings. The tension and miscommunication between transporters and the company which maintains the railroads influences the negative public opinion as it results in delays and lower comfort of travel. The improvement of this relationship could bring the improvement of public perception of the whole railway sector.

Table 3.1 External communication means in rail companies

	Infrastructure	Passenger transport – state	Passenger transport – private
Media campaigns (TV, press)	X	X	X
Events (Railroad Day, road show, fire brigade show)		X	
Social media			X
Screens in trains			X
Website	X	X	X
Demonstration of new trains		X	
Company magazine			X
Conferences		X	
Cooperation with schools		X	

	Infrastructure	Passenger transport – state	Passenger transport – private
Additional services for passengers (refreshments, press)		X	
CSR activities		X	

Interviews with representatives of workers and employers

Nevertheless overall **image and attractiveness of the railway sector is improving**. The key factor for it is the gradual **renewal of the rolling stock** that makes the experience of passengers much comfortable and in general enhances the image of the railway sector.

The liberalization of the sector and presence of the new private transporters contributed to this change. One of private rail companies (RegioJet) focus their efforts on increasing the attractiveness of their services. Their motto is: 'To be one grade better' in comparison with the other railway companies, this way contributing to enhancing the attractiveness of the whole railway sector. Representative of state owned rail company also admitted that **the competitive environment helped to improve the overall situation** – especially regarding the culture of travel.

On the other hand **much still can be done for improving the image**, especially in regard to **professionalization of the staff** who is providing services to customers (they should be nice and neat, interacting positively, etc.). The representatives of state owned companies see that there has been significant improvement since the 90's in this regard. Nevertheless the situation has stagnated now and will probable change only when the new generation of workers replace the older, because the older employees are already accustomed to their ways.

The improvement of the attractiveness of the railway transport is also **a matter of European, national and regional politics**. The EU policy objective is that until 2050 there will be 50% of the transport ensure by ecological means. The railways should be also connected to the airports. But the unequal position of the railway in comparison with the road transport is a significant obstacle for further development of railway transport. The road transport is in fact more supported by the conditions set by the states. Main problem is that the fees for the infrastructure are unequal⁷. The pricing of railway services across Europe varies, which limits the competitiveness of the railways. Without making this condition fair, the huge investments to the railways renewal all around Europe will not pay off.

An important drawback is also the lack of the support from the state. Although the railways are declared as the ecological transport of the future, the real actions of the Government do not follow the statements. The České dráhy, a.s company for example still does not have the status of the national transport company and the state uses also other (private) companies for the necessary state-related services such as military transports etc. To improve the image of the railway cargo transport, the state representatives should treat their companies as a valuable state asset, which is not always the case. Also the fact that regional railway transport is administered by the individual regions doesn't support good functioning and good public image of the railways, because in many cases the time schedules of local connections are not well coordinated.

For **private companies it is easier to maintain good public image as they have less trains**, more recent and operate only at selected tracks. Thus, providing always the top-level service is less demanding than it is for a company with nation-wide scope, with older technical equipment and huge number of vehicles.

⁷ See for further details: the Green paper Towards Fair And Efficient Pricing In Transport

Interviewees see the opportunity to increase the attractiveness of the rail sector by presenting the rail transport as reliable, effective, well connected and environmentally friendly.

3.1.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

The overall image of employment in the railway sector in the Czech Republic is **improving in the last years because of the investments to the sector** that enhance the quality of passenger transport.

There are **differences between the major state and private companies** concerning their image and attractiveness as an employer. The private rail transporters in general, offer services of higher quality with advanced trains. But on the other hand they operate only at selected tracks while the public transporter ensures the countrywide operation and thus provides services of average standard quality. According to trade union representatives, private companies compete with low fare prices which attracts more customers but is not sustainable in the long term. The state-owned companies offer to their employees better social benefits (e.g. shorter working hours for the locomotive drivers) and higher security of the jobs. The private companies offer higher wages, with no social benefits, but the wages are still decisive factor for most potential employees.

Representatives of private companies consider themselves as leaders in activities aimed at improving the overall attractiveness of the railways, offering highly-reliable services with follow-up transport (door-to-door concept: follow-up buses, rent-a-bikes etc.). For the potential employees, **private transporters entice especially young people** by flexible starting positions with possibility of career progression. They have also an image of demanding employers, asking for excellent job performance.

State-owned company of passenger railway traffic, biggest railway employer (The The České dráhy, a.s) is difficult to compare with other railway companies in the Czech Republic due to the scale of its operation. According to representatives of state company the work at the railway is **in general perceived as an interesting job, but people tend to opt for easier way and less demanding professions and conditions**. According to trade union representatives to attract more employees the state owned companies should increase salaries, though the average wage in the The České dráhy, a.s is already now higher than the average wage in economy. Also the social benefits for older employees, and better working time arrangements could improve the attractiveness of these companies according to trade union representatives.

3.1.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

According to rail transport expert, the rail sector is **attractive from the job opportunities point of view** – rail sector offers interesting jobs with **above-average earnings with the plenty of benefits**. The representatives of trade unions share this opinion and assess the overall image of employment in the railway sector is positive **despite overall not favourable image due to the negative media presentation**.

The sector is more attractive for employees because of **improving working conditions**. The railway sector is now more attractive to work in than 10 years ago, because of new private companies concentrated on increasing the attractiveness of their services. That pushes other companies to increase the quality of services too. That is why the sector is now very **attractive employer for young people** from rural communities. Sector is less attractive for young people from highly urbanised regions because there operate companies from sectors that are more attractive (automotive industry or big foreign companies etc.).

3.1.4 Comparison with other sectors

The overall image of the railways in the society now is **a little bit better compared to other sectors** of the economy, especially **when comparing the manual working professions**.

The rising technology level and the competitive wages are the main reasons for that. The image and attractiveness of the rail sector can be compared with other transport sectors, i.e. the automotive transport and the air transport. The **rail sector is less attractive than the air transport and more attractive than the automotive transport**. In the recent years the popularity of railways has increased especially thanks to the better quality of services and new modern train sets of new private railway companies (like RegioJet, Leo Express, GW Regio Train and Arriva).

3.1.5 Examples of good practices

Interviewees mentioned the following good practices of external communication:

- Trade unions issued a calendar with photos of the work environment 'Then and Now', to show the change in working conditions.
- The state owned company tries to improve the attractiveness of the railway sector in many ways. Especially through improving the comfort of travel. The concrete actions are e.g. the trainings of the staff dealing with costumers and improving the professional skills of the staff in general. Also offering additional services to passengers, such as refreshments, press, etc. Among other promotion activities are events for various target groups (often children) e.g. the prevention trains (social pathology prevention), Czech Railways days, open days in various interesting facilities, nostalgic trains (historical), various competitions. There are also measures to increase accessibility for handicapped passengers, financial support of charities, sales policies (e.g. reduces fares for connections to cultural events, etc.), promotion materials (leaflets, banners).

3.2 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

This section presents the key employment strategies pursued by rail companies.

3.2.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

3.2.1.1 Pay and work conditions

The **working conditions and social standards have improved over the last 5-10 years**. In recent years especially the **modern technologies** are becoming more important attractive factor, which also increase the level of safety at work.

The rail sector is in the Czech Republic traditionally seen as an attractive to job seekers thanks to benefits provided to employees by the state company in the past as well as now. **Pay benefits and career advancement opportunities** (train drivers can work in more technology advanced trains, railway foreman can work as train dispatcher or manager) are definitely **the most attractive elements of working in the rail sector**.

The level of **wages** in state owned passenger transport and infrastructure companies is **competitive compared to other companies in the sector and similar occupations in other sectors**. The average wage in company (CZK 29,000 / EUR 1073) is **above the national average** (CZK 25,300 / EUR 936). There is however some tension regarding range and level of benefits between the employees of three entities to which the original state-owned company divided in 2003. The level of the wages is comparable to the of other railway companies in the Czech Republic (there are no employees leaving for higher wage to Czech competitors). Though the situation is different in regions bordering with Germany. The employees there often prefer to work in German railway companies which offer higher pension.

The representatives of companies consider the level of wages as the main factor of retention level, therefore other benefits have rather supplementary meaning for employees who appreciate them only after some time in the company. Employees **often take the non-wage benefits for granted** and do not realise that they are not provided in other companies. The benefits have lower influence on retention in comparison with the job characteristics, working

conditions, image of company and technical advancement of trains. Specific **motivational factor for the locomotive drivers are new technologies** (especially modern and well-equipped locomotives), that provide opportunities for professional development and together with the good level of wages represents very strong and attractive incentive.

The interviewees mentioned the following benefits offered to employees:

- contribution to their private pension savings and life insurance,
- premium for their life or work anniversary,
- contribution for recreation of employee and his/her family,
- free ticket for rail transport also for the whole family,
- above standard redundancy payment,
- meal vouchers (it is an ordinary benefit in the Czech Republic),
- fitness cards,
- special health benefit (free 11 day stay in spa) to employees in physically demanding professions.
- 6 weeks of leave (= 30 working days)

These benefits are higher in comparison with the other companies outside of the railway sector thus some the interviewee assume that they influence the recruitment and retention of new employees.

The state-owned company offers to their employees above standard health and social care conditions (regular health checks, rehabilitation and recreation stays, high safety standards, etc.), that is also stipulated in the collective agreement. The entitlement to health and social benefits increases with the age of employee. Additionally there are significant financial benefits after the employee reaches certain age which makes the rail sector attractive to older employees.

On the other hand, the interviewees mentioned the following least attractive elements of work in rail sector:

- health risks (the locomotive drivers), risks of injuries, accidents and violence (locomotive drivers, train conductors and similar occupations),
- continuous working hours,
- irregular and mobile nature of the work difficult to combine working and personal life,
- time-consuming commuting for longer distance where the work is performed,
- physically exhausting work,
- in some cases bad working conditions (e.g. high temperatures in locomotives). The companies invests to improve them e.g. better and ergonomic furniture at the lodges where the train crew sleeps when performing longer journeys, providing drinks, quality dressing, etc.,
- wage/benefits in cities,
- training and development to meet health and safety regulations – the necessity to undergo trainings and meet various requirements (applicable mainly to locomotive drivers),
- company culture and environment which it is not considered as particularly attractive,
- the necessity to work outside in all kinds of weather (for some professions), not very pleasant environment of the lodges, long shifts.

The companies **cannot change some of these unattractive working conditions**. The irregular working time schedules constitute an important obstacle for recruiting new employees. However this aspect is impossible to change in cargo transport as the passenger transport has priority at the railway network.

The level of **sickness absence is the same or even lower than the average in the economy and it does not constitute a major problem** for the companies. There are specific professions with higher the health risks – the locomotive drivers more often suffer from e.g. hypertension, dysfunctions of musculoskeletal system, diabetes, etc.; stewards are more in danger of being ill. The health requirements are quite high in some professions

(vision and hearing) and older workers who do not comply with them have to find new job. Trade unions negotiate with employers that they should find job for these workers within the companies.

The violence and aggression from passengers is considered as severe day-to-day problem in the Czech Republic (there were even fatal injuries caused by violent passengers). Coping with aggression, arrogance, unpleasant behaviour and problem solving are big issues of regular training of employees. Companies also prevent these risks by mixed train crew (at least one man aboard) safeguards in night trains and cooperation with plainclothes police officers. Especially train conductors are exposed to the risk of violence from passengers. Trade union seeks to change legislation in terms increasing the penalty for this offense. It should be classified as assaulting a public official.

Three interviewees were familiar with CER and ETF activities and aware of the Joint recommendations of European social partners. They apply them if possible or have similar rules already implemented.

3.2.1.2 *Company culture*

Company culture differs across private and public rail companies. In state owned companies in the last 5-10 years the corporate culture has improved. People value their jobs more and are more engaged. Also the employees to a large degree identify with the company and overall cohesion is high. The companies implement policies that support the engagement as well as quality performance. The communication and trainings are seen as a key tool to engage employees in these policies.

There are no substantial differences among groups of employees in integration with the company. Although older workers who work for the company for many years might be a bit more integrated. On the other hand young people brought up in new system are more engaged and proactive in the workplace.

The loyalty of employees to their employers and to the railways in general is very high. The underlying factors for the strong company identity lie mainly in the often life-long working contracts, stable benefits, security of the jobs, more free time than in other sectors etc. Also various company activities supporting the cohesion, such as cultural events (e.g. Christmas theatre), communication activities, explaining, discussions, regular trainings, etc. Often their railway occupation is a subject of professional pride.

Private companies are relatively new so they are at the stage of building company culture. Representatives of these companies admit that train drivers are less integrated and do not share the team spirit (especially older drivers and former trade unionists refuse to wear uniforms).

The companies **do not use temporary work agencies and rarely outsource services** which contributes to strong sense of belonging and integration of employees. Also trade union representatives admit that agency workers represent only a marginal number. Nevertheless, due to liberalisation of the market this trend is increasing.

The “railway family” understood as a professional pride and tradition still exists, though it is slowly disappearing. The “railway family” **as a notion of cohesion among all railway workers does not exist.** The division of state owned company to three companies has had a negative influence on this image. The strongest association is among train drivers. Young employees not necessarily are admirers of railways. Private companies to foster the team spirit and company culture (not association with railway family) organise official company meeting once a year and non-official company trips (four times a year). Trade unions organise several events for enhancing ‘rail family’ – cultural and sport events, joint recreation, events for pensioners. Public companies for instance organise ‘Railway Day’ every year, Railway Museum is open to the public, there is Winged Wheel Foundation with mission of conservation and restoration of railway heritage.

Private rail companies in the Czech Republic do not have **Corporate Social Responsibility** strategy but they do take part in specific actions if opportunity arises. State owned companies have such strategies and they concentrate on their own employees. The company try to enhance the financial literacy of their employees, because it seems that some people could have a problem with their ability to pay off their credits/loans/mortgage.

3.2.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

Collective Bargaining Agreements are in the three state-owned companies. The interviewees differed in their assessment of similarity across these agreements. Some argued that they are more or less the same with only marginal differences. Others saw difference in the range of benefits and average wages. The locomotive drivers consider themselves as elite of the railway crew and that sometimes results in the tensions, especially e.g. during the collective bargaining, when their demands are often higher than of the other employees. Trade unions do not participate in any activities in recruitment and retention. They negotiate excellent compensation for redundant employees. The private companies do not have collective agreements nor trade unions.

Internal communication seems to be effective. Although in state owned cargo company the atmosphere among employees towards their employer is rather negative. There is general tendency of all employees to be critical to their employers. The Company faced several personnel changes in management and its media image is negative. Besides that, their employees are scattered all over the country and it is very difficult to control and organize unified flows of information and promote a collective spirit.

The companies use **following channels to reach employees:**

- e-mails to disseminate daily internal information,
- newsletter,
- meetings – which are not always efficient due scale of operations and irregular working schedules,
- notice boards,
- company parties organised once a year,
- internal journal “My journal”,
- intranet.

3.2.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

Among the recent trends that affect the employment in rail sector belong the demographic decline and ageing workforce. It is especially valid for locomotive drivers whose job is very demanding and the younger generations are less willing to undergone the higher level of stress and discomfort of the irregular/night/weekend shifts etc. Majority of the locomotive drivers are over 50. The growing average age brings also the consequences of increasing number of health issues.

The locomotive drivers suffer more often with health problems related to stress, such as high blood sugar levels (even diabetes), hypertension, stomach problems, etc. and these problems are increasing in recent years (probably also due to the ageing of the workers). The workers more frequently fail to meet the health and fitness requirements to perform the job. The sickness absences are often longer (but it is also related to the fact that for the first three days of the absence the employee doesn't get any compensation according to the Czech legislation).

Only train drivers expect an entire career in the railway sector. As for other staff – especially young, the work in the railway sector is only temporary job (starting position for young stewards) or good opportunity of additional earnings.

3.2.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Staff turnover differs between professions, nevertheless is not seen as particular problem. In cargo company the staff fluctuation used to be higher as they employed difficult employees (e.g. former prisoners). Now, after the major staff reductions, this is not the case anymore and many of the staff are their life-time employees.

High staff turnover is among call centre employees whose job is quite repetitive and stressful. To encourage staff retention in this unit companies apply regular rotation of positions of call operators and booking clerks.

Also higher staff turnover is among train's crew due to irregular work shifts and cleaning teams which have high norms in terms of speed of cleaning. The companies look for people who accept the working conditions. The unemployment rate among low skill people is generally quite high thus it is not seen as problem.

There are significant skills shortages within the sector. Companies struggle to fill following positions:

- train drivers,
- train traffic controllers,
- smiths, electricians, power current maintenance, welders,
- all professions in infrastructure maintenance and in repairing of locomotive and railway wagons,
- track maintenance, communication equipment and safety technique operators.

Locomotive drivers belong among the most needed professions. There is a permanent shortage of these workers. The locomotive driver is the job that is most difficult to fill due to the high risks and high level of discomfort associated with the occupation. Also there are risks of violence from the passengers or attacks on the train (e.g. shooting, placing objects at the tracks, etc.). Another factor is that not all the applicants pass the demanding professional training and meet the requirements (e.g. related to health). On the other hand there is low staff turnover as the most of locomotive drivers are very proud of their profession that is also a hobby to them and a lifetime commitment. There problem is quite rapid aging process in occupation of train drivers.

Generally, there is lack of people in occupations which require technical education. Vocational schools which trained train drivers were closed, therefore now companies have to compete to recruit older workers with this type of education. Currently there is no specific field of education with train driver specialisation. To remedy this, the **Transport Training Institute was established** (as a subsidiary of České dráhy, a.s.) and authorized by the Ministry of Transport. Transport Training Institute has obtained accreditation for education of train drivers. This Institute organises targeted recruitment of students of engineering and electrician apprenticeship and provides training for future train drivers, dispatchers, controllers etc. However young people are not interested in technical fields of education. Additionally apprenticeships have bad image.

To address these skills shortages companies **train potential employees** to obtain train driver's licence. The companies also often **re-train (using European Social Fund) their own employees** of other professions to become locomotive drivers where possible (especially in case of some professions which are being cut). They **cooperate with schools and universities, employment offices**. There are lot of unemployed candidates coming from the labour market, but not many of them (less than 40% fulfil the basic health requirements) are qualified or can match the requirements for performing the job. In the Czech Republic, the health standards for performing the job are higher than in other EU countries. It is considered to be to the benefit of the railway transport safety and so far there is no discussion about lowering the requirements, even though they can cause some difficulties in finding eligible drivers.

The companies try to solve skills shortages by **hiring Slovaks** as only they have very good command of Czech language which is necessary for the job.

From time to time they launch **recruitment campaigns for locomotive drivers**. The candidates from within the company as well as from outside can apply. The experience with campaigns is generally good, however only a small part of applicants (10% by estimation) make it through the whole recruitment process.

Skills shortages differ regionally. There is a lack of skilled manual workers in regions with low unemployment rate. Also private companies report problems in recruitment of employees (train drivers, electricians, engineers) in capital cities (Praha and Bratislava). Young people are not interested in technical fields and can find more attractive job offers.

The interviewees also reported oversupply of administrative employees, stewards and regionally train dispatchers, signallers, supervisors as distance traffic control will be located in two cities (Praha, Přerov).

3.2.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

The interviewees mentioned the following factors influencing current recruitment strategies in rail companies:

- new technologies influencing the skills needed;
- lack of interest of young people in technical education;
- seasonality – at the end of the academic year young people and students are more interested in work in rail sector as e.g. stewards;
- other companies in rail sector – in case of train drivers important is financial offer given to them by competition. Private companies head hunt the locomotive drivers of the traditional state-owned businesses. They attract them by providing higher wages. Also they offer an opportunity to drive recent modern machines which attracts some (especially young) locomotive drivers. Thus, in addition to many experienced employees leaving for retirement, the state owned companies face staff reductions due to many workers leaving for their competitors. State owned companies try to compete by offering high stability of jobs and other non-financial benefits (e.g. health and social programmes).
- the demand for railway transport is increasing thus the employees are not in danger of losing their jobs;
- investments in the railway network regulated by the Ministry of Transport influence the number of needed employees;
- centralisation of traffic management results in staff reductions;
- lower willingness of unemployed to accept job that is connected with lower comfort (e.g. shifts);
- demographic change and rising age of highly trained staff;
- public procurement;
- Regional labour markets:
 - unemployment rate in regions;
 - Wages in general are seen as the most important factor of recruitment and retention of employees. Nevertheless, the concrete situation varies a lot among regions. In Prague, for example, the employees have relatively high chance to find better paid and less demanding job, while in the country – especially in mountain areas around borders with high unemployment rate – the work at the railway means a stable job with far higher wage than most of the neighbours can expect from local employers.
- Public perception of rail as rather “dirty” job.

The economic crisis did not have impact on passenger transport companies but caused substantial job losses in cargo companies due to lower demand for transport of goods.

HR recruitment strategies of rail companies differ between the national and private transporters – the České dráhy, a.s. continue to decrease number of staff and at the same

time they open new positions for qualified workers. Private transporters increase recruitment of junior staff regardless of qualifications and then they train them on the job.

In general, the jobs at the railways are relatively stable. The employees do not face high risks of losing a job. Nevertheless in the ČD Cargo company this isn't the case and (as mentioned above) the employees face a risk of dismissals, but that does not apply to all of them (e.g. the newly coming younger employees and graduates are not at this risk).

There are also areas where is much higher number of applicants than the actual demand for workforce. It is mainly the administration (clerical jobs) and IT jobs.

The table below summaries recruited staff in short and long perspective.

Table 3.2 HR strategies and recruited staff

	Short-term perspective	Long-term perspective
Private	stewards, train drivers, booking clerks and call centre operators	stabilization of staff in sales, customer service and marketing departments
State	reduction of aging staff (passenger and cargo transport) Replacement of staff: rail traffic controllers, conductors, locomotive drivers, wagon masters (rolling-stock mechanics), qualified manual workers (e.g. welders, electricians, locksmiths)	Companies are not very experienced in HR planning, they prefer short-term approach. Cargo company plans to dismiss about 1 thousand employees in the next 3-5 years.

Interviews

The view on the work in railway sector has been changing with the entry of new market players (RegioJet, Leo Express, GW Regio Train and Arriva). Today it is more often seen as attractive job also due to technological progress.

Nevertheless recruitment and retention became more challenging, especially for state owned companies. The companies cannot change the nature of the job and high safety demands which can eliminate some candidates.

3.2.4.2 Employment for young people

Attracting young people is gaining importance over the time. Private companies do not have any programmes or strategies for young people as they are popular among them. In general, private transporters target their employing strategies at young people with respect to lower average wages they can offer.

State owned companies cooperate with schools and universities trying to attract young people to technical professions, e.g.:

- The state owned company has scholarship programme “Čédés”. Students of the last grade of basic schools can apply for a scholarship if they choose one of the suitable technical fields of study at the secondary school and sign an agreement to prepare for and then work for five years in the České dráhy, a.s. The experience is that many of these students drop out from their commitment, even though there is a financial sanction. Additionally some of them do not pass the necessary health check.
- Among the universities the most important partners include the Czech Technical University in Prague and the Jan Perner Transport Faculty of the University of Pardubice. This cooperation evolves mainly around the modern and technically advances locomotives.
- For attracting students/pupils before they finish their course of studies company organizes “Student Cup” every year in several cities. This event aims at pupils in the age

13-15 years to enhance their interest in professions needed in railway transportation. During these events the participants receive the information about individual professions in the company and about the relevant schools in which they can study. Sport activities are the important part of this event. It is a PR event to enhance the interest of young people in technical educational branches and to find out new perspective employees. Company have sign a co-operation agreement with 17 vocational education schools and 6 Universities. The activities concentrate on lecturers on specific current topics and on promotion events. It depends on current needs of company and schools. This cooperation is evaluated as useful the students receive the information about company and some of them start their career in the company. It also contributes to image improvement.

According to interviewees the working conditions in rail sector can be attractive for younger workers. However the problem is a lack of young people with needed skills and lower will to perform jobs with higher level of discomfort (irregular/long shifts, night work, uncomfortable working environment, high level of stress and responsibility).

3.2.4.3 Employment for women

There are also no specific gender related programmes.

The work-life balance is a challenge only for several professions and especially for mothers with children in pre-school or school age. The workers know their shift schedule in advance thus they can arrange their private life in accordance with it. There are no substantial differences among men and women or among young and senior workers. Everybody knows the working conditions and agree with them

3.2.4.4 Employment for older workers

There are no special measures/priorities for any groups of employees besides the older workers that may enjoy social or health programmes (e.g. recreation or fitness holidays), but these programs are rather marginal and present only in state owned companies.

The working conditions for older workers in the physically demanded profession are not very attractive. Therefore the state owned company helps them to transfer to less demanded profession within the company through special training for older workers. The companies also try to reduce number of older staff, in this case trade unions insists on socially sensitivity of dismissals.

3.2.4.5 Employment for less skilled workers

Companies in the sector have no priority actions for employing/ addressing skills shortages of lower skilled workers.

3.2.4.6 Job mobility

Working time requirements are a barrier in recruiting especially train crew because they have to spend a lot of time out of their home. The issue plays more important role for women than for men and rises with the age of employees. Similar barrier has occupation of train drivers however they are usually rail enthusiasts thus the mobility is not as big problem for them as it is in the case of a train crew. The companies are not able to change this aspect of the work and will not be able to do it in a future.

3.2.4.7 Recruiting and internal training

The table below summarises channels used to recruit new employees.

Table 3.3 Recruiting channels

Channel	Private	State	Usefulness
Employee referrals		✓	
Job portals			

Channel	Private	State	Usefulness
Cooperation with PES		✓	the cooperation with the Labour Office is the main source of candidates for state owned companies
Company website	✓	✓	
Internships	✓		
Scholarships			
Facebook	✓	✓	High as they have many followers (60,000)
LinkedIn	✓		
Job fairs	✓		

Source: ICF based on the interviews conducted

The companies constantly pay the attention to enhancing the skills of employees.

In state owned company need for training differs for various positions. For professions dealing with machines (mechanical engineers) it is much more demanding than e.g. for the train conductors. Thus, it is not possible to tell if this is an attractive or discouraging feature of the job.

The in-company training of locomotive drivers is very lengthy (not many candidate are willing to take it) and expensive. There is also shortage of personnel capacities to provide these trainings. Among other factors that limit the number of candidates for train drivers are strict health requirements and related health checks, irregular and demanding character of working schedule that includes also long periods of being far from home, etc.

Private companies provided initial courses for new employees, courses enhancing the necessary professional soft (especially customer service skills) and hard skills (regular testing). On-the-job training is a way of familiarising employees with company vision: quality of services, strong orientation on customers. Representative of private company expects that all employees are responsible for and proud of their job, however admits that train drivers is specific group which is less integrated in the company and do not share the team spirit (e.g. older drivers and former trade unionists refuse to wear uniforms).

The infrastructure rail company offers courses promoting the adaptability of workers (courses for workers 50+), other courses aim to transform employees to mentors and after passing the course they can act as a lecturer in a specific theme for other employees, the company provides the courses for young employees (specific programme for graduates). All of these activities have positive effects especially on skills and on the sense of belonging to the company. Workers' perception of educational activities is mixed some of them welcome it the others do not.

State-owned company apart from regular trainings (e.g. for locomotive drivers, psychology training of those dealing with costumers) offers competence agreements for employees within which they can study suitable university programmes or can learn languages (including internships abroad). The company manages "academy" where various lecturers are invited to discuss rail issues. The academy is popular among rail managers.

3.2.5 Identify areas for job creation

In near future the rail companies will recruit: stewards, train drivers, booking clerks, call centre operators, rail traffic controllers, conductors, locomotive drivers, wagon masters (rolling-stock mechanics), qualified manual workers (e.g. welders, electricians, locksmiths).

3.2.6 Examples of good practices

The following good practice examples were mentioned by interviewees:

- The most useful programme to attract students in LE private company is the UNICHANCE. The programme offers 3 month students exchange. The students are selected on the basis of assessment centre (<http://www.unichance.cz/o-uni-chance.php>).
- The České dráhy a.s company (main railway employer in the Czech Republic) has a programme of scholarships for upper secondary students called Čédés. The students of the last grade of the basic school (i.e. at the end the compulsory general education, at the age of 15) interested to study selected secondary study fields or students of selected secondary schools can apply for the programme. The student signs a contract and is obliged to work for the company 5 years after graduation. The programme has a potential to select young people with a high interest in railways, e.g. with a family tradition, etc. But in general it is not extremely successful in terms of long-time numbers of employees as many of the recruits leave the company after their obligation is fulfilled (with a main reason for it being better financial and working conditions they find elsewhere). The programme used to be very attractive, nevertheless the situation has changed a bit since the Company set stricter rules that bind the candidates to pay back the money even in case they do not complete the programme (e.g. in case they do not pass the maturita exam). The students are more cautious since the state standardized maturita was introduced in the last years (it is generally considered more difficult than were previous maturita exams conducted individually by each school and not centrally regulated). The requirements for the study results (marks) are also relatively high which means that only very good students can apply.
- Škoda Transportation trains young people in renovation of trains.

3.3 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

This section presents conclusions and implications from the research based on the work undertaken. It identifies what works well and what works less well in terms of attractiveness for employees and job seekers.

3.3.1.1 Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees

The attractiveness of sector differs depending on the company (private vs. state owned, cargo vs. passenger transport) and profession. In state owned companies most attractive elements of working in the sector are benefits (contribution to private pension savings and to the life insurance, free tickets for rail transport, contribution for recreation, above standard redundancy payment) and job security. The job is considered as an interesting one – many of the railway jobs include interaction with people, which is perceived as attractive by many employees; on the other hand many jobs include working with modern technologies that is interesting as well. The companies offer career advancement and the related training – for most professions there are possibilities of professional development and further career steps.

Regarding the profession of steward, the most attractive elements is definitely interesting work with people, flexible working hours and pay. As for profession of train driver, the most attractive element of is the opportunity to drive the most advanced trains equipped with cutting-edge technologies (in private companies).

Additionally the perception of attractive elements differs between regions. In Prague the opportunity to gain experience that can be used in other firms is the most attractive factor. In Ostrava it is a job security.

3.3.1.2 Identify effective recruitment and retention measures

The companies do not any particular measures to encourage staff retention or recruitment.

The companies provide as additional benefits meal vouchers, free water, tea and coffee, discount on the products of business partners, language courses, holiday bonuses. However interviewees do not consider that these benefits have a special influence on recruitment or

retention. They are more or less similar benefits provided in all rail companies. The benefits have lower influence on recruitment in comparison with the job characteristics, working conditions and image of company.

3.3.1.3 Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

Company culture differs across private and public rail companies. Nevertheless employees are loyal to their employers and to the rail sector. The “railway family” understood as a professional pride and tradition still exists, though it is slowly disappearing.

Companies in the sector have no priority actions for employing/ addressing skills shortages of young people, women, old workers or lower skilled workers.

3.3.2 Examples of good practices

The following practices can be regarded as examples of good practices:

- A calendar with photos showing change in work environment in the rail sector.
- The students exchange programme in which students are selected on the basis of assessment centre (<http://www.unichance.cz/o-uni-chance.php>).
- Trainings for young people on how to renovate a train (Škoda Transportation).

3.4 Summary SWOT analysis

The summary SWOT analysis is provided below. It presents the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of rail companies as employers.

Table 3.4 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing the attractiveness of their services due to privatisation of companies and competition ■ High demand for passenger transport ■ Positive public image of private companies (especially among young people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The demographical trends (ageing workers are more often losing their permissions to perform the jobs due to worsening health conditions) ■ Negative public image of state owned companies
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New technologies used in rail sector which will also influence the skills needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of specific secondary vocational programme offering technical education (e.g. locomotive drivers) ■ Public perception of manual work (less valued than in the past) ■ lack of interest of young people in technical education ■ Competition for workers (locomotive drivers) with German companies ■ Changing labour market conditions in regions

Annex 4 List of Interviewees

- Prof. Ing. Václav Cempírek, Ph.D. – transport issues expert, professor at Logistic Systems Unit at Jan Perner Transport Faculty of University of Pardubice
- Martin Bureš – Head of HR – HR development planning (recruitments, training and education) at railway company “Leo Express”
- Mgr.Martin Malý – Trade union representative, Railway Workers’ Trade Union (OSŽ) – vice-chairman for Railway Infrastructure Administration; collective bargaining
- Jaroslav Pejša – Trade union representative, Railway Workers’ Trade Union (OSŽ) – chairman,
- Martin Chomča – HR specialist – HR development planning (recruitments, training and education) at railway company “RegioJet”.
- JUDr. Ivo Veselý – Director of the HR Department at Czech Railways (České dráhy a.s.)
- Ing. Pavel Koucký – Head of HR at Railway Infrastructure Administration (SŽDC) – developing and implementation plans for recruitments, trainings, benefits, wage policy
- Doc. Dr. Ing. Roman Štěrba – Member of the Executive at Czech Railways (České dráhy,a.s.), professor at Institute of Logistics and Transport Management at Faculty of Transport Science of Czech Technical University in Prague
- Ing. Mojmír Bakalář – Director of the HR Department at Czech Railways Cargo (ČD Cargo,a.s.)

Annex 5 Employee Survey

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	180
Negative	2339
Neutral	2792
Positive	1134
Very positive	44
Unsure	515
(blank)	68
Grand Total	7072

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	252
Depends on occupation	462
Very positive	297
Quite positive	2776
Neutral	1988
Quite negative	581
Very negative	87
Don't know	569
n/a	60
Grand Total	7072

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	426
Quite positive	2617
Neutral	2076
Quite negative	0
Very negative	548
Don't know	1351
n/a	54
Grand Total	7072

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?

No, far lower level	1374
No, lower level	988
The same level	1115
Yes, a little higher	248
Yes, far higher	60
Unsure	3198
Don't know	0
n/a	89
Grand Total	7072

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	5720
Improve benefits	2827
Improve working hours	1318
Provide a better work-life balance	1523
Improve career opportunities	2139

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	2284
Quite satisfied	3341
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	749
Quite dissatisfied	77
Very dissatisfied	0
Unsure	399
n/a	188
Grand Total	7072

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	397
Most days	1496
From time to time	4413
Never	363
Unsure	310
n/a	93
Grand Total	7072

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
Job security	4217	1798	550	133	64	84	35	191	7072
A good working atmosphere	3424	2548	563	117	50	75	46	249	7072
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	3550	2268	605	134	45	139	46	285	7072
Overall level of pay and benefits	2750	2867	874	168	54	84	23	252	7072
Pension provision	1837	2365	1553	546	293	94	128	256	7072
Opportunity for career development and promotion	1374	2611	1530	442	224	220	321	350	7072
Access to training and education	1283	2520	1858	555	256	143	118	339	7072
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	1096	2166	1583	561	352	578	397	339	7072
My employer providing additional health benefits	944	1698	1524	635	452	719	766	334	7072
International opportunities / working abroad	190	452	859	803	1394	345	2545	484	7072

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	1507	4313	880	160	47	63	102	7072
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	1082	3564	1401	304	109	363	249	7072
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	1329	3337	1621	271	84	204	226	7072

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	608	2645	2429	762	141	357	130	7072
Benefits	1041	3729	1465	250	56	329	202	7072
Working hours	703	3016	1796	769	206	405	177	7072
Work-life balance	539	2536	2367	661	159	583	227	7072
Career development opportunities	359	2148	2885	675	141	672	192	7072

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	570	2718	2668	294	64	578	180	7072

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	2437	3675	573	210	59	27	91	7072
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	1223	2549	1257	1141	407	217	278	7072
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	1304	3710	1241	409	113	125	170	7072
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	2062	3977	590	114	35	138	156	7072
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	498	1695	1412	332	112	2716	307	7072
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	562	2709	2137	636	209	571	248	7072
Overall, My workload suits me	921	4310	1135	261	79	117	249	7072

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	430	3127	2388	497	94	357	179	7072
There is a sense of a "railway family"	382	2320	2317	802	149	788	314	7072
My commitment to the company is very high	1041	3520	1657	211	41	286	316	7072
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people,	559	2657	1844	559	112	1124	217	7072

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds								
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	267	1810	2277	827	229	1423	239	7072
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	550	3285	1743	503	117	633	241	7072
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	287	2054	2318	693	174	1288	258	7072
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	501	3125	1867	452	140	779	208	7072

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	1506	3882	1342	0	42	169	131	7072
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	1603	3891	1298	0	55	105	120	7072
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	1201	3719	1581	0	49	360	162	7072
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	707	2513	2765	0	67	827	193	7072
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	708	2585	2551	0	55	883	290	7072

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	1312	3327	1821	0	135	309	168	7072
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	1051	3152	2090	0	139	434	206	7072

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	1426	3496	1664	0	133	195	158	7072
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	1259	3407	1700	0	149	334	223	7072
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	1282	3159	1531	0	106	785	209	7072
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	1342	2981	1487	0	91	934	237	7072

Annex 6 Student/Pupil Surveys

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Please tick all that apply)

Males	251
Females	75
Older workers	207
Younger workers	37
All of the above	192

Important factors when looking for an employer

	1 Most important	2	3	4	5 Least important	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
An employer where there are likely to be considerable future job opportunities	141	195	75	19	5	9	9	453
An employer that my family/friends have worked in	215	165	46	5	4	7	11	453
The level of pay and financial reward	27	72	113	75	116	36	14	453
Long term job security	203	199	32	2	2	4	11	453
Good work / life balance	319	99	19	2	3	2	9	453
Opportunities to develop my career	196	162	64	11	4	6	10	453
International opportunities / working abroad	183	178	64	11	5	3	9	453
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	70	120	133	78	35	6	11	453
A good working atmosphere	176	188	57	10	4	5	13	453
Opportunities for training and development / learning new skills	209	176	42	8	5	3	10	453
An employer that provides flexible working time	132	180	94	28	4	3	12	453
An employer that has good health & safety standards	91	157	124	37	19	15	10	453
An employer that provides good pension benefits	190	156	73	13	8	4	9	453
An employer that is close to my home	134	189	68	26	9	18	9	453
An employer that promotes innovation	97	148	131	41	23	4	9	453
An employer with a positive image	82	179	123	27	10	22	10	453
Other	12	11	29	2	7	206	186	453

When compared with other sectors, how do you think the rail sector compares?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No opinion	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	63	209	84	44	9	38	6	453
Benefits	76	158	123	22	6	57	11	453
Working hours	33	127	124	97	25	37	10	453
Career development opportunities	50	161	131	56	10	35	10	453
Work-life balance	37	141	138	69	19	37	12	453
Training and education	66	172	126	39	16	27	7	453
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	84	139	93	28	9	53	47	453

How closely do the jobs in the railway sector match your career aspirations?	
Exact match	98
A somewhat good match	172
Not a good match	66
Poor match	71
Don't know	38
(blank)	8
Grand Total	453

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be higher in other sectors?	
Yes, far higher	69
Yes, a little higher	52
The same level	73
No, far lower level	68
No, lower level	56
Unsure	127
Don't know	0
(blank)	8
Grand Total	453

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
A Short-term one (0-1 year)	18
A Medium-term one (2-5 years)	68
A long term one (more than 5 years)	307
Don't know	54

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
(blank)	6
Grand Total	453

Are you aware of any specific initiatives to encourage students or pupils to choose the railway sector?	
Yes	136
No	309
(blank)	8
Grand Total	453

Were you previously thinking of applying for a job in the rail sector?	
Yes	211
No	153
Perhaps	82
(blank)	7
Grand Total	453

Are you aware of any recruitment activities?	
Yes	216
No	232
(blank)	5
Grand Total	453

Did the recruitment activities change your view of the rail sector?	
No	233
Yes, more favourable	53
Yes, less favourable	17
Don't know	144
(blank)	6
Grand Total	453

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
Yes	155

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
No	291
(blank)	7
Grand Total	453

4 Country report – France

4.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

4.1.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

SNCF operates the country's national rail services, including the TGV, France's high-speed train and rail network. Its functions include operation of railway services for passengers and freight, traffic management and signalling as well as maintenance of rail infrastructure.

– Factors of attractiveness

According to interviews with trade unions in the railway sector, rail companies in France are in general fairly attractive companies. However, the publicly-owned company (SNCF) appear to be more attractive than private companies. A big public group is seen as a secure working place where it is very unlikely to be subject to big restructuring plans. Therefore, this company tends to attract people who seek job stability and willing to make their career in the same company. 95% of SNCF staff stays all their career at SNCF and the turnover rate is indeed very low (around 8%)⁸. In addition, SNCF is also known to offer a very good social package which includes healthcare insurance, early retirement⁹ and free travel (*facilités de circulation*)¹⁰ with SNCF for the employee and his/her family. The attractiveness of the job security of a big group can however be a sort of a double-edged sword especially in this difficult economic context, as applicants may be more attracted by job security than by the company itself and choose SNCF by default.

The trade unions also agreed that working conditions were good in this publicly-owned company. The access to training is a priority of the company as each year SNCF spends almost 6% of its total payroll on in initial training and in continuing vocational education of its employees. SNCF employees have benefited from more than 6 million hours of training courses and traineeships in 2011. For SNCF, training is seen as one of the key vectors of career development as 70% of managers come from technical jobs. Emphasis is also made on better integrating diversity in the company. Even if efforts are still needed, women represent 22% of employees of the Group¹¹ which is above the average share of women in European railway companies.

SNCF was recently awarded the Top Employers France 2015 certification. This certification has been awarded by the Top Employers Institute which certifies excellence in the conditions that employers create for their people globally.¹² The Top Employers certification is given to organisations that achieve the highest standards of excellence in employee conditions. Thanks to the company's participation in the HR Best Practices Survey, a comprehensive analysis of the Human Resources environment was made critically assessing HR management and employee conditions within the organisation. Following validation and an external audit, performance scores were rated against an international standard. This research revealed that SNCF provides exceptional employee conditions, nurtures and develops talent throughout all levels of the organisation and has demonstrated its leadership status in the HR environment, optimises its employment practices and making personal

⁸ <http://www.lopinion.fr/13-mai-2014/sncf-se-defend-d-offrir-generouse-pre-retraite-a-agents-12220>

⁹ Even if 'early retirement' has been reformed recently it is still possible for persons recruited under the 'statut' for a reduction on the pension perceived. This is financed by higher contributions from the employee throughout his career.

¹⁰ Free travel or discounts on tickets. Number of free tickets are limited for the employee's family.

¹¹ <http://sncf.publispeak.com/brochure-rse-2014/com/ipedis/publispeak/client/contents/pdf/SNCF-BrochureRSE2014-FR.pdf>

¹² <http://www.top-employers.com/>

development accessible to all employees¹³. The strengths mentioned for SNCF were amongst others, the good communication channels with one-to-one meetings between the employee and the manager, the existence of strong works councils and employee surveys. Learning and development and well-being programs were also mentioned as strong components of the good working conditions. Finally, the compensation and benefits such as employee discounts on company services/products and canteens were positive points of working at SNCF.

Trade unions and HR representatives agreed to say that SNCF offers good working conditions. This has significantly been improved for some types of jobs thanks to technical progress. However, trade unions expressed some concerns regarding the shift from physical pain to psychosocial risks which are becoming more and more important in the company. The company is aware of this rising risk and according to HR representatives, is taking measures to address this issue thanks for instance to the setting up of the multiannual plan of occupational risk prevention. However for trade unions, no real change has been noticed in the management of psychosocial risks. In addition, it was noticed by the latter that the opening of the freight to competition has led to some budget cuts and more pressure on staff. Trade unions consider that the company more and more uses subcontracting which is not seen as a positive change by them. These concerns on the increasing use of subcontracting were especially expressed in relation to infrastructure maintenance work. Trade unions consider that health and safety standards are not as good as in SNCF in these external companies. .

Concerning the existence of external studies on attractiveness, no ranking studies concerning rail companies in France could be found. The only study available online is Universum ranking 2015¹⁴ which has asked 700,000 students and professionals their perception of companies in France. SNCF was in this sample but smaller private companies were not included or it is not possible to make the distinction between the rail transport branch of a company and its other activities¹⁵. According to the Universum ranking 2015, SNCF is ranked as an attractive employer amongst engineering professionals (12th in the ranking) and being the 27th most attractive employer amongst engineering students. It is ranked as the 24th most attractive company for business professionals and 70th for business/commerce students. However, one of the trade unions mentioned that SNCF still has the image of an old company who is struggling to look attractive and appealing especially to young and highly-qualified people. The trade union representative considered that the lack of transparency in terms of career evolution and salary coupled with the reluctance to try new processes can discourage SNCF employees to make their career in the company. According to trade unions in the railway sector, private companies in the railway sector are also relatively attractive on the French market but for other reasons. In their case, they attract thanks to generous salaries based on high financial compensation when night work or business trips are undertaken. This tends to attract young graduates or professionals without children who are willing to work hard, be flexible and mobile in their work in exchange for good salary and generous bonuses. Finally both HR representatives from SNCF and trade unions agreed to say that some jobs at SNCF such as train drivers are indeed attractive as they represent a childhood dream for many women and men.

– Factors hindering attractiveness

Concerning the specific case of SNCF, the company seems to suffer from a lack of attractiveness due to the fact that people usually mix the image of SNCF as a service

¹³ <http://www.top-employers.com/companyprofiles/FR/sncf/>

¹⁴ Universum conducts the largest career survey of its kind, targeting some 700,000 students and professionals around the world.

<http://universumglobal.com/rankings/france/student/2015/>

¹⁵ For instance, the private freight rail operator Colas rail is only mentioned as Colas in the study which also includes road transport activities. See <http://universumglobal.com/rankings/company/colas/>

provider company and the image as an employer. Indeed, being the only operator of passenger transport in France, SNCF suffers from a bad image due to delays, technical problems on trains and strikes which directly impact on travellers. These on the traffic and their direct impact on people's life (commuters, students etc...) can strengthen stereotypes and bad image of the company to a large public.

According to HR representatives of SNCF and trade unions, SNCF also suffers from certain prejudices which make it unattractive to some people for several reasons.

First of all, there is a **misconception of the jobs** which exist in the company. Passengers are only exposed in their daily life to certain jobs on board of trains or in train stations and do not suspect jobs that are less known¹⁶.

Secondly and as explained below, the core jobs in the railway sector imply some sacrifices that not every person is ready to take. SNCF is bound by the principle of **continuous service**. As a result, many jobs imply night work, shift work, flexible work. Workers in the core activity relating to good function of the trains and railways can also be called anytime as their work is of public utility¹⁷.

Another important feature is the **mobility** which is inherent to some jobs. For instance train drivers or maintenance workers often need to go to another site for a project and this can last for a week or more. Being away from home and having to travel everywhere in France is also seen as unattractive¹⁸.

Geographical mobility namely having to move house after a certain time to go to work in a different city or region is something which is also part of certain jobs at SNCF (and in the railway sector more generally). Having to move (with one's family when applicable) is a burden that not all are ready to take. This can also imply moving from cities to live in small villages or in a totally different part of France which represents a drawback especially for workers with families¹⁹.

Finally, according to trade unions, SNCF has many jobs based in Paris which can be unattractive for employees. Indeed, accommodation is very difficult to find in Paris and rents are very high, this thus causes a problem for jobs with low salaries requiring to be based in Paris and can also lead to long-distance commuting which is neither attractive to employees.

These features are inherent to some jobs in this sector and this can discourage some applicants who are not ready to make these sacrifices. The HR representative of SNCF underlined the fact these working conditions used to be more accepted in the past but that more and more young people are not ready to work at night or be on stand-by time. Another HR representative also noticed that in some cases the children of workers at SNCF who grew up with one of their parents having to work at night have better assimilated these constraints and are more ready to take on this type of jobs. One of the trade union representative was emphasised the need for more solutions to be found to accommodate better the negative aspects inherent to some jobs at SNCF. This could for instance consist in better accompanying mobility or adapting timetables for train drivers to have a better work-life balance.

4.1.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

According to trade unions in the railway sector, rail companies are seen as attractive for jobseekers. Nonetheless, as mentioned above, publicly-owned companies are more appealing to jobseekers as they stand for job security, good working conditions and good social package.

However, inside this sector, some types of jobs are seen as unattractive by jobseekers. Indeed, jobs relating to the core activity of the rail companies such as train managers, train

¹⁶ Interviews with trade union and HR representative of SNCF

¹⁷ Interviews with trade union and HR representative of SNCF

¹⁸ Interviews with trade union and HR representative of SNCF

¹⁹ Interviews with trade union and HR representative of SNCF

drivers or maintenance work on railway lines often require a great flexibility as workers can work at night, outside and during weekends and bank holidays and not all jobseekers are ready to do this kind of work. This thus creates difficulties for rail companies to recruit good candidates for this position. According to the HR representative from SNCF, the company highlights the importance of recruiting the top candidates for its open positions. However, in the jobs relating to the core activity of the business, some positions can remain unfilled despite the high number of applications because candidates' profiles are not suitable.

Concerning private companies, trade unions unanimously agreed to say that working conditions were poorer in private companies. Trade unions mentioned bad management practices where employees are often under pressure. The lack of communication and last minute changes regarding employees' timetable have also been mentioned as a practice harming work-life balance of employees.

4.1.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of the rail sector in the country

It is worth noting that the rail sector has been only composed of one company until 2006. Since that date, the rail freight activities have been opened to competition and private companies are now active on this market. Thus, factors mentioned above concerning attractiveness of SNCF also apply to this section (see Section 1.1.2 above)

4.1.4 Examples of good practices

■ To remedy to the negative aspects of mobility

SNCF is looking at reducing the negative aspects surrounding mobility of employees which is a key component of some professions in the company. For instance, they are currently looking into better anticipating the mobility so that employees can better prepare their life change. SNCF is also looking into better helping employees who experience mobility such as helping them to find accommodation.

SNCF might also put in place greater flexibility on the salary bands for some professions where it is difficult to recruit. However, this is still at a very hypothetical stage.

The need to remedy to the negative aspects of mobility was a key message from one the trade union who considers that mobility could be better communicated to employees and also better anticipated and managed.

■ To remedy to the misconception of jobs

To attract attention to the new and 'trendy' jobs at SNCF, a job ad campaign was launched to show that SNCF had many jobs that were not known. This campaign consisted of ads in train stations or in newspapers showing that SNCF is recruiting drone pilots (to watch railways). According to an HR representative at SNCF, this campaign seems to have caught the attention of a new public. However, the number of these 'new trendy jobs' remains very limited and it is questionable whether candidates interested to be drone pilots will look at the other jobs available at SNCF or will simply look for a similar job in another company.

SNCF is very active in getting for female workers and especially in technical jobs. SNCF is currently working on a campaign to advertise the job of train driver especially targeted at women²⁰.

²⁰<https://www.facebook.com/SNCFrecrutement/photos/a.174402929351499.17575.173253769466415/467745173350605/?type=3&theater>

4.2 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

4.2.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

4.2.1.1 Pay and conditions

■ Salaries and benefits

According to trade unions, **the level of pay** is not the same in all companies in the railway sector. Indeed, salaries tend to be higher and thus more attractive in private companies. Workers performing night work and going on business trips receive very good financial compensation on top of their salary. This is seen as a very attractive factor especially for young people willing to work at night and away from home in exchange for very good financial compensation.

The salary bands tend to be lower in SNCF than for other private competitors. However, these lower salaries bands are counterbalanced by a very good social package which includes amongst other things: a special social security regime²¹, the possibility to retire at the age of 55 years old (although this would be a retirement with a reduction on the pension perceived)²² and free travel (or generous discounts on train)²³.

A very important factor is that these advantages are also extended to their children, partner (married or in a legal partnership) as far as healthcare and free train travel are concerned. This advantage is however used in a disparate way by employees – some use for instance free travel a lot while some do not and thus do not see the added-value and the extra-advantage. SNCF employees can also benefit from social housing and there a free medical center dedicated to the employees of the company.

■ Working conditions and health and safety

HR representatives from SNCF and trade unions agreed to say that SNCF offers **good working conditions**. HR representatives from SNCF argued that working conditions have even **improved thanks to technical progress**. Indeed, machines are now more advanced and their use makes the work of employees easier. Work stations such as train drivers cabins have also been improved with time. For instance, driving seats in trains are now designed for more comfort and takes into account ergonomics whereas it used to be a simple stool in the past. Trade unions agreed that the physical pain associated with the low-skilled jobs has decreased at SNCF. However, they also expressed some concerns regarding the shift from physical pain to **psychosocial risks** which are becoming more and more important in the company. This was explained by the fact that part of the railway sector has been open to competition and SNCF had to adapt to stay competitive.

Trade unions raised concerns regarding health and safety and more generally security at work. They condemned the use of private subcontractors who in their opinion do not apply the same health and safety standards.

Another risk flagged up during interviews with trade unions and HR representatives of SNCF is third-party violence which concerns jobs in contact with the public.

Concerning private companies, trade unions unanimously agreed to say that working conditions were poorer in private companies. Trade unions mentioned bad management practices where employees are often under pressure. The lack of communication and last

²¹ Contributions to the special regime at SNCF are higher for the employees and the employer compared to the general regime.

²² For that reason, today the retirement age without a reduction is 58 years, gradually brought up to 62 years. The possible retirement age is being gradually brought up to 57 years (whereas it is 62 years for employees in private companies. For train drivers recruited after 2010, there is no distinction between train drivers and other SNCF employees.

²³ Free travel or discounts on tickets. The Number of free tickets are limited for the employee's family.

minute changes regarding employees' timetable have also been mentioned as a practice the working life and harming work-life balance of employees.

4.2.1.2 *Company culture*

The company culture has always been a **key component at SNCF**. According to HR representatives and some trade unions, there is a very strong feeling of belonging to the railway family. This feeling finds its explanation in the fact that employees from the railway sector have the feeling of having a different life and different working conditions compared to other sectors (e.g. working at night or away from home). Workers in this sector never really discussed these working conditions because they are part of their job and their duty of public service. There is also a community spirit and strong solidarity and cooperation between employees. As shown by the employee survey conducted by SNCF, 87% of SNCF employees are proud to work in this company.

However, it is worth noting that the company culture might have **changed throughout the years**, evolving with the changes in the society. Indeed, SNCF used to have few towns in France that were exclusively inhabited by SNCF workers. In these towns, accommodation, schools, supermarket and other key institutions were provided by SNCF for SNCF employees. SNCF employees were working together, living together and there was a strong feeling of belonging to a family. SNCF still owns building and can still provide workers with accommodation but this way of living is not welcome by workers anymore due to the shift to a more individualistic society.

They are also strong trade unions and works councils that perpetrate this family spirit. Works councils offer a lot of advantages to SNCF employees and their family such as holiday centres especially for SNCF employees, vacation camps for the children of SNCF employees and discounts on many family activities.

However in the opinion of the trade unions, this company culture was found to be threatened by the increasing recourse to managers from outside SNCF who are not familiar with the company culture. Indeed, during the past few years, SNCF has been more and more recruited managers externally while managers at SNCF had been for a very long time workers who started at the bottom of the ladder and who had made their way up to managerial positions. Even if trade unions agree that hiring managers externally is a good thing to bring new ideas into the company, a certain balance needs to be maintained which has not been the case. Therefore, one of the negative impacts of this phenomenon is that managers recruited externally tend not to understand the technical work at SNCF and do not have a good enough understanding of the specificities and technicalities of the work of their team. This also impacts negatively the company culture as the knowledge of the core work of SNCF is a component that unites employees²⁴.

4.2.1.3 *Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee*

Relationships between the management and employees and employees to employees are key elements of SNCF/railway culture. According to the interview with an HR from SNCF based on their last employee survey, these relationships are characterised by the transmission of knowledge thanks to the most experienced colleagues. Indeed, SNCF employees prefer to ask their senior colleagues rather than their manager. However, as mentioned above, relationships between management and employees tend to deteriorate due to the external recruiting of managers (see above for more details)²⁵.

4.2.2 *Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries*

Covered across other sections

²⁴ Interview with trade union representatives at SNCF

²⁵ Interview with trade union representatives at SNCF

4.2.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Covered across other sections

4.2.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

According to HR representatives from SNCF, the company is facing some job shortages in relation to low-skilled jobs such as electricians, boilermakers but also in relation to high-skilled jobs such as engineers. This needs to be put into context as these job shortages are experienced by other companies in France and even in Europe as these types of profiles are very rare. One of the trade union found that HR strategies could be improved in order to better anticipate retirement of some part of the staff and thus anticipate recruitment phases. New recruitment strategies have been used at SNCF which enable to attract very good highly-skilled workers. However, these workers tend to be discouraged as they find out that the position and career progression were oversold²⁶.

4.2.4.1 Employment for young people

Like many other companies, SNCF has partnerships with schools and attends job fairs to attract young talents. It is also present on social networks where SNCF tries to create a real exchange with young people like for instance on forums or online platforms like Pathmotion where e-recruiters respond to the questions raised on the company and the jobs in the company²⁷.

SNCF is also looking to recruit an important number of engineers and focused on recruiting young professionals in launching a 'serious game' targeted at engineering students. The company has really adapted its recruiting methods to the tools used and liked by the young generation.

SNCF is also very active in offering apprenticeships to young people who study at the same time. As such, 6,000 new apprenticeship contracts are concluded at SNCF every year²⁸.

However, the image of SNCF as an old company can discourage young people to make a career in the company²⁹. Indeed, SNCF was judged to be struggling to modernize its processes and not be innovative enough. For instance, it was emphasized by one trade union that the company does not always integrate new technologies such as using Skype for meetings instead of making employees travel across France.

4.2.4.2 Employment for women

Because the transport sector is male dominated, SNCF makes a point of recruiting women, especially in jobs where they are underrepresented. Women represent 22% of SNCF Group staff and 25% of white-collar employees (*cadres*) and around 30% in the board. They mainly have a support role in their job whereas technical jobs are the majority of the jobs at SNCF³⁰. In addition, technical jobs at SNCF like train managers or train drivers are not seen as attractive by women as there is bad image on work-life balance in these positions. Concerns are often raised in relation to safety at work as women tend to suffer more from harassments and physical assault. The same reluctance also applies to night work as women tend to not feel safe when coming back from a shift late at night

²⁶ Interview with trade union representatives at SNCF

²⁷ Interviews with HR representatives at SNCF

²⁸ <http://sncf.publispeak.com/brochure-rse-2014/com/ipedis/publispeak/client/contents/pdf/SNCF-BrochureRSE2014-FR.pdf>

²⁹ Interview with trade union representatives at SNCF

³⁰ Interviews with HR representatives at SNCF and <http://www.resonanceshumanitaires.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CR-Conf%C3%A9rence-RH-de-la-SNCF-10112012-final.pdf>

There is a strong will from SNCF to increase the role and the female representation in their company thanks to various methods consisting of presenting their jobs to female students in technical paths or targeting their advertisement campaign to women.³¹

4.2.4.3 *Employment for older workers*

For older workers, SNCF takes measures such as the support of employees during the second part of their careers in order to maintain their employability.

4.2.4.4 *Employment for less skilled workers*

SNCF used the measure of '*Emploi d'avenir*' launched by the French government which consists in giving a first job to young people aged between 16 and 25 especially in the regions most affected by unemployment. These jobs are subsidised (75%) by the state and aim at improving employability of less-skilled workers. SNCF signed a convention with the French State. In 2013, year when the measure was launched, SNCF had already recruited 160 low-skilled workers under 26 years old.

SNCF has also an internal training centre for train drivers which enable less-skilled workers willing to become train drivers to benefit from theoretical and practical training and be qualified to be a train driver at the end of this programme³².

4.2.4.5 *Job mobility*

According to HR representatives at SNCF, job mobility is an important part of the identity of the company. Employees have opportunities to evolve rapidly and also change jobs thanks to the variety of jobs that exists in the company.

According to trade unions, job mobility is not as easy as it used to be in the company. Career progression is not as fast as before and it is very rare that a low-skilled worker arrives at the top of the scale like it used to be. This was nuanced by the fact that this is not specific to SNCF but more due the generalisation of university studies amongst the new generation. Another phenomenon highlighted by employees and hindering the job mobility is the fact that SNCF seeks to recruit experienced employees from competitors or other big private companies for top managerial positions. This can create frustration amongst employees who do not feel that their manager is best placed to understand the specificities of the business. This contrast with the situation where for a long time managers at SNCF were people who started on at the bottom-end of the scale and became managers got promoted later on thanks to their good work and experience in the company.

4.2.4.6 *Recruiting and internal training*

■ **Recruiting**

SNCF is an attractive employer when looking at the numbers concerning recruitment:

- 9000 recruits expected in 2015
- Approximately 700 white-collar/managers (*cadres*)
- 650 engineers
- 4, 2 million visitors in 2014 on the employment part of the website sncf.com
- 200,000 applicants
- 39 applicants on average for a job offer

There has been a progressive change in SNCF's recruiting strategy with the development of SNCF employer brand (*marque employeur*). This aimed at differentiating SNCF as a service provider and SNCF as an employer.

³¹ Interviews with HR representatives at SNCF and <http://www.resonanceshumanitaires.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CR-Conf%C3%A9rence-RH-de-la-SNCF-10112012-final.pdf>

³² Interviews with HR representative at SNCF and <http://www.sncf.com/fr/emploi/fiche-metier/7303>

The company has adapted its recruiting strategy to new ways of communicating and is present on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn), platforms such as Pathmotion and has also a website where job advertisements are published. There are also job fiches which aim making people discover the wide variety of jobs which exist at SNCF, these fiches include employee testimonies and tips to apply for job³³. A platform called 'Career Inspiration' has also been created where any interested person can ask questions to SNCF employees to know more about their job.

There also has been a change to promote diversity and recruit employees with different profiles who have experience in other companies and can bring their knowledge to SNCF. This will to modernize the company is made possible via the recruitment of managers in HR, finances, communication³⁴.

There is an important focus on recruiting engineers; out of the 9,000 persons to be recruited in 2015, 650 aims would be engineers³⁵. They represented 65% of the recruitment at SNCF in 2014³⁶. Engineers are really demanded by lots of companies in France and abroad and SNCF is diversifying its recruitment technics to reach these profiles.

To recruit engineers, SNCF has launched a "serious game" to attract the top candidates. This also aimed at increasing attractiveness of SNCF to students. This challenge consisted of solving concrete problems and was rewarded by discovering the activities of SNCF internationally (thanks to SNCF subsidiaries based abroad). For example, the questions asked how to optimize the movement of trains taking into account maintenance work on the network and problems on some stations. Out of the 8000 candidates, 350 successfully completed all the challenges. After various interviews, 60 candidates had practical problems to solve on the ground. Finally, the 15 successful candidates won the opportunity discover the activities of SNCF Group companies abroad: in Norway and Sweden for Keolis, Arep in China, Dubai and Systra³⁷. According to trade unions, the challenge for attracting engineers and highly-skilled workers in general was not in getting to recruit them but rather in retaining them in the company as other private companies can offer better career progression but also better job content in terms of innovation³⁸.

■ Training

SNCF considers training as an essential factor in economic and social progress. Thus, an important budget is dedicated to training in the company. Each year SNCF spends almost 6% of its total payroll on in initial training and in continuing vocational education of its employees. They have benefited from more than 6 million hours of training courses and traineeships in 2011. Training is one of the key vectors of career development, in a company where 70% of managers are from the field³⁹. One-to-one sessions are organized between managers and employees so that training is really tailored-made to the needs of employees. Trade union representatives welcome the importance given to training in the company but one of the trade union representatives emphasized that training at SNCF could be improved. Indeed, the notion of competence should be extensively developed to make sure it links well to the different jobs and positions at SNCF. In addition, it is worth noting that attendance of training does not always necessarily imply the validation of competences. Thus, better

³³ <http://www.sncf.com/fr/emploi/fiche-metier/7303>

³⁴ Interviews with HR representative at SNCF and <http://www.resonanceshumanitaires.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CR-Conf%C3%A9rence-RH-de-la-SNCF-10112012-final.pdf>

³⁵ Numbers anticipated by SNCF

³⁶ <http://www.sncf.com/fr/presse/article/francoise-tragin-recrutement09042015>

³⁷ Interview with HR representative at SNCF and <http://www.sncf.com/fr/presse/article/francoise-tragin-recrutement09042015>

³⁸ Interview with trade union representatives at SNCF

³⁹ <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/actualites/la-politique-ressources-humaines-de-la-sncf-@/article.jspz?id=60910>

follow-up to make sure that employees did gain new competences and apply those to their daily job should be undertaken.

4.2.4.7 *International cooperation*

International cooperation is not the focus of SNCF as the railway activity of SNCF is mainly based in France⁴⁰. Career opportunities abroad at SNCF are very rare and only concerns railway experts⁴¹.

4.2.5 *Identify areas for job creation*

Covered across other sections

4.2.6 *Examples of good practices*

■ **To attract more women (especially in jobs where they are underrepresented)**

To attract more women, SNCF is working in cooperation with regional education authorities to raise awareness about the possibilities for young women to work at SNCF. This results in the organisation of forums where women

To recruit more women in jobs where they are underrepresented, SNCF is active in presenting its jobs to girls studying technical studies.⁴²

There is also a SNCF female network (*Réseau SNCF au féminin*) for SNCF female employees. This is managed by the HR and Communication department where currently 5,000 women working at SNCF help and mentor each other in their daily job.

■ **Good practices to attract young engineers**

As many other sectors and companies in France, SNCF struggles to recruit young engineers. To address this need⁴³, SNCF launched for the second year an online game made of very complex questions tailored-made to the work of the engineers at SNCF. Extra-points were given to engineering students who would upload their CV online or linked their profile to their LinkedIn account. This game was available online and aimed at catching the attention of the elite of the French engineering schools. This recruitment campaign was a success as 150 schools competed, 5000 students played this online game

4.3 *Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures*

This section should present conclusions and implications from the research based on the work undertaken in order to identify what works well and what works less well in terms of attractiveness for employees and job seekers.

4.3.1.1 *Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees*

See 1.3.2

4.3.1.2 *Identify effective recruitment and retention measures*

Job security at SNCF is guaranteed by the civil servant type employment contract. SNCF as the publicly-owned railway company which represents most of the employees of the railway

⁴⁰ SNCF is understood here as the company and not the Group and its subsidiaries which are indeed based internationally.

⁴¹ <http://www.resonanceshumanitaires.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CR-Conf%C3%A9rence-RH-de-la-SNCF-10112012-final.pdf>

⁴² <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/actualites/la-politique-ressources-humaines-de-la-sncf-@/article.jsp?id=60910>

⁴³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=1&v=3klVdnYWLgY>

sector has therefore an attractive image for job security and the good working conditions it offers.

See also 1.3.2

4.3.1.3 *Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures*

See 1.3.2

4.3.2 **Examples of good practices**

SNCF is clearly very attractive for its good working conditions which are recognised both internally, thanks to the results of the employee survey, and externally, thanks to the award of the Top Employers 2015. The company culture which enables employees to work in autonomy and knowledge to be transmitted directly from the most senior colleagues to newcomers is also appreciated by employees.

The very generous social package including healthcare, free travel for the employee and his family⁴⁴ and early retirement⁴⁵ have been identified as playing a role in **employee retention**. This is especially true when employees have children who can benefit from these advantages⁴⁶. SNCF employees also benefit from lots of advantages thanks to their works councils which offer the possibility for children of SNCF employees to go on holidays in France or abroad and families to access to nice holiday camps. The company culture is and has always been seen as positive at SNCF. Employees still see themselves as part of the railway family even if this can be a bit less relevant than it used to be in people's mind.

The importance given to training with *inter alia* one-to-one sessions to assess the needs of the employee is also a good practice which enables to give the necessary tools for employees' personnel development.

Regarding **recruitment**, many initiatives which can be identified as good practices have been launched by SNCF to recruit the best candidates. The branding of SNCF as an employer has been an important positive step for the public to better differentiate the different identities of SNCF (service provider vs. employer).

SNCF has also created a very intuitive career website where all the offers are gathered but also offering guidance and tips to candidates thanks to job fiches describing the requirements of some jobs and including employees' testimonies on what the daily job consists in.⁴⁷

SNCF is also present on various online platforms and social media where community managers can direct potential candidates to their career website. Employees are also directly intervening on some platforms and forums where they candidates receive a response to their question directly from an SNCF employee who does the job they are interested in.

To cope with the overall shortage of engineers in France, SNCF has launched a serious game tailored-made to the jobs of SNCF and aiming at recruiting engineers.

To bring more women to male-dominated jobs, SNCF has set-up partnerships with schools and regional authorities and organises sessions where it can present their jobs to female students studying technical studies.

⁴⁴ Free travel or generous discounts. Number of free tickets are limited for the employee's family.

⁴⁵ Only applicable to employees who have been hired under the 'statut' before 30 years old. This is financed by higher contributions from the employee throughout his career.

⁴⁶ Until they turn 21 or as long as they are students.

⁴⁷ <https://www.emploi.sncf.com/fr/emploi/>

Campaigns are also launched to tackle the lack of knowledge of all the different jobs existing at SNCF. SNCF regularly creates new ads posted in newspapers or in train stations. Recent examples include advertising the job of drone pilot to the public which seems to have raised awareness on the existence of not only traditional jobs at SNCF. Another recent campaign aiming at recruiting women in technical jobs breaks stereotypes of men as train drivers.

4.4 Summary SWOT analysis

To present the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of rail companies as employers.

Table 4.1 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The publicly-owned railway company SNCF which represents most of the employees of the railway sector has an attractive image for the good working conditions and job security it offers. ■ The social package offered at SNCF is very attractive compared to other companies in the French labour market. ■ SNCF has managed to adapt its recruiting technics to new ways of attracting talents (online media, targeted advertisement campaigns etc...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ SNCF and the sector in general still stand for old-fashioned companies which struggle to adapt to the new processes and do not always manage to insert innovation and creativity in their internal functioning. ■ SNCF as a recruiter suffers from the negative image of SNCF as a service provider.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The recruitment of external managers or employees in general can bring innovation and creativity to the company. ■ The development of SNCF employer brand is a good opportunity to differentiate the recruiting side from SNCF as a service provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The general shortages for some low-skilled or high-skilled jobs make it difficult to recruit for some positions. ■ Private companies usually have a more attractive and appealing image for young people who can prefer go working for these companies.

Annex 7 List of sources

<http://sncf.publispeak.com/brochure-rse-2014/com/ipedis/publispeak/client/contents/pdf/SNCF-BrochureRSE2014-FR.pdf>

<http://universumglobal.com/>

<http://www.lopinion.fr/>

<http://www.pole-emploi.fr/>

<http://www.resonanceshumanitaires.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CR-Conf%C3%A9rence-RH-de-la-SNCF-10112012-final.pdf>

<http://www.top-employers.com/>

<https://www.emploi.sncf.com/fr/emploi/>

Annex 8 List of Interviewees

Companies:

- Françoise Tragin, SNCF – Interviewed on 17 September 2015
- Éric Beaudonnet, SNCF – Interviewed on 17 September 2015
- Loïc Hislairé, SNCF – Interviewed on 17 September 2015
- Christophe Valentie, SNCF – Interviewed on 17 September 2015

Trade unions:

- Rémi Aufrère, CFDT – Interviewed on 18 September 2015
- David Gobé, CGT – Interviewed on 17 September 2015
- Benoit Vienne and Lionel Chautru, UNSA – Interviewed on 25 November 2015

Annex 9 Employee Surveys

An employee survey was devised and conducted for this study with questionnaires distributed through trade unions networks. There were 63 employee responses to this survey.

A staff survey was conducted in 2014 for SNCF by an independent survey institute (TNS Sofres). This survey was a representative survey, with a sample of 1,904 employees out of approximately 150,000 employees.

Most of the results presented below are for the 63 employees that responded to the study survey distributed through trade unions networks. Where the questions asked in the SNCF representative survey undertaken by TNS Sofres were the same as those included in this study the results are presented below alongside each other.

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	13
Negative	23
Neutral	16
Positive	7
Very positive	1
Unsure	3
(blank)	0
Grand Total	63

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	1
Depends on occupation	1
Very positive	2
Quite positive	13
Neutral	8
Quite negative	23
Very negative	15
Don't know	0
n/a	0
Grand Total	63

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	6
Quite positive	16

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Neutral	18
Quite negative	13
Very negative	6
Don't know	4
n/a	0
Grand Total	63

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?	
No, far lower level	5
No, lower level	18
The same level	16
Yes, a little higher	5
Yes, far higher	1
Unsure	18
Don't know	0
n/a	0
Grand Total	63

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)	
Improve pay	54
Improve benefits	27
Improve working hours	34
Provide a better work-life balance	39
Improve career opportunities	22

For the following question the SNCF representative survey results (with 1,904 respondents representing approximately 150,000 employees) are included below in **red**

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?	
Very satisfied	4
Quite satisfied	37
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13
Quite dissatisfied	4

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?	
Very dissatisfied	4
Unsure	1
n/a	0
Sum	63

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector? SNCF staff Survey data	
Very satisfied	5%
Quite satisfied	27%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	58%
Quite dissatisfied	8%
Very dissatisfied	2%
Unsure	-
n/a	-
Sum	100%

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?	
Every day	8
Most days	27
From time to time	22
Never	5
Unsure	0
n/a	1
Grand Total	63

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
Job security	39	20	2	1	0	0	1	0	63
A good working atmosphere	39	18	2	1	2	0	1	0	63
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	17	17	13	10	3	2	1	0	63
Overall level of pay and benefits	30	26	4	3	0	0	0	0	63
Pension provision	34	20	4	3	0	0	1	0	63
Opportunity for career development and promotion	19	21	19	3	1	0	0	0	63
Access to training and education	18	21	18	5	1	0	0	0	63

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	20	15	11	5	4	2	5	1	63
My employer providing additional health benefits	21	13	11	5	6	2	5	0	63
International opportunities / working abroad	1	5	3	18	30	5	0	1	63

For the following question the SNCF representative survey results (with 1,904 respondents representing approximately 150,000 employees) are included below in **red**

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	4	33	13	10	1	1	1	63
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	4	21	17	13	5	1	2	63
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	6	26	16	8	5	1	1	63

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?					
SNCF staff Survey data					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	5%	27%	Option not included in survey	8%	2%
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	45%	28%	Option not included in survey	7%	5%
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	32%	42%	Option not included in survey	8%	5%

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	5	19	12	23	4	0	0	63
Benefits	3	20	31	8	1	0	0	63
Working hours	2	7	13	15	26	0	0	63
Work-life balance	2	5	19	19	18	0	0	63
Career development opportunities	4	26	16	12	5	0	0	63
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	2	26	23	7	4	1	0	63

For the following question the SNCF representative survey results (with 1,904 respondents representing approximately 150,000 employees) are included below in **red**

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	5	28	11	12	6	0	1	63
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	2	14	9	21	16	0	1	63
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	3	16	19	16	8	0	1	63
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	4	16	17	17	8	0	1	63
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	2	8	15	20	7	10	1	63
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	1	8	23	17	13	0	1	63
Overall, My workload suits me	2	22	18	15	5	0	1	63

Views about working hours							
SNCF staff Survey data							
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)
My working hours suit me	42%	40%	Option not included in survey	12%	6%	-	-
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	Not part of SNCF survey						
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	35%	43%	Option not included in survey	16%	7%	-	-
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	55%	31%	Option not included in survey	9%	4%	-	-
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	Not part of SNCF survey						
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	Not part of SNCF survey						
Overall, My workload suits me	32%	44%	Option not included in survey	18%	5%	-	-

For the following question the SNCF representative survey results (with 1,904 respondents representing approximately 150,000 employees) are included below in **red**

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	0	3	12	28	19	0	1	63
There is a sense of a "railway family"	1	21	19	14	7	0	1	63
My commitment to the company is very high	13	28	14	5	2	0	1	63
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people, older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds	2	12	23	14	6	5	1	63

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Total
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	0	12	17	17	16	0	1	63
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	2	20	11	17	11	1	1	63
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	0	6	14	24	18	0	1	63
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	2	14	16	19	10	1	1	63

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise							
SNCF staff Survey data							
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	11%	49%	Option not included in survey	27%	14%	-	-
There is a sense of a "railway family"	Not part of SNCF survey						
My commitment to the company is very high	Not part of SNCF survey						
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people, older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds	Not part of SNCF survey						
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	Not part of SNCF survey						
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	Not part of SNCF survey						
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	Not part of SNCF survey						
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	Not part of SNCF survey						

For the following question the SNCF representative survey results (with 1,904 respondents representing approximately 150,000 employees) are included below in **red**

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	7	33	9	9	4	0	1	63
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	10	33	12	5	2	0	1	63
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	10	21	21	7	3	0	1	63
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	1	8	29	20	4	0	1	63
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	1	2	32	20	7	0	1	63

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
SNCF staff Survey data								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	Not part of SNCF survey							
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	58%	34%	Option not included in survey	6%	2%	-	-	
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	Not part of SNCF survey							
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	Not part of SNCF survey							
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	Not part of SNCF survey							

For the following question the SNCF representative survey results (with 1,904 respondents representing approximately 150,000 employees) are included below in **red**

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	6	12	20	13	11	0	1	63
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	4	11	18	17	11	1	0	63
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	4	7	16	20	15	0	1	63
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	4	10	18	18	12	0	1	63
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	4	16	20	16	6	0	1	63
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	5	13	21	17	4	1	2	63

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
SNCF staff Survey data								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	Not part of SNCF survey							
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	Not part of SNCF survey							
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	21%	49%	Option not included in survey	18%	11%	1%		
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	Not part of SNCF survey							
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	Not part of SNCF survey							
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	Not part of SNCF survey							

Annex 10 Apprentice Survey

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the railway sector in your country?	
Depends on occupation	2
Don't know	2
Neutral	12
Negative	9
Positive	38
(blank)	4
Grand Total	67

Why did you chose to undertake this apprenticeship? (tick all that apply)	
The program is suited to my job/career aspirations	39
Funding was available for the apprenticeship	10
There was a clear link to actual job opportunities	45
I was attracted to a career in the rail sector	35
Other	8

Views about pay, benefits and career opportunities. To what extent are the following factors important to you in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	0	3	11	38	15	0	0	0	67
Job security	0	5	7	20	34	0	0	1	67
Pension provision	3	11	24	11	9	1	5	3	67
Access to training and education	3	4	7	33	18	0	1	1	67
Opportunity for career development and promotion	0	2	5	22	35	1	2	0	67
International opportunities / working abroad	5	10	13	21	8	5	5	0	67
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	1	9	21	35	0	0	1	67
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	4	5	17	32	8	0	1	0	67
An employer providing additional health benefits	5	3	23	28	7	0	1	0	67

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to these factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	8	5	19	30	4	0	0	1	67
Job security	0	2	7	27	29	1	0	1	67
Pension provision	0	2	13	29	13	0	9	1	67
Access to training and education	0	1	11	39	14	0	1	1	67
Opportunity for career development and promotion	0	2	12	27	23	1	0	2	67
International opportunities / working abroad	3	11	14	14	7	5	12	1	67
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	3	2	12	28	20	0	0	2	67
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	2	2	13	32	13	0	4	1	67
An employer providing additional health benefits	1	2	20	28	10	0	5	1	67
Being part of a "railway family"	1	5	17	26	15	0	2	1	67

Views about working hours, work organisation, health and safety and maintaining a good work/ life balance. Which of the following factors are most important in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	0	0	9	24	31	2	0	1	67
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	0	1	7	26	29	3	0	1	67
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	0	1	11	21	32	1	0	1	67
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	1	1	10	34	20	0	0	1	67
A comfortable place of work	0	5	13	24	24	0	0	1	67

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to the following factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	1	1	10	35	17	2	1	67	1
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	1	4	10	30	17	4	1	67	1
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	3	4	14	24	19	2	1	67	3
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	0	1	7	43	15	0	1	67	0

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to the following factors?

	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
A comfortable place of work	3	6	18	25	14	0	1	67	3

To what extent has your experience to date met your expectations in relation to the following factors?

	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	(blank)	Grand Total
Integration into the company and/or in my team?	3	3	11	23	26	0	1	67
Relationship with day-to-day manager / tutor	5	2	7	24	28	0	1	67
Relationship with other workers in the company	0	1	11	30	24	0	1	67

How would you rate the overall image of the railway sector?

Depends on occupation	2
Don't know	2
Neutral	12
Quite negative	8
Quite positive	30
Very negative	1
Very positive	8
(blank)	4
Grand Total	67

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Tick all that apply)

Males	26
Females	6
Older workers	11
Younger workers	10
All of the above	42

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector?

Improve pay	42
Improve benefits	9
Improve working hours	6

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector?	
Improve the working climate / corporate culture	18
Provide a better work-life balance	19
Improve career opportunities	18
Improve external communication	43
Other	8

Would you recommend the rail sector to others considering undertaking an apprenticeship?	
No	10
Yes	55
(blank)	2
Grand Total	67

Annex 11 Student/Pupil Surveys

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Please tick all that apply)

Males	11
Females	16
Older workers	4
Younger workers	19
All of the above	12

Important factors when looking for an employer

	1 Most important	2	3	4	5 Least important	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
An employer where there are likely to be considerable future job opportunities	7	18	6	4	0	1	0	36
An employer that my family/friends have worked in	21	11	2	0	0	2	0	36
The level of pay and financial reward	0	3	2	5	24	2	0	36
Long term job security	18	14	2	0	2	0	0	36
Good work / life balance	13	14	5	1	3	0	0	36
Opportunities to develop my career	16	14	4	0	2	0	0	36
International opportunities / working abroad	22	8	3	1	1	0	1	36
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	18	8	5	2	2	0	1	36
A good working atmosphere	24	11	0	0	1	0	0	36
Opportunities for training and development / learning new skills	19	13	1	1	1	0	1	36
An employer that provides flexible working time	12	13	8	2	1	0	0	36
An employer that has good health & safety standards	6	14	10	2	2	0	2	36
An employer that provides good pension benefits	9	15	6	4	1	0	1	36
An employer that is close to my home	4	13	9	6	2	1	1	36
An employer that promotes innovation	4	10	15	5	1	0	1	36
An employer with a positive image	5	15	10	3	2	0	1	36
Other	6	14	9	4	3	0	0	36

When compared with other sectors, how do you think the rail sector compares?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No opinion	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	2	14	9	8	1	2	0	36
Benefits	13	18	3	0	1	1	0	36
Working hours	6	12	9	5	3	1	0	36
Career development opportunities	1	14	10	6	4	1	0	36
Work-life balance	2	16	10	4	3	1	0	36
Training and education	1	13	9	5	4	4	0	36
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	2	13	12	2	5	2	0	36

How closely do the jobs in the railway sector match your career aspirations?	
Exact match	4
A somewhat good match	13
Not a good match	7
Poor match	4
Don't know	8
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be higher in other sectors?	
Yes, far higher	6
Yes, a little higher	15
The same level	12
No, far lower level	0
No, lower level	1
Unsure	2
Don't know	0
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
A Short-term one (0-1 year)	5
A Medium-term one (2-5 years)	16
A long term one (more than 5 years)	10
Don't know	5
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

Are you aware of any specific initiatives to encourage students or pupils to choose the railway sector?	
Yes	6
No	30
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

Were you previously thinking of applying for a job in the rail sector?	
Yes	13
No	18
Perhaps	5
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

Are you aware of any recruitment activities?	
Yes	19
No	17
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

Did the recruitment activities change your view of the rail sector?	
No	19
Yes, more favourable	3
Yes, less favourable	1
Don't know	12
(blank)	1
Grand Total	36

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
Yes	7
No	29
(blank)	0
Grand Total	36

5 Country report – Germany

5.1 Introduction: background of the sector

In Germany, the railway sector has been growing in terms of passenger numbers, despite the fact that there has also been an increase in other modes of long-distance passenger (and freight) traffic. In German public railway transport, there is a differentiation between short distance transport within city, municipal or county boundaries (*Schienepersonennahverkehr*) and transport between cities or longer distances (*schienengebundener Personenfernverkehr*). The first one is regulated as part of the 'Daseinsvorsorge' a term that describes the provision of services and goods of general interest (health, infrastructure, electricity, transport etc.). Deutsche Bahn (DB) operates 99% of long distance transport, 80% of short distance transport and 66% of freight, with an increasing competition in the two markets short distance transport and freight⁴⁸. Today, there are over 440 publicly or part-publicly owned and privately owned railway companies active in Germany⁴⁹. Many of these are mainly active within a small geographical area in the delivery of local commuter transport or touristic (or indeed company internal freight) services. Although this study looked at the sector as a whole, the assessment continues to be dominated by the experience of Deutsche Bahn (DB) as the largest provider.

Demographic change is having a significant impact on the wider labour market in Germany, and as a result demographic trends have increased the 'war for talent' and German railway companies need to tackle these challenges by introducing recruitment and retention measures.

5.2 Analysis of employment and sectoral data (2009 – 2014)

5.2.1 Employment

The largest operator of rail services in Germany, DB currently employs around 187,700 individuals worldwide in the rail sector of which around 170,000 are based in Germany. This makes DB one of the largest employers in Germany. Specific data for Deutsche Bahn indicate that they estimate just under 47,000 employees will retire in the next 10 years.

The DB group (Deutsche Bahn AG) has over 1000 operational entities, with about 300 in Germany. The most known ones are DB Bahn Fernverkehr (long-distance passenger rail services), DB Bahn Regio (regional trains), DB Netze (infrastructure) and DB Schenker (freight). The table below shows how employees are distributed among the different operational entities of DB:

Operational entity	Number of employees (total numbers)
DB Bahn Fernverkehr (long distance trains)	17,503
DB Bahn Regio (regional trains)	38,220
DB Arriva	47,792
DB Schenker	31,212
DB Schenker Logistics	67,374
DB Dienstleistungen (services)	26,483
DB Netze Fahrweg (rail infrastructure)	44,116
DB Netze Personenbahnhöfe (stations)	5,122

⁴⁸ Bundesnetzagentur, Jahresbericht 2014 available here: .

⁴⁹ For a register of all railway companies see

http://www.eba.bund.de/DE/HauptNavi/FahrzeugeBetrieb/EVU/EVUregister/evuregister_node.html

Operational entity	Number of employees (total numbers)
DB Netze Energie (energy)	1,805
Others	27,339

Source: company website accessed 21.09.2015;
http://www.deutschebahn.com/de/konzern/konzernprofil/zahlen_fakten/kennzahlen2014.html

5.2.2 Working conditions

Around 23% of the DB's domestic employees (in Germany) are female, 6.5% are disabled. Around 5% are apprentices. Around 500 different occupational profiles are present in DB and the company offers apprenticeship based training for 50 occupational profiles⁵⁰. The average age of employees at DB is around 46 years of age.

5.2.3 Enterprises

There are over 500 publicly or part-publicly owned and privately owned railway companies active in Germany⁵¹.

The German market for rail passenger services is characterised by the co-existence of long distance (high speed) transport services operated on a non-subsidised, for profit basis and regional and short-distance rail services subsidised by the federal states (*Bundesländer*) out of funds provided by the federal government (in the case of regional services)⁵².

The nature of current competition and operations in the German passenger rail sector is the result of significant legislative reforms in the mid-1990s, which were inspired by EU Directive 91/440 on the *Development of the Community's Railways*.⁵³ This legislative frame includes:

- The federal law on the new regulation of the railways (*Eisenbahnneuordnungsgesetz*) of December 1993⁵⁴, which entered into force in January 1994;
- The law on the regionalisation of passenger transport (*Gesetz zur Regionalisierung des öffentlichen Personennahverkehrs*) of December 1993, also entering into force in 1994⁵⁵;
- The law on the transportation of passengers (*Personenbeförderungsgesetz*)⁵⁶ from 1961, last amended in 2013.

The Federal Office for Railways (Eisenbahn-Bundesamt) publishes a list of all railway companies offering public transport in Germany operating passenger and freight rail services. The latest list (2015) includes around 440 companies, most of which are very small and operating within large industrial undertakings or at the very local level only. Deutsche Bahn (DB) remains the largest provider, but its market share has been declining since market opening. Figures presented below from 2015 indicate that DB remains dominant in long distance rail passenger transport with nearly 99% of market share, while its competitors in 2012 took 18% of the market in local and regional passenger transport and 25% in freights (measured by passenger or freight/ton kilometres)⁵⁷. Other large providers operating in

⁵⁰ Source: Company website accessed 21.09.2015;
http://www.deutschebahn.com/de/konzern/konzernprofil/zahlen_fakten/mitarbeiter.html.

⁵¹ For a register of all railway companies see
http://www.eba.bund.de/DE/HauptNavi/FahrzeugeBetrieb/EVU/EVUregister/evuregister_node.html

⁵² Beck, Arne (2011); Barriers to Entry in Rail Passenger Services: Empirical Evidence for Tendering Procedures in Germany; *European Journal of Transport and Infrastructure Research*; Issue 11(1); January 2011; pp 20-41

⁵³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31991L0440:en:HTML>

⁵⁴ <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bundesrecht/eneuog/gesamt.pdf>

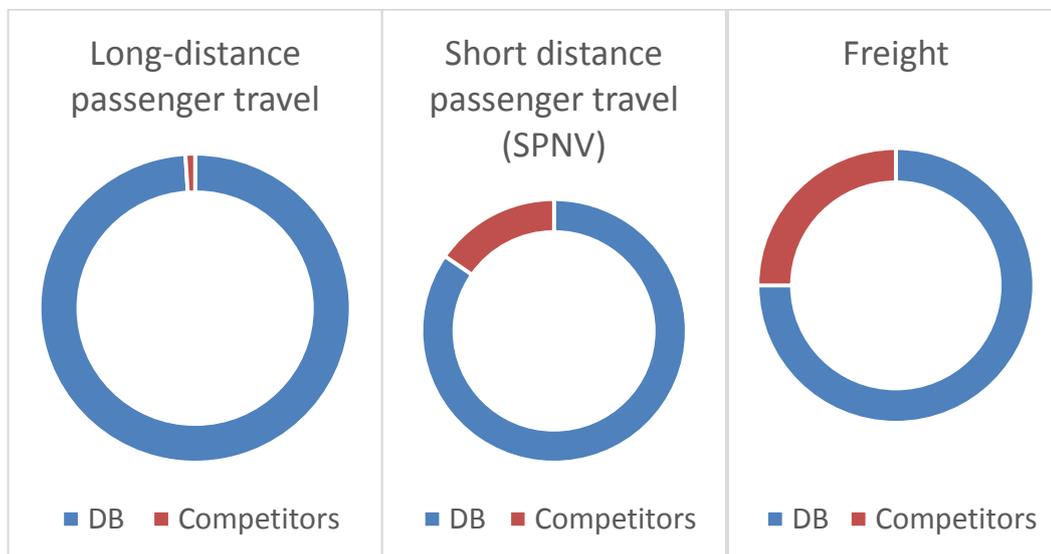
⁵⁵ <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/regg/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/pbefg/>

⁵⁷ http://www.mofair.de/content/wettbewerber-report-2015-2016_2015-11-03.pdf

Germany include Transdev, Netinera, BeNex, Albtal Verkehrsgesellschaft and Keolis, among others.

Figure 5.1 Market shares in passenger long distance rail transport, passenger local and regional rail transport and rail freight (2015)



Source: Mofair(2016); Wettbewerberbericht Eisenbahn 2015/2016⁵⁸

The responsibility for the tendering of local and regional rail services formally lies with the 16 federal states. The states have created specific agencies (*Aufgabenträger*) to function as public transport authorities (PTAs). As well as tendering, they carry out contract management activities. Since 2009, 27 such bodies have been in existence, which are represented by BAG SPNV (*Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Schienenpersonennahverkehr*) at federal level.

5.2.4 Infrastructure

- Length of rail line

5.3 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

5.3.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

The attractiveness of the rail sector in Germany is influenced by a number of key factors:

- The perception of the rail sector in the media in relation to punctuality and the wider quality of service delivery;
- The legacy perception of DB as a state-owned company with (what used to be) a high number of employees on civil service type contracts, which was perhaps perceived as not very ‘modern’ – a perception the company has been making significant efforts to change;
- Differences between collective agreements which have increased as a result of greater competition in the sector and the resulting emergence of employers with more or less attractive terms and conditions.

⁵⁸ http://www.mofair.de/content/wettbewerber-report-2015-2016_2015-11-03.pdf

Compared to other sectors, **incidents (e.g. strikes, experience of train cancellations or delays) in the railway sector have high media attention** which impacts on the overall public perception of the sector. Although DB faces increased competition, all developments and media coverage in the sector have an impact on the public perception of DB as the main operator. The image of the company and the sector has recently been affected by strike action organised by the trade union of train drivers (GDL) and (local) trends in punctuality of services, as affected – among other things – by staff shortages (e.g. at the rail control centre in Mainz in summer 2013). Such incidents led to train cancellations and a reduced reliability of services within given periods of time which receive much media attention. Moreover, according to a DB representative, political measures have not encouraged growth in the sector and did strengthen other forms of transport (road charge for trucks was lowered or kerosene is not taxed which has partly encouraged the growth of long-distance bus services).

In recent years, DB has increased efforts to change culture and image of the company in order to become a more attractive employer. DB was state owned until 1994 when the railway law (Bahngesetz) prescribed the conversion of the Deutsche Bundesbahn (West Germany) and Deutsche Reichsbahn (East Germany) into a limited company, Deutsche Bahn AG, with the Federal Republic of Germany as the only shareholder. At that time, the company had 350,000 employees based in Germany. Over the following 15 years, the company's workforce in Germany was reduced by over 150,000 employees, which was mainly achieved through natural wastage, with little new recruitment taking place. Since then, mainly as a result of demographic trends, the company has become a significant recruiter again. To a certain degree, it continues to suffer from a perception of being an 'old fashioned' employer with the legacy of state ownership and a relatively high degree of civil service type contracts (currently around 30,000 individuals are on such contracts), which – while offering some significant advantages to employees – are also associated with a perception of 'officialdom' and a potential lack of dynamism.

The **DB 2020 strategy of the DB company** outlines the company's vision to become the world's leading mobility and logistics company. The guiding principle of DB 2020 is a sustainable business approach based on the three dimensions of economy, social affairs and ecology. These three dimensions are of equal importance and status: DB wants to become a profitable market leader, a top employer and an eco-pioneer.

DB's goal in the social pillar is to be rated among the top 10 employers in Germany by 2020. Its current ranking depends on the nature of the survey and the type of respondents. Three key sources on employer ranking are available in Germany which are briefly presented below. Of particular interest to the company is the ranking among engineering graduates, where it is currently ranked 14th and here in particular aims to reach a position among the top 10. Other large rail companies do not feature in the Top 20 of these indices. Attractiveness in different rail companies is strongly influenced by the nature of collective bargaining in the sector and the resulting differentials in terms and conditions (see also section 5.4 below).

Source	Ranking of DB (and other rail companies)
Arbeitgeber Ranking 2015 ⁵⁹	Top 10 depend on field of study, but mostly include car manufacturers (BMW, Mercedes, Porsche, Audi, VW) as well as software companies such as Google, Microsoft and Apple, as well as other large companies such as Siemens, Bosch etc. Rail companies are not featured in Top 10
Universum global student survey ⁶⁰	<i>2014 ranking Economics graduates (top 5):</i>

⁵⁹ Arbeitgeber Ranking 2015, available here: <http://karrierebibel.de/arbeitgeber-ranking-2015/>.

⁶⁰ Universum global student survey 2014, available here: <http://universumglobal.com/ideal-employer-rankings/student-surveys/germany/germany-top-100-ideal-employers-2014/>.

	Audi BMW Porsche VW Google Deutsche Bahn 42 (in 2014: 35) <i>Engineering graduates (top 5):</i> Audi BMW Porsche VW Mercedes Benz Deutsche Bahn 14 (in 2014: 10) <i>IT graduates (top 5):</i> Google Microsoft Apple Audi SAP Deutsche Bahn 37 (in 2014: 33) <i>Natural science graduates (top 5):</i> Max Planck Gesellschaft Bayer Fraunhofer BASF Merck Deutsche Bahn 34 (in 2014: 24) <i>Humanities graduates</i> Deutsche Bahn 29 (in 2014: 23)
Arbeitgeberstudie 2014 ⁶¹	Deutsche Bahn was among the employers covered, but the full report has to be purchased. DB not among top 10.

5.3.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

Interviewees from the employer and employee side emphasised that the sector is still considered as a **relatively safe work place** and **salaries and benefits are a positive factor** of employment in the rail sector, although in some occupations, higher salaries can be offered in other sectors (such as the automotive industry in relation to engineers). Therefore, the sector faces competition from other sectors that might be more attractive and challenges to keep up with changing job expectations, particularly on the part of young people.

Furthermore, the picture of a **relatively safe working place in the rail sector is challenged in local transport** where the DB faces more competition by private providers. If a company does not win a public tender there is a risk of redundancies. Although the change of employers is regulated⁶² the terms are often not very clear and companies are not obliged to employ employees from the former contractor. According to the VDV representative, people are reluctant to apply for jobs with companies whose public contract is soon about to end.

The rails sector offers a significant number of different job profiles, which is often not well known to young job entrants or job changers. DB has been running a campaign ('a job like no other' – see below for further information) to raise awareness of the occupational and

⁶¹ Arbeitgeberstudie 2014, available here: http://statista-research.com/wpcontent/uploads/2014/01/LP_ArbeitgeberStudie_2014.pdf

⁶² § 613a Rechte und Pflichten bei Betriebsübergang.

career potential within the company and a careers page on its website offers substantial information about the nature and requirements for these different occupational profiles. Because of the size of the company, the range of apprenticeships and occupations offered within DB is greater than in other rail companies, which nonetheless still offer a wide variety of career opportunities. As indicated above, the specific characteristics of companies in the sector are determined by which sub-segment of the sector they fall into and which collective agreement they are governed by.

The picture of the **'railway family' is changing and becoming less important**. One interviewee underlined that although many people are still fascinated by railway, becoming a train driver is not a 'dream job' anymore. In general, **job expectations by job seekers and working careers are changing**. Young job seekers in particular emphasise the importance of a 'meaningful' job, as well as having an interesting role and the possibility to develop in the job. Good working conditions offering flexibility in particular are also highly valued. One employer representative reported a 'change of values' among young people which is focused on work-life balance and individual goals. Employees also want to be more involved and informed about developments in the company. Mobile employees, especially working parents, face the difficulty to reconcile work and private life and interviewees emphasized that the willingness to compromise in these terms is decreasing. In addition, job seekers do not only have changing expectations, but are also able to **access information on working conditions or working climate via social media** in order to check if their expectations are met.

As an answer to changing job expectations and careers, DB n offers **individualised packages of conditions which can adapt around the life cycle**. This includes the collective bargaining agreement designed to address demographic change (Demography CBA)⁶³, which is an agreement with the Union for Railway and Transport Workers (EVG) and DB. Its vision is a stage-of-life model offering **employees at different stages of their lives or careers** a number of concrete measures **adapted to their individual needs** or circumstances such as **flexible working time models** (part-time work, **sabbatical**), a **better work-life balance** by offering **child care** facilities or **support for employees with relatives in need for care** and measures to support employees to keep their **mental and physical fitness and health**.

The Demography CBA also provides a life-long job guarantee for all workers employed by DB for at least two years and it allows older worker to reduce their working time by 20% with an 12.5% decrease in salary and more flexible working time arrangements for younger workers with long-term working time accounts (with the possibility to accumulate additional hours either to realise early retirement or to take family leaves for study breaks etc). Other smaller companies often cannot offer such individualised packages and underline other offers such as working climate or training opportunities.

5.3.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

Although interviewed experts underlined positive aspects of the sector, they **stated that in general the attractiveness of the sector has decreased** because of several internal and external factors. Moreover, the rating by graduates of DB in the Universum Global Student Survey worsened in 2015 compared to 2014.

The sector is a relatively **safe place of work** because the **sector is growing and there is a global tendency towards more mobility and sustainability**. Moreover, **DB as is secure employer** because of wide possibilities to employ people in different areas of work and different occupations and the above mentioned Demography CBA. However, competition is increasing in the transport sector for short distances which poses an increased risk to lose a job in companies without such agreements. Less attractive elements of the sector are **irregular working times for mobile workers** and in the case of DB, the challenge to make

⁶³ Demografietarifvertrag (DemografieTV).

such a big company fit for **changing developments and employees' expectations in the labour market**. One interviewee stressed that in order to increase the attractiveness of the sector there needs to be a **cultural change** that addresses digitalization, changes leadership and sees the importance of family, leisure and fulfillment in a job.

5.3.4 Comparison with other sectors

In general, there are positive aspects that contribute to the attractiveness as an employer (as mentioned above, e.g. security of employment, variety of careers etc.), however, other sectors can be more attractive in terms of compensation and identification for certain occupational profiles, such as the automotive industry for engineers. This varies across regions, for example the automotive industry is quite present in the south of the country, so the railway sector faces more competition there.

5.3.5 Examples of good practices

- **DB 2020 strategy** that considers global economic, social and environmental aspects in order to address change in the company.
- DB campaigns increasingly with **advertisements that show their employees**. This contributes to the identification of employees with the company and provides insight into the company for customers or future employees. Together with the campaign 'a job like no other' this raises awareness of the career potential of the sector.
- The Demography CBA at DB is designed to address demographic change and encompasses a number of concrete measures to support employees at different stages of their lives while taking their individual needs into account.

5.4 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

5.4.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

The general framework for employment conditions in the rail sector is regulated by general labour laws and collective bargaining agreements. For example, the German federal labour laws regarding working time and holiday benefits can be regarded as providing for minimum social standards, with the possibility for collective bargaining agreements to establish more favourable conditions. It should be noted that general labour laws do not provide for specific social standards for employees in the railway sector.

Germany recently introduced a statutory minimum wage, but this continues to emphasise the role of collective bargaining in setting minimum wage levels. For core staff in the rail sector, minimum wage levels tend not to be particularly relevant as collectively agreed wages generally exceed such minimum levels, although this is not necessarily the case for some sub-contracted services such as cleaning/catering. Collective agreements negotiated by relevant social partner organisations are only binding on the negotiating parties and are not generally applicable (however, see below on *Tariftreuegestz*).

The main unions in the railway sector are:

- EVG (Eisenbahn und Verkehrsgewerkschaft; Union for Railway and Transport Workers)
- Ver.di
- GDL (Gewerkschaft Deutscher Lokomotivführer)

Three employer organisations are present in the railway sector:

- Employers' Association of Mobility and Transport Service Providers (Arbeitgeberverband der Mobilitätsverkehrsdienstleister, Agv MoVe)
- Employers Association of German Railway Companies (Arbeitgeberverband deutsche Eisenbahnen, AGVDE)
- Employers Association of Local Public Transport (Arbeitgeberverband Nahverkehr, AVN)

AgvMove represents DB and its subsidiary companies whereas AGVDE represents other public and private train and other transport companies.

All partners are involved in collective bargaining at national (sectoral) and local level. Separate sectoral agreements exist between Agv MoVe and AGVDE and its partners. There are also separate agreements for train drivers. There are also many diverse company level agreements.

For the local and regional rail passenger transport sector, since 2011, the framework agreement SPNV determines a minimum wage level and the agreement is applicable to almost 98% of railway operators. Furthermore, more favourable wage levels and conditions can be set in company collective agreements or in-house agreements, by corporate collective agreements (taking into account all the company subsidiaries and branches) and in the individual labour contract. This creates a patchwork of provisions with very different wage standards and conditions in different companies, which are, however, delimited by the minimum standards set in the framework collective agreement. The negotiation of this agreement was considered to be an important step in preventing social and wage dumping which, it was feared by some, might result from liberalisation in the sector⁶⁴.

So such framework agreement exists in the long-distance rail sector, however, as this continues to be dominated by DB, it is the company collective agreement which is of greatest significance here.

Important differences still prevail in the wages and terms and conditions in different operating companies with the best paid employees (generally those of the national operator Deutsche Bahn, henceforth DB) earning up to 20% more than their worst paid counterparts (who rely on the provisions of the framework collective agreement).

An important provision in Germany impacting working conditions in the context of increasing tendering of local and regional rail services are the so-called *Tariftreugesetze* (laws on compliance with collective agreements, henceforth TTGs). These laws determined at the level of each region (Land) intend to set a level playing field for social aspects among all bidders in public tendering procedures, in particular regarding wage standards, and thus prevent the risk of social and wage dumping.⁶⁵ While social dumping has been a key concern among trade unions for some time, the Association of German transport companies, VDV, also pronounced its concern about this and spoke out in favour of provisions regarding the compliance with collective agreements.⁶⁶

What is 'Tariftreue'

The basic idea behind the concept of 'Tariftreue' is to inform and require all potential bidders – and eventually the successful contractor – in a tendering process to respect certain minimum social standards with regards to wages (and working conditions) for staff in the context of the delivery of the contract. TTGs are agreed at federal state level, with 14 of the 16 federal states current having such legislation. They not only cover the local and regional rail sector but all sectors subject to public tenders. The applicable social standards to be used are determined in relation to the specific sector.

The minimum social standards to be respected are determined with reference to one (or several) collective agreements pertinent to the sector. Because different collective agreements can be found in the local and regional sector⁶⁷, a relevant or representative collective agreement is determined at state (or in some cases PTA) level– often in consultation with a committee of representative bodies

⁶⁴ Gewerkschaft GDBA und Transnet (2011); Für einen Branchentarifvertrag SPNV.

⁶⁵ The risk of wage dumping resulting from liberalisation was specifically referred to in the proposals for the state TTG proposed by the CDU and SPD at state level in Saarland; (DS 15/96 of 23.08.2012).

⁶⁶ VDV Presseinformation; 14.5.2013; Kein Sozial- und Lohndumping im deutschen ÖPNV

⁶⁷ See also section on industrial relation in the sector.

including the social partners (or in fact determined by such a committee). This does not mean that a (new) operator has to adopt a particular collective agreement⁶⁸ but instead that it has to abide by a predetermined minimum standard set in the representative collective agreement, which can of course be exceeded.

The 'representative' collective agreement is usually determined with reference to its geographical application and the number of employees in the sector covered by this agreement. Another criterion is the number of employees who are members of the relevant trade union in the sector. In practice, the framework collective agreement for the local and regional sector (Branchentarifvertrag SPNV⁶⁹) increasingly acts as the reference agreement in this respect.

Successful bidders not respecting the minimum social standards mandated by TTGs are subject to financial sanctions; existing contracts can be terminated and companies could be excluded from further bidding processes.

Existing evaluations of regional TTGs have generally found positive impacts on wage and social standards resulting from TTGs, but in some cases shortcomings in relation to enforcement have been identified and concerns have been raised that without legal and practical clarity on how relevant tenders should be organised bidders are often uncertain which the application of the TTG means for them in practice in the bidding and post-bidding progress. Suggestions for concepts of Tariftreue 4.0 have therefore been made which would foresee better control mechanisms as well as the potential for pre-qualifications stages in bidding processes which would require bidders, at an early stage to demonstrate how they would meet the requirements for the TTG should their bid be successful.

Another relevant recent development is the passage of a so called 'Tarifeinheitgesetz' (law on collective bargaining unity) through the German Parliament. The purpose of the law is to ensure the efficiency of free collective bargaining. It effectively rules out collision of competing collective bargaining agreements for one professional group in a company. In case of conflicts where trade unions negotiate competitive collective bargaining agreements for one and the same professional group these conflicts are regulated by the principle of majority rule. This means that if trade unions with overlapping collective bargaining agreements are not able to compromise the collective bargaining agreement of the trade union with the most members in the company will be regarded as valid.

Furthermore, the Germany Parliament approved, in early 2016, an amendment to the Public Procurement Act (Law against the restraint of trade) which applies to the railway sector. As a result, any contracting authority should require a transfer of staff in case of a change of operator in the public award of passenger rail contracts. The legislator shied away from using the terminology 'must' to allow for exceptions, and initial efforts at national level to include the bus sector were also not included. This new regulation offers further protection of social standards in cases of the competitive award of tenders for passenger rail services⁷⁰.

5.4.1.1 Pay and conditions

Beyond the baseline standards set in the national collective agreement for the local and regional rail transport sector, terms and conditions in different companies in the rail sector are **governed by different collective agreements**. Within DB there are different collective agreements for occupations and operational entities. There is a **wide range of benefits** available which such as pension schemes, free trips, different travel allowances health programs and much more. Private railway companies have their own collective agreements.

In terms of working conditions, employee representatives interviewed for this study underlined that **irregular shiftwork for mobile employees** (train driver, train manager etc.) has a negative impact on health and private life. Especially in local transport, working time

⁶⁸ In the context of the principle of the autonomy of collective bargaining, this would not be possible.

⁶⁹ http://www.evg-wrb.de/1pdf/03_11/04_03ani.pdf

⁷⁰ Rohrmann, M and Pfaff, S (2016); Beschäftigtenübergang im SPNV im international Vergleich; Der Nahverkehr 1-2/2016

has increased compared to previous years and staff rotas are developed automatically so there is little chance for people to influence it.

Information from the DB employee survey⁷¹ indicates that employees were overall satisfied with their job tasks and activities. In terms of working conditions 70% stated that their employer takes safety issues at the workplace seriously (11% declined this) and 45% feel that they can maintain their physical and mental health (27% indicates that this was not the case). Nevertheless, the survey also says that working conditions and working time are a relatively less important factor for overall employee satisfaction with an exception for some operational occupations. Sickness rates and staff turnover is higher for mobile employees which shows that working time arrangements are potentially an important aspect of employee retention. With regards to all employees, sickness rates are slightly higher than in other industries and DB has a very low rate of staff turnover per annum (around 3%).

According to many interviewees, the **risk of violence or harassment by passengers is becoming a more relevant issue**. Measures to address the issue are shifts with two people, an additional security service (DB Security), security apps and cooperation with the police. However, this is only partly done and is not so wide spread in local transport. There is the fear that other solutions (cameras) instead of more personal are used to address the issue.

There is a wide range of measures for **health promotion**, such as reviews after long sick leave (Krankenrückkehrgespräche), preventive health measures (such as the DB health weeks), occupational doctors on sites, support with care obligations and a change of workplace in order to retain employees (for example, a mobile worker who cannot do any shift work anymore is placed in administration).

5.4.1.2 **Company culture**

The DB 2020 strategy 2020 addresses company culture with the specific aim to **become an attractive employer** by increasing employee motivation and satisfaction. DB wants to promote itself as a fair and social employer with the principles of mutual respect and involvement of employees. The company also communicates to different target groups, it stresses freedom and independence for younger people and safety and reliability for older employees.

A part of the strategy is the **DB employee survey 2014** which shows that the overall satisfaction rate increased to 3.7 in 2014 compared to 3.6 points in 2012 (5 points are the highest score). Although this increase is important because of the size of the company and short period of time between the two surveys, there are still differences between different teams (satisfaction rate between 1.6 and 5.0). The good satisfaction rate is supported by high scores with **job activities and tasks** and **loyalty to the company**. 61% of the employees state that they feel strongly connected with DB, however, only 55 % say that they have confidence in the future of the company. This may be a sign of tense economic situation and structural changes that are addressed at management level but have not reached employees. 53% of employees state that they would recommend friends and family to work for DB and 64% indicated that they would opt for DB as an employer again. In terms of work, 69% agreed that there is a good working climate in their areas of work (10% declined this statement) and 72% stated that they enjoy their work.⁷² Most employees are satisfied with their tasks and activities (satisfaction rate was here at 3.7 - with 5 points as highest score), working conditions (3.6) and working time (3.6). Therefore, the study points out that these areas are not seen as an action area, e.g. the company will not address this in their internal policies or change management. However, DB foresees a **change in their company culture in their strategy DB2020** on the basis of the areas for improvement outlined by the employee survey (see below).

⁷¹ Presentation of the Employee Survey by Deutsche Bahn in 2014 (internal document): 189.897 employees in 67 countries took part.

⁷² Ibid.

Smaller railway companies do not have a comprehensive model of company culture, but highlight a **safe workplace and a good working climate** in their companies.

5.4.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

Within DB **working relations between colleagues seem to be good**, although the relation between employees and management and communication could be improved. In the DB staff survey, 77% stated that they can rely on their colleagues if they support, however only 48% of employees rated the cooperation with other areas of work or departments as positive. It appears that there is still a 'silo mentality' that hinders efficient cooperation within the whole company.

Germany has strong regulations on co-determination of employees to ensure the representation of interests of employees. This is also present in all railway companies. However, these structures do not seem to give many employees in such a big company as DB the feeling they are involved, as only 35 % of the employees stated that concerns of employees in important decisions are considered. Another problem is that only 37% of employees state that the internal communication is open and honest. Compared to 2012, this has even slightly decreased (from 38% to now 37%). Leadership is another important factor to influence the satisfaction rates of employees. According to some DB staff, managers do not encourage their employees to take stock (22%), and consider to a lesser extent their personal interests (19%) , or do not show that their work is meaningful and important (20%). The survey interprets the result as the need to work further on a 'culture of trust' within the company in which direct communication by leaders plays a key role.

5.4.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

Challenges outlined by representatives from the railway sector are **demographic change, skill shortages, the development of technology and IT and to some extent the economic crisis**. According to the employers' association of transport (VDV) it is estimated that the whole sector (including other forms of local transport) will have to recruit 30,000 additional people until 2015.

The number of school-leavers decreased since 2003 by 7% and will decrease by 12% until 2020.

As a result, there will be 100,000 fewer potential apprentices. The strongest declines are among pupils with matriculation standard (-18%) and high-school diploma (-12%)⁷³. The decreasing number of employees on the labour market is already evident, in particular in urban areas such as Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich and Hamburg. The average age of employees in all railway companies is between 40-50 years. Therefore, companies will be even more under pressure to find employees in 10-20 years once these people will retire.

All railway companies have adopted their way of communication because of the technical development and increased use of online communication. They will need to further integrate these developments in recruitment, retention and training measures.

The economic crisis and more recently trends in migration have led to some extent to an increased number of available potential employees and temporary workers in some regions. However, according to representatives of the railways sector, the impact of the economic crisis on the availability of staff has already abated and the impact of migration remains difficult to predict.

5.4.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Companies in the sector employ mobile, technical and administrative staff. DB offers apprenticeships within the dual system (on-the job training in the company and additional education) for 50 occupational profiles and aims to recruit approximately 4000 pupils per

⁷³ Presentation by Michael Bütow, Head of Employer Branding, DB Mobility Logistics AG, October 2015.

year.⁷⁴ Moreover, DB offers 14 different dual study courses in the areas engineering, economics and IT. Shorter apprenticeships (around 9 months) are also offered to career changers. At the moment there are around 11,000 people in an apprenticeship or a dual study course. Apprenticeships at DB overall are over-subscribed with around 200,000 applications per annum, but there is a shortage of applicants for technical profiles. Other railway companies offer also apprenticeships or trainee programmes for graduates in order to identify and quality future leaders and experts.

It is estimated that DB will have to recruit between 7000-8000 new staff on an annual basis, mainly as a result of existing workers retiring. The average age in the company is 46, but in some departments and occupations it can be much higher. DB faces the following key challenges in its recruitment efforts:

- Image of the company and the sector
- Lack of knowledge about the wide variety of professions available in DB and for which it offers apprenticeship programmes
- High employment rates in some regions
- High demand for similar occupational profiles from other companies, particularly in the south of the country

Therefore, DB and other private operators already experience a **shortage of employees in technical professions and train drivers**. Although there are differences across regions and sub companies, DB faces overall difficulties to recruit people responsible for the operation and maintenance of trains and infrastructure, mainly engineers, drivers and apprentices for technical occupations. It is expected that the lack of skilled employees will increase, because the decreasing number of graduates and the long qualification path (up to seven years in technical professions). Other companies in the railway sector face similar problems to recruit drivers and apprentices for technical occupations. The sector does not face recruitment problems in the administrative sector, this underlines the assumption that flexible working times and the mobile character of work are not very attractive factors of work in the sector.

5.4.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

In line with the company strategy DB 2020 introduced in 2012, DB modified its recruitment strategy to ensure an **integration of recruitment, staff development, working conditions and broader corporate culture**. The responsible department for recruitment in DB has 150 employees with recruitment centres located in different parts of the country. This includes specialist recruiters with expertise in particular sectors/occupational profiles (e.g. for engineers).

Watchwords for an integrated strategy are:

- Innovation – always exploring and developing new recruitment mechanisms in a full understanding of what is attractive to different target groups
- Big data – developing a clear understanding of the company's requirements and the labour market (at international, national, regional and local level) and knowing what works and does not work in terms of recruitment strategies
- IT – developing a user friendly system to submit applications and ensuring these are appropriately dealt with in such a way to encourage applicants, as well as being able to deal with a high number of applicants
- Good working conditions and corporate culture – word of mouth is an important recruitment tool and existing employees should feel valued in their work and recommend a career at DB to others
- Leadership is considered critical in ensuring positive corporate culture and well-being at work

⁷⁴ Deutsche Bahn mit Schüler-Kampagne für facebook und YouTube, accessed 4/12/2015, available here: <https://www.saatkorn.com/deutsche-bahn-mit-schueler-kampagne-fuer-facebook-und-youtube/>

- Moreover, **strategic workforce planning** has started as a result of the incidents in the railway control centre in Mainz described above. Strategic personnel planning is designed **to forecast the regional and functional development of staffing requirements** and levels at DB.

DB has developed a very **comprehensive recruitment strategy** and tools that communicate across all available channels (print, online, flyer, TV and cinema, event communications, job fairs, radio, social media, outdoor advertising) with a particular focus on online communication and runs campaigns targeted to certain groups (see below). There is a new mobile friendly career website with optimised information and ad-hoc-ads for regional needs in specific occupation groups.

The company Transdev with app. 5500 employees in Germany is working on an employer branding strategy in order to become more known on the labour market and to recruit talented and qualified employees. At the moment, this is based on cooperation with universities, internships for students and public relations. Social media has not been used as a recruitment tool yet.

Vias Logistik and Vias GmbH are small companies with 90 and 120 employees. The company does not have a recruitment strategy as such, they recruit via job advertisements, networks of employees and the employment office. In order to make sure to recruit the right people who are then trained in apprenticeships, Vias offers information seminars for applicants. Moreover, every applicant gets an 'internship' for 3 days before starting the job. According to the Vias representative, 50% of these people realise after these 3 days that they would like to work in another sector.

5.4.4.1 Employment for specific groups (young people, women, older workers, less skilled workers)

As a large company, DB has initiatives to employ specific groups and particular attention is paid to young people. **Older workers** are addressed by the above mentioned demography collective agreement (Demographie-Tarifvertrag) in 2013. The agreement not only covers older workers, but all employees at all stages of their professional lives to ensure that workers are able to work longer. Moreover, the company encourages women/men into professions where they are currently under-represented. Overall, the share of women is relatively low (see above), but is significantly higher (and women are indeed in the majority) in some occupations, in particular in services.

Recently, DB has **significantly strengthened targeted communication to young people**. DB works with schools, colleges and universities. At present there around 360 school collaborations in place where DB offers career guidance, work experience, tours of specific workplaces and other services. Work experience and careers guidance is also offered to college and university students. DB participates in a wide range of job fairs and takes part in around 400-500 career events for potential recruits on an annual basis. 'Backstage DB', an initiative which offers access to actual workplaces and contact with employees, is particularly popular and pupils, students and apprentices are able to network via internal networks and social media with employees of DB to find out more about career profiles and day to day jobs. There is also advertising in popular youth magazines and TV shows.

Parts of the career website are targeted at pupils and students which include a self-test tool to find out preferences with linked apprenticeship offers. In order to increase awareness of young people, DB uses 6 social media channels. Apprentices are encouraged to blog about their experiences and the company encourages career networks and talent pools among its employees. Such activities are considered to be particularly important for college and university students who join DB for work experience and then return to their courses, in order to keep them in touch with former colleagues and the employer, in the hope that they will return when their course is completed.

Special programmes are also being offered **to young people who have only completed (or have not completed) basic education** in order to qualify them for an apprenticeship

placement. This initiative entitled 'Chance Plus' (opportunity plus) is offered to 300-400 young people per annum. They complete a year of pre-apprenticeship training and support and can later apply for full apprenticeship placements.

A specific measure to address shortages of specific groups of workers are **dual university courses**. In terms of future recruitment, DB has also changed criteria for recruitment, now every applicant who submits CV and cover letter is invited to an online test that asks about abilities of particular interest for future jobs. In that way, DB advertises **that school or university grades are only secondary criteria** for a job application.

5.4.4.2 *Job mobility*

The **DB group has its own temporary work agency**, DB JobService, which has the aim to retain employees in the company after job cuts in one entity. DB is committed to transparency in advertising internal vacancies and enabling staff to apply for new opportunities. The works councils have a particular role to play in approving all new recruitment and can reject new recruits (for instance in cases where it is felt that suitable qualified internal applicants were available). The company offers an internal web-tool which helps staff to plan their career path. For each job profile, it sets out potential next steps or linked provisions and delivers information on the type of training or qualifications required to move on to these levels. This can be an important part of the one to one personal development conversation, which generally takes place on an annual basis.

So far, European and global mobility opportunities in the DB companies exist but are not significantly marketed as a recruitment tool.

5.4.4.3 *Recruiting and internal training*

The **quality of apprenticeships** in DB and other companies has been emphasised as very high. There are also career opportunities, for instance **dual courses for students** who have good career opportunities in administrative or technical areas.

DB has a system for training and development and the **DB development pathways** (as mentioned above) – a web-based tool that supports users to find future career opportunities. The company also differentiates between a leadership career and an expert career. However, according to the DB staff survey, development and staff appreciation of **internal training within the company is yet to be improved as a result of these innovations** and is also becoming more important for overall job satisfaction. Less than half of employees (41 %) indicate that they consider their professional development opportunities as good and only 42 % state that their professional development is supported. Only 47 % state that they feel informed about possibilities of professional development and 52 % state that the offered qualification measures meet the needs for a certain job. The fact that half of the employees do not feel informed about training or do not think it is accurate singles out the need to inform better about available training and to improve it.

Smaller companies on the Germany market offer also opportunities for training. Transdev has a performance review system that identifies personal goals and room for development which is then followed by internal and external training. The Union for Railway and Transport Workers (EVG) has also been a driver for training. There is a fund (agreed on in collective agreement) to cover some expenses of training for employers and also IT courses organised by EVG.

5.4.4.4 *International cooperation*

In recent years, recruitment in other European countries has become more important, with efforts to recruit pupils and graduates from Spain and Italy who are recruited in country and then offered language training prior to starting their apprenticeships in Germany.

5.4.5 Identify areas for job creation

As discussed above, there is currently a **demand for train drivers, engineers and apprentices in technical positions** which is also likely to increase in the next years as more people will retire.

5.4.6 Examples of good practices

Working conditions

- **EVG outlined the topic work-life balance as their key issue for 2016.** They will discuss this at their union conference, assess the situation with companies and initiate local projects together with employers to tackle problems.
- Vias offers **training on harassment and violence** and has a **volunteer team that supports staff affected by harassment and violence.**
- The Union for Railway and Transport Workers (EVG) has started the campaign '**Safely underway**' (Sicher unterwegs) to encourage employees to report incidents of violence or harassment by passengers in order to make employers and politicians more aware of the issue.
- EVG and the association of railway engineers (VDEI) co-operated to the project 'Schienenjobs' (rail sector jobs), which also has a range of private and public sector as well as education sector partners and seeks to market the attractiveness of jobs in the sector more widely. In addition, it offers a portal of jobs available in the sector in a single web portal 'schienenjobs.de'.
- **DB health weeks** (DB Gesundheitswochen).
- The recently agreed **Demography CBA** at DB provides the conditions for more flexible ways of employment in different life stages.
- Increased measures to **support employees with care obligations** are also part of the collective agreement.

Recruitment

- DB has particularly sought to raise awareness of the breadth and quality of training and career opportunities offered at DB and to this end has been running a campaign since 2012 entitled '**A job like no other**'. This long-term campaign⁷⁵ is aimed at different target groups (pupils, students, labour market entrants, experienced workers etc.). The choice of media to communicate the message is specifically designed and targeted to these different groups (TV spots, use of social media etc.). The campaign is linked to company's career portal. A company internal assessment of the campaign⁷⁶ considers that these efforts have contributed to improving the company's ranking of top employers among certain target groups (among pupils from 46 to 25 in the Trendence survey). Additionally 70% of pupils, students and experienced workers surveyed online (2012-2014) know the 'job like no other' campaign.
- The **DB career portal**⁷⁷ which provides targeted information on occupations and access routes for different types of target groups (as well as direct opportunities for applications) won awards including the Trendence Employer Branding Award 2014 for the best career website and the 2013 Queb award for the excellence in an employer branding campaign. The website allows interested individuals to 'go behind the scenes' of a job at DB where

⁷⁵ A TV spot for the campaign can be found via this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcqhaR-cF4s>

⁷⁶ Company own website accessed 21.09.2015

http://www.deutschebahn.com/de/presse/themendienste/7716524/arbeitgeberkampagne_032015.html

⁷⁷ www.deutschebahn.com/karriere

information is provided by the company's own staff. The company's career portal had over 4 million visitors in 2014.

- **'Backstage DB'** – an initiative which offers access to actual workplaces and contact with employees
- **DB career development webtool** which promotes internal career development and mobility

5.5 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

5.5.1.1 *Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees*

Attractive elements of the sector is a relatively safe workplace, a stable employer, the quality and variety of apprenticeships, available development paths and contact with different people. The sector has only been slightly affected by the financial and economic crisis. These are surely points that could be emphasised more in employer branding strategies.

Although the mobile character of many jobs in the sector can also have positive sides, it has been emphasised by the representatives in the sector that the balance between private and professional life for mobile employers needs to be improved. Measures that support these are a better regulation for shift work (more breaks, more involvement of the individual when planning shifts), more flexible working hours, various part-time models, support with care and health promotion (which has been taken up by DB with the introduction of health weeks).

The level of basic remuneration packages can be an issue in efforts to recruit staff, depending on the specific occupational profile and the part of the country. It is a challenge for railway companies to balance attractive wages and the economic interest of the companies, however, more attractive compensation structures might be a way to attract workers in the required occupations. Rent allowances or company flats in urban, expensive areas could be also a possibility. DB considers that some of this potential disadvantage can be addressed by more attractive additional benefits packages, flexible working conditions and the job security offered in particular since 2013 as a result of the Demography CBA.

5.5.1.2 *Identify effective recruitment and retention measures*

DB has started a comprehensive recruitment strategy that outlines the **variety of occupations**, considers **various forms of media** and particular targeted communication to young people while other smaller railway companies do not use different channels (online/offline) so extensively. Such strategies are based on extensive research on factors which are relevant to different targets groups and has led to the increasing use of social media to attract young people. DB and also other companies use **cooperation with education** to recruit young people. The DB recruitment strategy is quite new and it is too soon to draw conclusions based on outcomes. According to one DB representative, there are positive results, such as the cooperation with schools and universities and programmes targeted at certain groups such as the **'Chance Plus' programme**. There have been single negative side effects such as an insufficiently tested online test for certain technical occupations.

DB could increase **efforts to recruit people from certain groups**. The 'Chance Plus' has been considered as successful and increases as well the perception of DB as a social and stable employer. As described above, the share of women in some occupations is still low and efforts to address this segmentation could include working time flexibility or women in leadership programmes.

In external communication, the sector could **put more emphasis on positive aspects**, such as job security, stability, mobility, sustainability and environmental aspects, but also the range of different occupations.

5.5.1.3 Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

The image of the sector as an employer and strategic measures to increase the attractiveness for employees and future employees are linked to a range of aspects, such as employer branding, company culture, working conditions and external and internal communication. In particular in such a big company as DB the **company culture needs to consider changing developments on the labour market**, such a values and expectations of young employees and digitalisation.

As described above, the DB 2020 strategy aims to facilitate this and uses the DB staff survey 2014 to **identify positive aspects of the work** and **areas for improvement** in order retain staff and recruit new employees. The study singles out strong aspects such as activities and identification with the company and identifies areas for improvement which are communication and information of employees, cooperation across different departments and business areas, leadership, training and personal development.

5.5.2 Examples of good practices

- The **‘job like no other’** campaign helped to increase awareness of the breadth of careers available. It is also acknowledged that job seekers are increasingly motivated by the ‘meaning’ behind the company they work for and DB therefore emphasises its important place at the backbone of the nation and in connecting people, as well as the ecological/sustainability benefits of rail over other transport services.
- DB staff development portal which allows employees to assess their current position and possibilities for development in relation to the careers available in DB (and they steps they would need to undertake to get to the next level/or a career change).
- The **DB staff survey** in order in order to single out areas of improvement. The survey in 2014 also says that there is a strong correlation between the follow-up process of the study in 2012 and the employee satisfaction. The better the follow-up process was conducted in the perception of employees, the higher their satisfaction.
- The Employers’ Association of Transport (VDV) is working on an **employer image campaign** (Kampagne des Arbeitgeberimages) which will start in 2016 with an increased information about the different occupations and activities in the sector.

5.6 Summary SWOT analysis

Table 5.1 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Safe workplace ■ Satisfaction with tasks ■ Stable salary ■ Growth perspective because mobility is increasing ■ Sustainability ■ Contact with people ■ Health promotion ■ Comprehensive recruitment and development strategy (DB) ■ Comprehensive communication strategy (DB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sector not seen as dynamic ■ Shift work for mobile employees ■ Threat of violence/harassment by passengers ■ Employees do not feel involved in decision making process (DB) ■ Employees feel not enough support with professional development (DB)

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate positive aspect of sector (environmental, range of occupations in sector) ■ Targeting of certain groups (young people, women etc.) ■ Flexible working arrangements for mobile employees ■ Individualised packages of conditions which can adapt around the life cycle ■ Development of leadership (DB) ■ Increase awareness and quality of training opportunities (DB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demographic change ■ Changing job expectations ■ Other sectors have offer higher salary (automotive industry) ■ Political decisions favouring other transport sectors (decision to allow long distance buses) ■ Decreasing job security in local rail transport through public tenders ■

Annex 12 List of sources

- Arbeitgeber Ranking 2015, available here: <http://karrierebibel.de/arbeitgeber-ranking-2015/>
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Universum global student survey, 2014, available here: <http://universumglobal.com/ideal-employer-rankings/student-surveys/germany/germany-top-100-ideal-employers-2014/>

Annex 13 List of Interviewees

- Maud Barthel (13.11. 2015) trade union representative at Vias Logistik and Vias GmbH
- Johannes Houben (3.11.2015) trade union representative at EVG (Union for Railway and Transport Workers)
- Dirk Möller (4.11.2015)) trade union representative at Deutsche Bahn AG
- Gisbert Schlotzhauer (3.12.2015) employers' representative: board member of VDV Employer association on German transport
- Carsten Schröter (16.11.2015) employers' representative: HR Director: Transdev
- Kerstin Wagner (1.9.2015), employer representative: DB (Recruiting)
- Christof Beutgen (3.9.2015), employer representative: DB (Staff development)
- Lars Hünninghausen (15.9.2015), employer representative: DB (working conditions)

Annex 14 Employee Surveys

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	4
Negative	19
Neutral	14
Positive	5
Very positive	0
Unsure	1
(blank)	4
Grand Total	47

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	4
Depends on occupation	1
Very positive	0
Quite positive	6
Neutral	21
Quite negative	9
Very negative	4
Don't know	0
n/a	2
Grand Total	47

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	4
Quite positive	10
Neutral	14
Quite negative	16
Very negative	2
Don't know	0
n/a	1
Grand Total	47

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?

No, far lower level	4
No, lower level	6
The same level	17
Yes, a little higher	5
Yes, far higher	7
Unsure	5
Don't know	0
n/a	3
Grand Total	47

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	34
Improve benefits	19
Improve working hours	32
Provide a better work-life balance	37
Improve career opportunities	20

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	7
Quite satisfied	23
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	7
Quite dissatisfied	6
Very dissatisfied	2
Unsure	0
n/a	2
Grand Total	47

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	7
Most days	14
From time to time	25
Never	1
Unsure	0
n/a	0
Grand Total	47

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?										
	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
Job security		32	11	3	1	0	0	0	0	47
A good working atmosphere		31	14	1	1	0	0	0	0	47
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks		26	17	2	1	0	0	0	1	47
Overall level of pay and benefits		20	24	2	0	0	0	0	1	47
Pension provision		17	23	2	3	1	0	0	1	47
Opportunity for career development and promotion		10	20	10	2	2	1	0	2	47
Access to training and education		9	28	8	0	2	0	0	0	47
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)		14	21	11	0	0	0	1	0	47
My employer providing additional health benefits		14	19	10	3	0	0	1	0	47
International opportunities / working abroad		1	2	14	7	11	11	1	0	47

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	4	0	13	8	0	0	22	47
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	5	0	18	22	1	0	1	47
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	8	0	16	21	1	0	1	47

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	5	10	14	13	2	0	3	47
Benefits	6	17	10	8	0	0	6	47
Working hours	3	2	13	18	8	0	3	47
Work-life balance	0	6	13	19	6	0	3	47
Career development opportunities	1	16	14	11	1	0	3	47

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	12	24	7	0	0	4	47

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	6	0	20	19	2	0	0	47
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	4	14	8	18	2	0	1	47
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	2	18	13	13	1	0	0	47
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	7	25	8	6	1	0	0	47
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	2	10	16	8	0	8	3	47
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	1	11	14	13	4	1	3	47
Overall, My workload suits me	1	23	14	6	1	0	2	47

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	0	14	18	13	2	0	0	47
There is a sense of a "railway family"	1	8	17	15	3	0	3	47
My commitment to the company is very high	6	18	14	6	2	0	1	47
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people,	3	10	22	6	2	2	2	47

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds								
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	0	2	7	2	0	5	31	47
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	0	2	5	1	0	6	33	47
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	0	12	14	14	3	0	4	47
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	3	10	21	7	1	2	3	47

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	11	26	5	4	1	0	0	47
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	11	25	8	2	1	0	0	47
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	5	28	9	2	2	1	0	47
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	6	17	16	6	1	1	0	47
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	5	22	12	6	1	1	0	47

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	7	10	4	3	1	0	22	47
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	6	15	13	8	3	1	1	47

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	7	16	13	9	2	0	0	47
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	5	19	14	4	5	0	0	47
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	6	20	12	3	3	2	1	47
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	9	15	13	5	2	2	1	47

Annex 15 Apprentices Survey

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the railway sector in your country?	
Depends on occupation	1
Don't know	0
Neutral	3
Quite negative	4
Very negative	2
Quite positive	3
(blank)	0
Grand Total	13

Why did you chose to undertake this apprenticeship? (tick all that apply)	
The program is suited to my job/career aspirations	7
Funding was available for the apprenticeship	4
There was a clear link to actual job opportunities	4
I was attracted to a career in the rail sector	7
Other	0

Views about pay, benefits and career opportunities. To what extent are the following factors important to you in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	0	0	2	5	6	0	0	0	13
Job security	0	0	0	1	12	0	0	0	13
Pension provision	0	2	2	5	4	0	0	0	13
Access to training and education	0	0	3	3	7	0	0	0	13
Opportunity for career development and promotion	0	0	0	5	8	0	0	0	13
International opportunities / working abroad	2	3	3	1	3	1	0	0	13
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	0	1	7	5	0	0	0	13
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	0	1	6	6	0	0	0	0	13
An employer providing additional health benefits	0	1	5	6	1	0	0	0	13

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to these factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	1	1	4	6	1	0	0	0	13
Job security	0	2	1	5	2	2	1	0	13
Pension provision	0	1	5	4	0	0	3	0	13
Access to training and education	0	1	3	8	0	0	1	0	13
Opportunity for career development and promotion	1	0	5	5	0	0	1	1	13
International opportunities / working abroad	2	5	1	1	0	2	1	1	13
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	1	3	3	4	0	2	0	13
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	0	0	6	2	2	0	2	1	13
An employer providing additional health benefits	0	1	6	2	1	0	2	1	13
Being part of a "railway family"	0	1	4	5	3	0	0	0	13

Views about working hours, work organisation, health and safety and maintaining a good work/ life balance. Which of the following factors are most important in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	0	0	1	5	7	0	0	0	13
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	0	2	1	4	5	1	0	0	13
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	0	0	3	4	4	0	0	2	13
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	0	0	3	4	6	0	0	0	13
A comfortable place of work	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	12	13

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to the following factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	0	0	7	6	0	0	0	0	13
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	2	0	4	4	0	1	2	0	13
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	0	1	7	5	0	0	0	0	13
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	1	0	3	6	2	0	1	0	13

To what extent has your experience to date met your expectations in relation to the following factors?

	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	(blank)	Grand Total
Integration into the company and/or in my team?	0	0	3	7	3	0	0	13
Relationship with day-to-day manager / tutor	0	2	6	1	4	0	0	13
Relationship with other workers in the company	0	0	3	6	4	0	0	13

How would you rate the overall image of the railway sector?

Depends on occupation	1
Don't know	0
Neutral	3
Quite negative	4
Quite positive	3
Very negative	2
Very positive	0
(blank)	0
Grand Total	13

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Tick all that apply)

Males	8
Females	0
Older workers	12
Younger workers	0
All of the above	1

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector?

Improve pay	8
Improve benefits	1
Improve working hours	3
Improve the working climate / corporate culture	2
Provide a better work-life balance	4
Improve career opportunities	9
Improve external communication	8
Other	0

Would you recommend the rail sector to others considering undertaking an apprenticeship?	
No	3
Yes	9
(blank)	1
Grand Total	13

Annex 16 Student/Pupil Surveys

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Please tick all that apply)

Males	16
Females	1
Older workers	10
Younger workers	4
All of the above	4

Important factors when looking for an employer

	1 Most important	2	3	4	5 Least important	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
An employer where there are likely to be considerable future job opportunities	2	7	7	1	1	0	1	19
An employer that my family/friends have worked in	3	12	4	0	0	0	0	19
The level of pay and financial reward	0	0	1	6	10	2	0	19
Long term job security	6	11	2	0	0	0	0	19
Good work / life balance	10	6	3	0	0	0	0	19
Opportunities to develop my career	11	6	1	0	1	0	0	19
International opportunities / working abroad	9	8	1	1	0	0	0	19
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	6	5	5	2	1	0	0	19
A good working atmosphere	10	7	1	1	0	0	0	19
Opportunities for training and development / learning new skills	15	2	2	0	0	0	0	19
An employer that provides flexible working time	11	7	1	0	0	0	0	19
An employer that has good health & safety standards	7	7	3	2	0	0	0	19
An employer that provides good pension benefits	5	7	6	1	0	0	0	19
An employer that is close to my home	3	8	6	2	0	0	0	19
An employer that promotes innovation	3	4	9	3	0	0	0	19
An employer with a positive image	4	7	6	2	0	0	0	19
Other	1	7	9	1	0	1	0	19

When compared with other sectors, how do you think the rail sector compares?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No opinion	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	0	6	6	2	0	5	0	19
Benefits	0	4	10	1	0	3	1	19
Working hours	0	0	7	9	0	2	1	19
Career development opportunities	0	2	8	5	0	3	1	19
Work-life balance	0	3	6	6	0	3	1	19
Training and education	0	8	7	1	0	2	1	19
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	1	11	2	0	4	1	19

How closely do the jobs in the railway sector match your career aspirations?	
Exact match	0
A somewhat good match	1
Not a good match	4
Poor match	6
Don't know	8
(blank)	0
Grand Total	19

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be higher in other sectors?	
Yes, far higher	7
Yes, a little higher	1
The same level	3
No, far lower level	1
No, lower level	0
Unsure	4
Don't know	0
(blank)	3
Grand Total	19

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
A Short-term one (0-1 year)	2
A Medium-term one (2-5 years)	8
A long term one (more than 5 years)	5
Don't know	3
(blank)	1
Grand Total	19

Are you aware of any specific initiatives to encourage students or pupils to choose the railway sector?	
Yes	2
No	17
(blank)	0
Grand Total	19

Were you previously thinking of applying for a job in the rail sector?	
Yes	0
No	16
Perhaps	2
(blank)	1
Grand Total	19

Are you aware of any recruitment activities?	
Yes	14
No	4
(blank)	1
Grand Total	19

Did the recruitment activities change your view of the rail sector?	
No	10
Yes, more favourable	1
Yes, less favourable	0
Don't know	6
(blank)	2
Grand Total	19

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
Yes	4
No	14
(blank)	1
Grand Total	19

6 Country report – Italy

6.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

6.1.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

Some issues were identified by FS with regard to the attractiveness of the company:

- Lack of knowledge of the job content – there is a general lack of knowledge of the variety of occupational profiles and what jobs in the railway sector involve in terms of tasks, skills, technical knowledge, responsibilities, etc...
- The education and training system in Italy does not provide young people with experience of the world of work such as in other countries. Therefore there is a general lack of awareness among the public which is common to all sectors but affects to a larger extent complex sectors such as the railway which is also penalised by a negative legacy of misperceptions.

According to the trade union, working for the FS is still attractive for a number of reasons:

- Comparatively greater job security offered by a big company as FS Group, in the public service sector when compared to working for a company in the private sector.
- The overall package offered by the national collective agreement of the FS is more attractive than those used by other companies which often apply agreements from other sectors (e.g. from road transport or local transport sector). Often workers start in other companies but they apply to FS as soon as an opportunity arises;
- The 'old attraction' of working for a unique company where people can learn an uncommon profession still holds for the jobs of machinist and train conductors.

6.1.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

According to the trade union there is still a certain degree of attractiveness in working for companies in the rail sector. However, it is important to distinguish between companies that have recently entered the sector and more oriented towards marketing activities (e.g. new companies in the high speed transport) and historical state owned companies such as FS, nowadays a private company, with a greater focus on service delivery. In the view of the trade union, there is a higher level of work satisfaction among employees working in new companies which focus on marketing and new services. These companies function completely according to a *modus operandi* typical of the private sector (these also include collective agreements with less favourable working conditions), however the job satisfaction offsets the disadvantage of having a less 'stable job' compared to the job in the FS. Considering the entire transport sector (railway but also others sector), in the new companies the level of satisfaction is good (for example: the high speed company) high. FS, nevertheless, still remains attractive, also considering the security of a job. In addition in the FS the size of the company allows for a greater mobility, horizontal and vertical, but also geographical mobility. In a large national company such as FS there is more scope for internal job mobility (although less than in the past) and for progression in the career ladder. Furthermore, FS covers the all national territory therefore it is easier and/or possible for employees to either stay in their region or to ask for a relocation. The trade union also highlighted that different national collective agreements are applied by companies and this makes a significant difference in relation to the attractiveness.

According to FS personnel the main selling point for FS is that the company offers the opportunity for young and highly specialised people to work in the field they have studied (e.g. electrical engineering, chemical engineering, ICT workers, mechanics etc...). The right match between the job specifications and skills profiles of workers is a key priority for the company. Additionally, compared with other companies the size of the Group and the training provided offers more opportunities for internal job mobility.

6.1.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

6.1.4 Comparison with other sectors

According to interviews with trade unions, the salaries and financial prospects offered in this sector are a key factor in attracting workers. Compared with any other sector (both in the public and private) the railway offers technical jobs (for example, drivers, on board staff, maintenance) for which the total amount of the salary is influenced by the specific activities of the jobs. Basic salaries are also higher than the country average for all professional profiles (e.g. customer sales, administrative support, technicians, etc....).

6.1.5 Examples of good practices

From interviews with FS a number of good practices can be identified in relation to strategies and activities implemented by the company to improve the image and attractiveness of the company.

In recent years the focus of the company has been on marketing and awareness raising on the radical changes that occurred in the FS leading to the FS Group. The branding of the FS Group as an innovative Group and leader in many technological areas has been integrated in all activities of the company. The underpinning message of the branding is that FS Group includes several companies (e.g. Italferr, Ferservizi, etc...) which offer a range of opportunities in many sectors for highly qualified candidates. FS interviewees highlighted that it has proved challenging to change the stereotype of the 'old FS' in public opinion although this is slowly shifting towards thinking of FS Group rather than only FS.

The Company took targeted and constant actions, aimed to communicate to young people the transformation of FS Group in a dynamic and innovative company.

From the many events such as Job Meetings and Career Days promoted in order to identify and attract the best talent, to reduce the gap between company and university, to the several initiatives of work orientation, programmed with universities of excellence, until the proposal of a rich program of master⁷⁸ degree theses⁷⁹, internships, workshops and seminars.

Another important activity is rewarding the best students and graduates in order to promote research and innovation. It has been done by business games, university and brainstorming competitions, PHD in higher apprenticeship, research fellowships aimed at the development of innovative projects

All the actions described produced good results. FS was awarded with the Best Awareness 2015 certification and the 'Best Employer of Choice' (BEofC) award, as the company with the highest level of awareness among young graduates with reference to the job offer and the company deemed as best company to work. This was reported in the 'Recent Graduates Survey', a survey based on a representative sample of newly graduates. FS was perceived as reliable, serious and dynamic. In 2015 it ranked first among all graduates as BEofC and second among graduates of scientific subjects in 2014 and 2015. FS was selected as BEofC mainly by young graduates identified as 'informed' (29.3%) and 'optimistic' (25.3%) types. Graduates who were interested in working with FS also reported to be interested in working for companies such as Enel, Eni, Ferrari, Apple, and Google, thus identifying these companies as direct or indirect competitors of FS. Eni and FS were identified as companies

⁷⁸ Master in Infrastructures and Rail Systems Engineering, with "La Sapienza" University – Rome; Master in Homeland Security with Campus Bio Medico Rome - Master in Procurement Management with University Tor Vergata Rome - Master in Economics and Management of Transport (MEMIT) with Università Bocconi Milan.

⁷⁹ To create osmosis between the business and the university know-how for the development of degree theses on innovative themes have been promoted and sustained.

transmitting a sense of economic stability; young graduates also identified these two companies as the richest and with a solid position in the market⁸⁰.

FS personnel emphasised the intense work of branding that has been carried out in the last years to change the image of the company in the public opinion and to support the shift from FS to FS Group. The company has invested a significant amount of resources and time to design and implement the new branding strategy. As previously explained (section 1.2.5) the company's priority is to show the remarkable innovation process that has led to a group of companies leaders in many areas of the sector. The public opinion is not aware of the many changes that occurred in the last years in the railway sector and the potential for highly qualified positions and career paths.

6.2 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

6.2.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

6.2.1.1 Pay and conditions

FS explained that in the case of engineers the level of pay may be lower than in other sectors, in this instance the stability of the company plays an important role, and also the efforts made during last years by FS Group to a technological modernization in many different activities not only in the infrastructure area (for example, environment, chemical for the study of materials, ICT, etc.).

From interviews with FS and trade unions it emerged that overall the salaries offered in the sector are competitive and higher than the average salaries in the country, this applies to all job profiles in the company.

From interviews with FS it emerged that the company is making an effort to improve and modernise its welfare package. In addition to traditional benefits as free tickets for travelling for employees and family, a private health insurance was lately (2012) included in the company collective agreement. A supplementary pension scheme is also included in the package. In the same company collective agreement, there is the provision of legal assistance and of a specific insurance for those employees who are involved in accidents. It's also provided a specific legal assistance for employees who are victims of harassments and third part violence. Considering the increasing need of caring for older relatives at home, the company is also thinking about the possibility to include some kind of support in the private health insurance. From a healthy point of view, in recent years the company has also implemented a more systematic breast cancer prevention scheme for free for women. There have been taken also measures to ameliorate the mobility of employees (reduced tickets of public transport on the basis of specific agreement with public transport companies, car sharing, carpooling, bike sharing, agreements to facilitate the purchase of bikes).

Trade unions highlighted that FS has its own national collective agreement with the best conditions in the sector. Since the national legislation obliges only to apply "a" national collective agreement the new companies 'cherry-pick' the most favourable agreements for the company weakening the protection and eroding the benefits for employees⁸¹.

Work-life balance

Both trade unions and interviews with FS acknowledge that work-life balance was an area where more needs to be done. The nature of the work (for example the fact that a constant service needs to be guaranteed, long-distance services require personnel to cover inflexible schedules and high levels of geographical mobility) makes it more difficult to implement

⁸⁰ Cesop Communication: Recent Graduates Survey" Indagine sui neolaureati Italiani" 2015.

⁸¹ In some cases, new companies only apply company agreements or individual agreements, in particular in freight sector.

work-life measures across-the-board. Work-life balance instruments can be introduced via collective agreements, also considering needs of “families of workers”.

From interviews with FS it emerged that some work-life balance measures have been recently implemented to support the return to work after maternity leave. In the ‘pink shift’ (*turno rosa*), based upon legislation rules that let mothers (and in some specific cases fathers) work two or one hours less, depending on the duration of the shift for the first year of baby’s life, women are given shifts respecting these rules.

Guidelines have been drafted to support the return to work after maternity leave. The most important aspect of this measure is that the research work behind the guidelines has involved interviews with women but also their male managers. This approach has had a remarkably positive impact on raising awareness, also among male employees, about the issues related to the return to work after maternity leave and level of acceptance of the guidelines. The guidelines have been distributed directly between managers and employees, are published on the intranet website and updated constantly, considering the evolution of the legislation. They have been also promoted and publicized during the annual public event of “Frecciarosa”.

Health and safety

For FS Group safety and security has had and still has a crucial role that means go beyond the application of national legislation. For this reason, the recent policy of FS Group CEO (DG 204/AD 6 April 2016), confirming the efforts made in the past, establishes new steps and actions to carry on. The objective is the reductions of at least 3% of accidents and it’s considered a criteria for the evaluation of managerial performance. The policy includes:

1. the constant renewal of quality control systems considering safety and security topics;
2. constant specific training on safety and security;
3. specific project on prevention;
4. benchmark of best practices;
5. direct and higher commitment of on-site managers;
6. specific attention to safety and security in case of tender

Specific attention has been given by FS and trade unions together to reduce third part violence. To find a solution to this problem, last 15 June 2015 an agreement was signed committing to actions to reduce third party violence. This is a four actions agreement that includes:

1. Establishing a first list of 15 trains where the risk of aggression is higher that Trenitalia can cancel if there is no police control on board;
2. Activation at regional level joint contacts among Trenitalia regional departments, Trade Unions and regional Security Authorities (Prefettura directly controlled by the Interior Ministry) to integrate the first train list described in point 1.
3. Common request of constant monitoring the phenomenon and the actions to be taken together with competent Ministries
4. As specified in Trenitalia procedure the on board train staff, in case of need, can ask directly Polfer a support and can decide to temporarily stop on board tickets control when it’s dangerous (C.O. n. 423/AD del 12 luglio 2013).
5. Trenitalia will intensify the already present personnel training programme concerning behaviour aspects on the relation between on board staff and customers.

Moreover FS has, or is undertaking the following activities:

- implementing ticket control teams in the stations (anti-evasion) in addition to those on board;

- gates have been introduced in the main stations;
- on board cameras have been installed; and,
- on board staff employees are continuously trained with specific training, distinguished among the three different (regional, high speed and universal) passengers services.

In relation to well-being at work is concerned, it is understood that, some working places are still not equipped with the desired level of comfort (changing rooms, toilet service, etc....).

Where new operators are concerned, there only small attention given to the issue of third party violence and sometimes an underestimation of the significance of the problem. Trade unions are trying to negotiate the implementation of some specific actions in the field.

The trade union highlighted that it is important to differentiate between safety measures to control the risk of accidents in the railway sector and workers' health. The area of safety measures is regulated by the European Railway Agency as per Directive 2004/49/EC; in this area strict procedures and controls are guaranteed.

6.2.1.2 Company culture

According to the trade union it is important to distinguish between the company culture in the FS and the new companies which entered the sector following the opening of the market. Historically within employees in FS there was a strong sense of belonging to a state company which would offer unique job opportunities. The company also offered employees interesting opportunities for career progression and job mobility. This was an added value in comparison to other occupations in the public sector which would offer the job security but not these professional opportunities. There was also a sense of pride related to the fact that workers were offering an important service to the public. All this created a company culture and sense of belonging to 'an institution'. Additionally, the collective bargaining process would always involve the entire group of occupations in FS without distinction.

To a certain extent this sense of belonging still exists in FS, although in recent years there have been some divisions among employees also due to the modernization FS Group passed through that have produced changes in the organization and in the "culture" of the work.

This is also the reason why FS company interviewees believe that the concept of 'railway family' still exist to a certain extent, however there is a need for more support and coaching during the induction period and in the first years of employment for young people. The size of the company often means that young employees need to receive the highest support to ensure a full integration into the culture of the company and the world of work in general. A number of initiatives have been implemented by the company to improve the communication with employees and ensure that workers are aware of strategies and objectives. Initiatives include the 'story telling project' where a series of work-life stories have been collected and included in a specific section of the intranet; training of 'opinion leaders' employees across different sites working to support and motivate other colleagues. The company is increasingly investing in these types of HR strategies to support retention of staff as well as recruitment, all the more so within a social context where the public opinion is not aware of the many changes that occurred in the last years in the railway sector and the potential for highly qualified positions and career paths.

According to trade union company culture does not affect young people looking for a job, since there is such a lack of stable jobs in the country because of the economic situation of it, that the opportunity to have a stable job is in itself a motivation to enter the company.

6.2.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

According to trade unions, the liberalisation of the sector in Italy is more advanced than in other EU countries, this brought into the sector (both passengers and freight) a significant number of new companies often start-ups (mainly in the freight transport). This process has

had a significant impact in the area of recruitment and employment. Between 1995 and 2005 there has been a wave of new recruitment in the new companies operating in the freight transport, while FS (which was heavily affected by a the phenomenon of an ageing workforce) was undergoing a process of employment reduction, only through retirement and early-retirement procedures, as well as retraining its personnel in order to deal with the changes in the sector. After 2007 many new start-ups in the freight transport were badly hit by the economic crisis and forced to leave the sector. The staff, primarily the highly specialised group of train driver, was partly reabsorbed by new companies in the transport of passengers,

As FS Group said, during last years the age structure of employees, the impact of technology on employment levels, need for a generational and professional turn-over and redundancy, made the parties (company and trade unions) to reached an agreement on a specific fund for vocational retraining and employee redundancy management. There were actions of ordinary activities (vocational retraining-reskilling, reduced working hours-part-time) and extraordinary actions to support allowance for employees who are made redundant but eligible for retirement benefits. All the actions are financed by company.

We have to consider, in this respect, the effects of the pension reform in 2012 that elevate the age of retirement for all the employees and also for some typical professions in FS sector (depending on professions we went up from 58/6/62 years of age and 25/25/30 of seniority to 66/65 years of age). For this reasons, FS Group and trade union reached a new agreement to adapt the old one to the new pension legislation.

6.2.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

From interviews with FS, the developments which occurred in this sector in recent years brought about significant changes in the labour market (e.g. in terms of labour demand and offer, jobs profiles, skills demand etc.). Additionally, the economic crisis had a significant impact on the company's needs for new skills. The demand for new occupational profiles, which is also likely to increase in the near future, includes for example economists, engineers and experts in marketing (though likely to be few in number). Recent waves of recruitment for highly skilled positions in the company included approximately 65% engineers, 30% with economics/business/marketing background and 5% with legal background. This also means that it is essential for the company to adjust internal HR strategies and prepare HR personnel to deal with a changing internal workforce. Another key occupational profile include electrical engineers, there is an increasing demand for these type of skills, however there is also a significant skills shortage in this subsector and the company needs to implement targeted recruitment policies.

6.2.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

From interviewees with FS three main human resources strategies emerged: a) re-training and development of internal resources; b) selection through dedicated channels for specialised occupational profiles; c) activation of targeted 'employer branding' activities to attract the occupational profiles needed to the company as well as motivate possible candidates. The specific sub-sections below in this chapter give an overview of the different strategies implemented by the company.

6.2.4.1 Employment for young people

Young people are the main target of FS employment strategies. In FS one of the main employment path at the entry-point for young people is as until recently a traineeship followed by permanent contracts. Interviewees also explained that the company considered using apprenticeship schemes as the most important recruitment path for young people even if the complexity of the Italian legislation on apprenticeships make it difficult for them to use this instrument.

6.2.4.2 *Employment for women*

From interviews with the trade union it emerged that in FS there has always been a high level of awareness towards the necessity of recruiting of female staff. This was also confirmed by the interview with the HR in FS, for example in the last waves of recruitment (since January 2015) 57% of newly recruited employees were female.

Even though in FS Group there aren't measurable targets for women's presence, recruitment campaigns specifically dedicated to women promoted by FS Group produced effects on the presence of the number of women. This is also the effect of good school performances of women students: girls in fact outstrip educational performance of boys, especially in languages tests required for certain professional profiles (e.g. commercial staff, on board staff, etc.).

However, the trade union highlighted that there more has to be done in gender policy and in the area of work-life balance and to support female staff due to the fact that in the hole sector there are strong cultural resistances to fill the gender gap . As far as work life balance, the sector requires a continuous flow of service delivery and rigid working hours, such as for example the long hours opening required of front desk services or long journeys on the train. In Italy it should be added that there are culture resistances towards flexible working arrangements and work-life balance. For example, the part-time is more common in some sectors (services) more rare in others (included railway sector) considering the specificity of the professions and the necessity of finding the right balance with companies' productivities and organizational needs connected with the guarantee of a regular railway service. Examples of flexible arrangements and good practices in work-life balance can be found in ad-hoc cases but are not common practice and not evenly spread across the country, where no great attention is spent for women and family policies in general.

6.2.4.3 *Employment for older workers*

According to both FS and trade unions there has been a natural phenomenon of ageing workforce within the company, which has been exacerbated recruitment freeze and recent changes to national pension schemes. However, in the last years it has been possible to support a certain number of exits and start recruitment campaigns.

FS interviewees also discussed a number of retention policies for older workers which included the employment of older workers as coaches (*maestri di mestiere*) for younger employees and trainees to support the transmission of skills and company-specific knowledge. Interviewees explained that young people find role models, create strong links with their coaches and this aspect is particularly important in large enterprises where human relationships can be sometimes overlooked. Older workers also participate to information and career days; this provides young people with the possibility to talk with someone that has been working for the company for long time and ask questions about the company culture and career possibilities.

A pilot project of skills profiling has been recently launched to map the competences of old workers (maintenance technicians). The project has the twofold objective of revisiting the work life of employees and assessing the transferability of employees to other tasks.

6.2.4.4 *Job mobility*

Interviewees with FS confirmed that a certain level of job mobility within the company is possible according to the company's needs and employees skills. Job mobility strategies are particularly important for workers involved in tasks where high security standards are needed (e.g. technicians, train conductors etc...).

This was also confirmed by interviews with trade unions, where emerged that job mobility was much more frequent in the past due to the fact that jobs in the sector were less specialised and there was a comprehensive training offer which would cover all areas.

According to trade unions geographical mobility is very limited. As for internal mobility from one company to another, this is also limited since FS Group is already an integrated company and it is not easy for staff to move across companies (e.g. from Trenitalia, the passengers railway Company, to RFI the infrastructure management Company).

On this respect, FS underlines that should be also considered that the jobs and professional skills requested are highly specialized, each profession has its own specific qualification, connected also to infrastructures safety rules. For this reasons it's more difficult to move people from one company to another one within the Group. Nevertheless, The National Collective Agreement of Railway Sector applied in FS (CCNL della Mobilità/Area contrattuale delle Attività Ferroviarie 20.7.2012) provides three different instruments for mobility: from one company to another (Internal Group Mobility – Article 47), from one site to another within the same company (Individual Transfer – Article 45) for organizational reasons or private reasons of the employees and from one office to another within the same site (Individual mobility – Article 46) for organizational reasons or private reasons

6.2.4.5 Recruiting and internal training

Recruitment

From interviews with FS it emerged that continuous professional training (CPT) is a priority strategy for the company. The development paths cover: a) transversal skills, b) orientation and career guidance for new employees, c) specialization paths. The CPT comprises courses in transversal skills such as ICT but also more technical skills for professional development and re-qualification aimed at supporting internal professional mobility and job rotation.

Both trade union and FS representatives agreed that there is a significant mismatch between the skills and competences needed in the railway sector and the skills available in the labour market, this the case for jobseekers at different stages of their careers as wells as for new graduates.

One area where a significant gap was identified by interviewees in FS is for technical occupations such as mechanics and engineering (primarily electrical engineers), but also new profiles requiring an economic and legal background. Following the new labour market reform the company has re-opened the recruitment of technical operational profiles such as (e.g. maintenance technicians, train conductors), up to June 2015 a total of 560 people were recruited in technical operation profiles. Between 30 and 50 vacancies are also opened for occupational profiles with engineering and legal background.

A variety of channels are used by FS for recruitment purpose these include the website of the company, university portals, other institutional websites, Twitter and LinkedIn. LinkedIn is becoming increasingly important mainly for managerial profiles. Spontaneous applications in the website and public competitions are the main channels. Possible candidates are required to upload their CVs in the website and a first selection is made on academic background and territory. What's more, according to FS Group, in the Company Collective Agreement , the main method for recruitment consists in the use of the web site of the Company ("Lavora con noi", Join us link).

There are also specific project with universities (for example the Master of Science in Transport Systems or the Postgraduate Course in "Railway Infrastructure and Systems Engineering" at Sapienza where FS Group participates actively funding course activities, providing scholarships for students, providing Managers as "module Coordinator"odule Coordinatore Course in "Railway Infrastructure and Systems Engineering" , providing Managers as lecturers (each module with 50% of Lecturers from University and 50% from Industry, arranging technical visits to control rooms, repair shops, factories and construction sites, providing a 2-months internship to students. After these experiences, 90% of students found an employment within six months in the supporting companies (98% in the last 3 editions).

During the recruitment process is a priority for FS, the company tries to match candidates on the basis of the area of origin considering that geographical mobility is an issue. In Italy there is a strong resistance towards relocation, including in southern regions with high levels of unemployment and youth unemployment. For example in the last open call with positions in several regions (including southern regions) a total of 6,000 CVs were collected through the website, but only 2,000 candidates attended the assessment day.

Internal training

The interview with the trade union provided insight into the changes that occurred in the training strategies in the last forty years. In the past, the recruitment process of FS employees was done through a public competition, the candidates didn't have to be already skilled and the professions looked for didn't require specific degrees. Consequently, the employees were entirely trained inside the company for one year obtaining a "total" training for the different professions.: This also facilitated the internal professional mobility, it was relatively easy for employees to change occupation within the company and retrain.

Nowadays, the situation has changed. FS explains that at the beginning of the recruitment process the company asked for different degrees depending on the professions it's looking for. Then, when the candidates became employees, start a period (different on the basis of different professions) of internal training that has to be done on the basis of national regulation concerning safety and security rules (just as an example for example, for drivers to obtain a license). After this period, the company grant a continuous training on different topics.

For example, **RFI (infrastructure)** offers specific training programs to grant that employees maintain their competences. There is a managerial training that includes behaviours, aptitudes, and values necessary on the job and of competences needed to increase and improve the skills. There is also a technical training program that constantly verify and refresh competences with reference to general (public and internal) rules.

Trenitalia in 2015 hold a training course on customer care dedicated to more then 2000 employees divided into drivers, on board staff and commercial professions. The aim of the project was to develop a higher level of consciousness of the importance of the customer in our sector and in the different process of the job, including also professions that apparently are not directly connected to clients. The results of the training have been positive from the perspective of participants also with reference to the reached goals, the contents and performances that met expectations.

With reference to specific internal training on health and safety, there is a great attention to the topic. **Trenitalia**, for example, dedicates specific courses to train and retrain constantly different roles involved in health and safety (management, technical, etc...); specific course to dangerous freight or special waste; specific courses for emergencies, first aid, antifire; courses on the evolution of public and internal rules on health, safety and environment, courses on audit specific procedures controlling the respect of health and safety rules. Furthermore, Trenitalia adopts a specific quality control system on safety and security that lets the company and all the parts involved in to prevent any error or fault. The results of the efforts in 2015 have been no fatal accident, reduction of accidents at all, As an example of specific actions FS personnel reported that a number of ongoing projects focussed on training of groups of employees exposed to third party violence and stress, this includes mainly employees in contact with clients but also workers whose job involves managing internal/external communication in emergencies and/or situation of crisis. Communication to staff and/or clients is an area with increasing levels of work-related stress. Another project targets staff on board of regional trains and 2,500 people will be trained on client management, third party violence and harassment from clients. Internal surveys are always ongoing on samples of employees to monitor these areas of risks. A permanent team of psychologists (internal to FS) are in charge of four areas:

- a. training on management of third party violence and harassment from clients;

- b. treatment and re-integration of workers who have experience traumatic events such as suicides;
- c. assessment of non-compliance with health and safety regulations, for example train drivers who stopped after the signal. In these cases the team assess the reasons for not following the procedure and psychological support is provided together with additional technical training;
- d. a front desk of specialized psychologists with a very first action, via phone, and, in case of evidence of work related stress, a second step. The project has been piloted from 2013 to understand the type of support and the level of human resources needed to manage the service.

RFI launched a project dedicated right now to 8.700 employees with a “down-bottom” approach. It means that directly from the employees at different levels the Company gathers tales and share them among the employees to give an instrument to prevent incidents and accidents. The added value of the project is exactly the method that produced very good results in term of preventions more than in a “traditional” approach (bottom-down): it has been demonstrated that the study of rules, procedures, policies and so on safety and security it’s not enough.

6.2.4.6 International cooperation

From interviews with FS personnel it emerged that the company has been recently activating networks with other European partners to improve training methods and exchange schemes for apprentices. For example, apprentices in mechatronics engineering have been sent from the German agency for apprentices to complete a period of training in Trenitalia. Another project aims at creating a network with UK universities (outlined below). Another project is looking at expertise in the European labour market to support the development of new training modules and the implementation of new procedures in industrial logistic systems (this is a very complex area which requires knowhow in engineering, industrial logistics, information technology systems, management of teams as well as inflows and outflows etc....).

6.2.5 Examples of good practices

A number of best practices have been identified through interviews with FS in relation to recruitment strategies and retention.

In partnership with six universities FS cooperate to the design and delivery of masters in Railway Systems Engineering. FS also offers a range of grants towards enrolment and for best qualified. Every year between 25 and 30 students are selected through a joint recruitment procedure. FS personnel cooperate with the universities at the tendering stage to draft the terms of reference, selection criteria and recruitment process. FS also designs and implements the dissemination campaign with leaflets distributed in universities throughout the national territory, additionally webpages and targeted emails are used to raise awareness and provide information. The message is a central role of young employees and their capacity of innovation. There is detailed explanation of FS Group from different points of view (why joint FS Group, numbers of employees and specific roles in the different companies, job sites, witnesses, the ongoing initiatives for young people), a dedicated section to the international dimension and job opportunities, a dedicated page on partnerships with universities, a very well done section, distinguishing all the topics related to recruitment on the bases of degrees.

In the last year 432 applications were received and out of these 32 students were selected. The first step involved the selection of CVs based on criteria such as subjects of degree and final grades. A total of 120 possible candidates were then selected for a 6 days of assessment tests (technical and psychometric tests) and interviews with teachers and FS personnel. The teaching modules of the masters include courses jointly run by the university and FS personnel. In April FS presents the traineeships opportunities available across

different sites to be completed in June-July. The matching between the open position in traineeships and the particular interests of the student as well as career aspirations are a priority in the selection process, geographical mobility is also an important criteria. These traineeships are one of the main resources for the company to recruit high quality candidates, therefore it is important to ensure that students are motivated and understand the implications of the job.

Feedback sessions are organised with students twice per year to collect general feedback on the courses and the organisation of the course. More specific feedback is also collected on the traineeship experience.

This year the terms of reference reserved a number of grants to women to motivate young females to enter male dominated subjects. FS interviewees also highlighted that initiatives in schools such as career days and seminars often involve female personnel as a way to raise awareness and motivate young women to consider male dominated jobs such as train drivers and engineers.

Another best practice identified relates to career days and events carried out throughout the Italian territory. During these events FS personnel present the company and career opportunities, but also organise workshops with young people. These workshops are precious sources of information and important dissemination activities to raise awareness and marketing opportunities as well as collect feedback from young people on the image that they have about the company. For these reasons an important strategy for FS is related to the fact that these workshops are facilitated by FS personnel employed in a variety of occupations rather than only HR personnel. FS believes that it is important to provide information as realistic as possible as well as showing role models for young people.

In the national survey of graduates Almalaurea carried out every year by a consortium of universities, FS was identified as the best company in providing information and communicating with students, the main reasons provided related to the good practices in collecting feedback from students.

6.3 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

6.3.1.1 *Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees and identify effective recruitment and retention measures*

Overall, there is a certain degree of attention to continuous training and re-training strategies; however the high specialisation of tasks have also affected the training require a more strategic approach than in the past. A three year project designed to identify and support internal replacements of highly educated workers (university degrees) that have been under-recruited and/or experienced mismatch between tasks and academic background. Different skills assessments and evaluations undertaken, considering different ages, to understand the competences and aspirations as well as discussing a personalised career plan and/or training needed.

Many activities and good practices in relation to recruitment, which also aim at raise the attractiveness of the company are outlined above. Some additional examples includes a marketing campaign: the FS Competition. A contest open to university students of economics and engineering where students had to present a project on their view of the High Speed: 'How do you see the High Speed in the next 50 years?' A total of 230 project ideas were received and 6 were selected. The first classified will have the opportunity to attend the World Conference on High Speed Rail in Tokyo and other prizes for the remaining winners included several other destinations. The website has also a page called 'what you don't know about FS' and is dedicated to promote all opportunities within the Group, other pages in the website sponsor initiatives the Group is involved in including cultural initiatives, masters and courses supported by the Group, job opportunities, traineeships etc....

A number of strategies have been adopted by the company to attract required occupations which target university students and high education secondary schools/VET. Other initiatives with universities include:

- Grants for students – This initiative targets engineering students in their last year and provides financial incentives to complete their final thesis with a project of interest to the company. To disseminate this initiative HR visits selected universities to present the projects and discuss feasibility. The initiative was then presented to students with seminars where FS discussed the opportunity, the projects but also career prospects within the company.
- Scholarships – FS provides scholarships to students at the second year of engineer (English course) to pay towards the enrolment fees and a traineeship in the company.
- Recruiting/career days in universities – FS organises career days in targeted universities where HR present the company, career opportunities within FS, provide information on open vacancies and the recruitment process, opportunities for traineeships as well as the grants for students who wants to complete the final thesis with a project of interest to the company.
- Cooperation with universities – a close cooperation with the University of Tor Vergata provides FS with possible candidates from a Master in public procurements where students specialise in economics and legal subjects.

Initiatives targeted at students in their last years of high secondary schools (in technical paths such as mechanics) include seminars, career days where FS personnel present the wide range of occupational profiles within the company as well as career opportunities and company's culture.

6.4 Summary SWOT analysis

Table 6.1 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In FS Greater job security than working in the private sector and other parts of the public sector. ■ FS offers particularly attractive overall package to employees as a result of provisions of the national and company collective agreements. ■ High degree of internal job mobility in FS – with the possibility to relocate within Italy and/or undertake further or retraining activities. ■ The employee experience in newer companies (compared to FS) is positive as they offer a more dynamic work environment. ■ Basic salaries are competitive and higher compared to other sectors and this increases the attractiveness of the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Terms and conditions of employment are not uniformly attractive. Companies other than FS do not provide such an attractive package. ■ Lower level of employee job security in newer companies (other than FS). ■ A negative image of the sector comes as a result of negative media coverage regarding service reliability. ■ National legislation allows some companies to implement different collective agreements, instead the one specific for the sector, often with worse employment protections – this can facilitate unfair competition in the market, since new companies can cut their labour costs and reduce the prices. ■ The risk of third party violence is still very high (even though the 4-actions agreement has been implemented in FS) and the risk of stress-related sickness absence is also high in the sector.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To continue the public rebranding and establish the “FS Group” brand as an innovative employer with many career path possibilities in order to attract more and higher quality candidates. ■ To continue recruitment activities such as the FS Competition which will enable more young people to experience the possibilities for fulfilling careers in the sector in order to attract more and higher quality candidates. ■ Improvement to the FS welfare package may increase attractiveness of the organisation – and also possibly make competitors consider doing the same. ■ Improve, if possible, forms of flexibility in working time, that let work life balance more simple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of knowledge regarding the range of occupations operating in the sector means that it does not attract as many quality applicants as it could. ■ Significant mismatch between skills needed in the sector and those available in the labour market. (E.g. mechanics and engineering). ■ The problem of third part violence has become relevant and consequently there is a relevant attention of social parties.. ■ The risk to lose the sense of belonging to the family group

Annex 17 List of Interviewees

Organisation	Name interviewee	Position interviewee
Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane SPA	Claudio Guaitoli	Responsible for Recruitment, Development and Training Trenitalia S.p.A.
Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane SPA	Noemi Montaruli	Responsible Recruitment Unit FS Italiane S.p.A.,
Filt Cgil Lombardia	Rocco Ungaro	Regional General Deputy
Filt Cgil Lombardia	Luigi Ciraci	Regional Responsible for Railway Sector
Filt Cgil Lombardia	Clarissa Biscaia	Member and Trenord's employee

Annex 18 Employee Surveys

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	0
Negative	17
Neutral	4
Positive	7
Very positive	0
Unsure	3
(blank)	9
Grand Total	40

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	0
Depends on occupation	0
Very positive	0
Quite positive	5
Neutral	5
Quite negative	14
Very negative	16
Don't know	0
n/a	0
Grand Total	40

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	1
Quite positive	8
Neutral	10
Quite negative	10
Very negative	9
Don't know	2
n/a	0
Grand Total	40

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?	
No, far lower level	11

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?

No, lower level	13
The same level	9
Yes, a little higher	5
Yes, far higher	0
Unsure	1
Don't know	0
n/a	1
Grand Total	40

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	24
Improve benefits	25
Improve working hours	22
Provide a better work-life balance	14
Improve career opportunities	4

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	1
Quite satisfied	16
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14
Quite dissatisfied	5
Very dissatisfied	2
Unsure	0
n/a	2
Grand Total	40

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	2
Most days	11
From time to time	9
Never	4
Unsure	0
n/a	14
Grand Total	40

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?										
Rating	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total	
Job security	19	17	4	0	0	0	0	0	40	
A good working atmosphere	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	4	27	9	0	0	0	0	0	40	
Overall level of pay and benefits	4	29	7	0	0	0	0	0	40	
Pension provision	16	15	8	0	0	0	0	1	40	
Opportunity for career development and promotion	2	15	17	5	1	0	0	0	40	
Access to training and education	8	13	16	1	1	0	0	1	40	
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	2	18	14	4	1	0	1	0	40	
My employer providing additional health benefits	2	17	16	3	0	0	1	1	40	
International opportunities / working abroad	2	4	8	14	11	0	0	1	40	

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	2	29	6	1	0	0	2	40
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	7	17	7	7	0	0	2	40
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	8	15	8	7	0	0	2	40

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	1	18	11	3	0	1	6	40
Benefits	2	19	10	3	0	1	5	40
Working hours	5	12	9	7	0	1	6	40
Work-life balance	4	12	9	9	0	1	5	40
Career development opportunities	4	14	8	5	0	2	7	40

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	4	16	7	5	0	2	6	40

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	3	15	9	11	0	0	2	40
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	1	16	11	11	0	0	1	40
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	1	11	12	14	0	0	2	40
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	4	13	16	5	0	0	2	40
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	2	15	13	5	0	4	1	40
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	3	13	10	9	0	4	1	40
Overall, My workload suits me	1	17	11	8	0	1	2	40

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	6	21	5	5	0	0	3	40
There is a sense of a "railway family"	9	23	5	3	0	0	0	40
My commitment to the company is very high	5	22	11	1	0	0	1	40
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people,	2	9	19	3	0	4	3	40

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds								
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	2	13	19	3	0	2	1	40
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	2	14	14	6	0	2	2	40
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	2	13	12	7	0	2	4	40
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	0	13	16	4	1	2	4	40

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	8	25	5	1	0	0	1	40
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	7	22	9	1	0	0	1	40
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	5	17	13	4	0	0	1	40
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	3	15	13	6	0	0	3	40
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	3	16	14	5	0	0	2	40

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	5	24	8	3	0	0	0	40
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	3	22	11	4	0	0	0	40

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	5	18	12	4	0	0	1	40
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	3	19	13	4	0	0	1	40
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	5	14	12	9	0	0	0	40
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	5	14	9	8	1	0	3	40

Annex 19 Apprentices Survey

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the railway sector in your country?	
Depends on occupation	0
Don't know	0
Neutral	3
Quite negative	6
Very negative	8
Quite positive	0
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Why did you chose to undertake this apprenticeship? (tick all that apply)	
The program is suited to my job/career aspirations	14
Funding was available for the apprenticeship	10
There was a clear link to actual job opportunities	13
I was attracted to a career in the rail sector	4
Other	0

Views about pay, benefits and career opportunities. To what extent are the following factors important to you in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	0	0	0	7	10	0	0	1	18
Job security	0	0	0	5	12	0	0	1	18
Pension provision	1	2	3	10	1	0	0	1	18
Access to training and education	1	1	5	9	1	0	0	1	18
Opportunity for career development and promotion	0	1	8	7	1	0	0	1	18
International opportunities / working abroad	2	3	8	3	1	0	0	1	18
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	1	8	7	1	0	0	1	18
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	0	2	3	8	3	0	0	2	18
An employer providing additional health benefits	0	2	2	10	3	0	0	1	18

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to these factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	1	4	4	8	0	0	0	1	18
Job security	1	4	4	8	0	0	0	1	18
Pension provision	1	3	4	9	0	0	0	1	18
Access to training and education	1	3	2	10	0	1	0	1	18
Opportunity for career development and promotion	1	3	2	10	0	1	0	1	18
International opportunities / working abroad	1	3	3	6	0	4	0	1	18
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	1	3	4	8	0	1	0	1	18
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	1	3	3	10	0	0	0	1	18
An employer providing additional health benefits	1	3	3	10	0	0	0	1	18
Being part of a "railway family"	1	3	4	9	0	0	0	1	18

Views about working hours, work organisation, health and safety and maintaining a good work/ life balance. Which of the following factors are most important in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	0	1	4	9	2	0	0	2	18
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	0	1	7	7	1	0	0	2	18
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	0	1	5	10	0	0	0	2	18
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	0	1	2	8	5	0	0	2	18
A comfortable place of work	0	1	1	2	8	5	0	2	18

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to the following factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	1	1	7	7	1	0	0	1	18
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	1	1	6	8	1	0	0	1	18
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	2	2	3	7	2	0	0	2	18
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	2	3	5	5	2	0	0	1	18

To what extent has your experience to date met your expectations in relation to the following factors?

	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	(blank)	Grand Total
Integration into the company and/or in my team?	1	2	2	8	3	1	1	18
Relationship with day-to-day manager / tutor	1	3	2	8	2	1	1	18
Relationship with other workers in the company	1	5	3	4	2	1	2	18

How would you rate the overall image of the railway sector?

Depends on occupation	0
Don't know	0
Neutral	3
Quite negative	6
Quite positive	0
Very negative	8
Very positive	0
(blank)	1
Grand Total	18

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Tick all that apply)

Males	14
Females	5
Older workers	14
Younger workers	0
All of the above	2

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector?

Improve pay	14
Improve benefits	13
Improve working hours	9
Improve the working climate / corporate culture	6
Provide a better work-life balance	4
Improve career opportunities	4
Improve external communication	3
Other	0

Would you recommend the rail sector to others considering undertaking an apprenticeship?	
No	5
Yes	13
(blank)	0
Grand Total	18

Annex 20 Student/Pupil Surveys

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Please tick all that apply)

Males	35
Females	14
Older workers	29
Younger workers	7
All of the above	12

Important factors when looking for an employer

	1 Most important	2	3	4	5 Least important	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
An employer where there are likely to be considerable future job opportunities	26	15	6	2	0	1	2	52
An employer that my family/friends have worked in	34	10	2	2	2	1	1	52
The level of pay and financial reward	4	2	10	22	10	2	2	52
Long term job security	2	9	2	1	1	0	37	52
Good work / life balance	28	15	4	1	2	0	2	52
Opportunities to develop my career	33	13	1	1	2	0	2	52
International opportunities / working abroad	24	14	10	1	1	0	2	52
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	7	26	12	3	1	0	3	52
A good working atmosphere	13	12	9	12	4	0	2	52
Opportunities for training and development / learning new skills	10	22	12	4	1	0	3	52
An employer that provides flexible working time	8	24	15	1	2	0	2	52
An employer that has good health & safety standards	7	21	16	6	0	0	2	52
An employer that provides good pension benefits	13	16	16	4	1	0	2	52
An employer that is close to my home	8	16	16	8	1	0	3	52
An employer that promotes innovation	5	16	18	7	4	0	2	52
An employer with a positive image	7	14	11	10	8	0	2	52
Other	9	10	15	12	4	0	2	52

When compared with other sectors, how do you think the rail sector compares?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No opinion	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	22	19	2	3	0	0	6	52
Benefits	21	23	1	1	0	0	6	52
Working hours	4	16	9	14	3	0	6	52
Career development opportunities	9	20	12	4	1	0	6	52
Work-life balance	2	12	14	10	8	0	6	52
Training and education	8	22	8	5	2	0	6	52
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	8	20	12	4	2	0	6	52

How closely do the jobs in the railway sector match your career aspirations?	
Exact match	16
A somewhat good match	18
Not a good match	8
Poor match	4
Don't know	1
(blank)	5
Grand Total	52

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be higher in other sectors?	
Yes, far higher	1
Yes, a little higher	7
The same level	10
No, far lower level	4
No, lower level	18
Unsure	3
Don't know	2
(blank)	7
Grand Total	52

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
A Short-term one (0-1 year)	0
A Medium-term one (2-5 years)	10
A long term one (more than 5 years)	30
Don't know	1
(blank)	11
Grand Total	52

Are you aware of any specific initiatives to encourage students or pupils to choose the railway sector?	
Yes	33
No	12
(blank)	7
Grand Total	52

Were you previously thinking of applying for a job in the rail sector?	
Yes	33
No	12
Perhaps	7
(blank)	52
Grand Total	33

Are you aware of any recruitment activities?	
Yes	29
No	6
(blank)	17
Grand Total	52

Did the recruitment activities change your view of the rail sector?	
No	13
Yes, more favourable	15
Yes, less favourable	1
Don't know	8
(blank)	15
Grand Total	52

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
Yes	21
No	25
(blank)	6
Grand Total	52

7 Country report – The Netherlands

7.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

7.1.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

The attractiveness of rail companies in the Netherlands depends on whether one looks at it from the inside, or the outside. On the inside, the perception of the companies is generally good. Both NS and ProRail score comfortably over 7 (out of 10) on their internal employee engagement (NS) and satisfaction (ProRail) surveys.

On the outside this depends on the degree of visibility of firstly the work itself, and secondly the company. That said, once a company is visible as a rule it will be subject to the media who seem to focus reporting on negative issues, rather than positive news.

Companies in rail freight and subcontractors working with ProRail on rail maintenance (employing a few thousand employees) generally operate outside of the public eye. These companies are not state owned, which further detracts from the degree of scrutiny they are under. In the sense of ‘no news is good news’, this makes these companies relatively neutral in attractiveness, and interesting to a prospective employee who is interested in the niche type of work these companies provide. Two relevant companies were named in the top 50 best employers (with more than 1,000 employees) in the Netherlands in 2015. Volkerrail, specialising in rail infrastructure, was ranked 12th⁸²; DB Schenker, providing freight transport by train or truck, was ranked 18th.⁸³

ProRail (almost 4,000 employees) is responsible for the rail infrastructure. Their work affects many but is not a customer-facing service. This means that the public will not easily come to ProRail to obtain redress, but if something goes wrong with the infrastructure the media will point to ProRail. Secondly, it is a state-owned company, paid by the state, hence it is more so under public scrutiny. It has also not come out of the recession unscathed: The state tasked it with a reorganisation. While it strives to restructure in a socially responsible way, this may not have benefited its attractiveness.

The NS (almost 30,000 employees), responsible for the bulk of the passenger rail travel, draws the shortest straw. As it provides a customer facing service, the public will seek to obtain redress with the NS for any perceived issue, even if events are due to circumstances outside of their control. Social media in that sense have not been in their favour: customers are quick to take their discontent to Twitter etc., making the NS the most mentioned brand on social media, more often in a message with a negative note, than positive.⁸⁴ There have also been occasions of violence against NS personnel which has not had a positive effect on the attractiveness of the NS as an employer. The NS is not Government funded, but the Government is the only shareholder. This and its public task make it a company that is very much under public scrutiny. It has also suffered from negative media attention around a recent change in its top management and a parliamentary inquiry running on the acquisition of the controversial Fyra trains. In the yearly ‘Most Popular Employers’ research by Intermediar the NS scored a 14th place in 2013, dropping to 16th in 2014. For 2015 it has been ranked 46th.⁸⁵

⁸² <http://www.beste-werkgevers.nl/beste-werkgevers/plus1000/volkerrail/>

⁸³ <http://www.beste-werkgevers.nl/beste-werkgevers/plus1000/db-schenker-logistics-nederland/>

⁸⁴ <http://www.slideshare.net/Greenberrynl/top100merken-whitepaper-greenberry>

⁸⁵ http://www.intermediar.nl/carriere/een-baan-vinden/bedrijven/Whitepaper-de-50-populairste-werkgevers-van-2015?policy=accepted&utm_referrer=

7.1.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

Some of the jobs offered in the rail sector, such as train drivers, are quite niche and there is not enough interest from people in these specialized jobs. More generally, there have not been many issues filling vacancies. Despite the negative media attention, once prospective employees have made contact with companies in the rail sector, seen the inside and are aware of the pay and benefits, they do want to work in the sector.

However, with aging quickly becoming a problem and the lack of technical and IT skilled employees in the labour market overall, this is changing.

Historically the rail sector was a labour intensive industry. The increased importance of technology reflects a shift from labour to capital, and with that that a shift in labour demand from lower skilled to higher skilled labour. The nature of work for both groups also changes fundamentally. While currently most vacancies still ask for applicants with a vocational education, interviewees are conscious they will need to recruit workers with at least a higher vocational degree, if not higher education. This group has not traditionally been a large part of the sector.

To stick to the distinction between lower and higher education, it is also the case that generally higher educated employees will experience different barriers than those with a vocational education. And as is often seen, employees at the lower skilled end of the spectrum are more sensitive to changes in the market. A lot of the work on the rail network is done by those with a vocational education. This work happens at night and in the weekend, regardless of the season. Higher skilled personnel may on occasion have to go out at night, but generally has more sociable working times. So for lower skilled personnel working times as well as the image of the sector may be a barrier, for higher skilled personnel this is mainly the image of the sector.

Employers in the rail sector are aware of the negative consequences of these anti-social working hours (making the sector unattractive, but also leading to high incidence of sick leave). Subsequently employers are focusing more on durable employability of their employees, especially those most at risk. Part of this lies with the employer. For example both ProRail and NS are looking at forward shift rotations (from days, to afternoons, to nights), rather than backward shift rotation. Interviewees point out that research shows forward shift rotation is the healthier option. Furthermore, the NS combines the information gained from Risk Assessment and Evaluation (Risico Inventarisatie en Evaluatie, as required by the Arbwet (Law on Working Conditions⁸⁶)) with the Work Ability Index (WAI) developed by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH)⁸⁷ so that employees themselves can discover at what risk they are, and what action they can take.

7.1.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

As previously mentioned the attractiveness of the sector very much depends on the perspective. Interviewees point out that on the inside, the sector is known to have excellent collective labour agreements that provide good working conditions and benefits. The work itself is interesting and it is easy to give meaning to the work as it provides a public, socially responsible service.

On the outside, because of the sector providing a public service and its main companies being state owned, there is constant scrutiny. On balance then, even though the Dutch Railways are relatively punctual considering the load (in passenger kilometres)⁸⁸ and relatively not too expensive considering the level of punctuality and rail utilisation⁸⁹, the

⁸⁶ This law can be found on http://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0010346/geldigheidsdatum_26-10-2015

⁸⁷ <http://www.ttl.fi/en/health/wai/pages/default.aspx>

⁸⁸ This is reported on in the NS Year Report <http://nsjaarverslag.nl/FbContent.ashx/downloads/NS-jaarverslag.pdf>

⁸⁹ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2011/10/25/internationale-benchmark-2011-prorail>

public discussion is focused on the negative, not on positive outcomes. Media elaborate to great extent on such items as the parliamentary inquiry into the NS Fyra issue, the NS CEO leaving after allegations of fraud, research into violations of subcontracting laws by ProRail and more recent political discussions on the financial management at ProRail. Interviewees universally agreed that this negative media attention was a problem for the rail sector, detracting from the image and attractiveness of specifically ProRail and NS. As one interviewee mentioned: 'it can't be a nice experience to work hard for a company and to see it in the news in a negative sense all the time.'

Jobs that are not in the office may have anti-social working times. Whether this detracts from the sector's attractiveness will depend on a person's individual priority and this may be subject to their position in their (working) life cycle, but in general interviewees agreed this may be a barrier for some who values a 'normal' social life more. This makes the sector as an employer less attractive.

7.1.4 Comparison with other sectors

On the outside, interviewees point out the sector is not seen as attractive, which makes connecting to the labour market more difficult. They find similar 'tech-heavy' sectors such as the car or plane industry are perceived as more attractive, as these sectors have traditionally had to sell their product and make it desirable, attractive and/or luxury: something to aspire to, that has status attached to it. KLM (Royal Dutch Airways), for example, scores a lot better in the image and attractiveness research previously mentioned⁹⁰. Some interviewees point out that the railways are not seen as such because it has traditionally, and still is, a public service. With that, it is a widespread commodity rather than a luxury good. When competing for labour force then, also taking into account anti-social hours that may not be the case in some other technical sectors (but is in some others), the rail is not as attractive as other sectors, despite its generous benefit packages. One interviewee points out that to make employment in the rail sector more attractive it should shift the attention of prospective employees onto the interesting technical aspect (which is objectively similar to the other 'tech-heavy' sectors) it has to offer, and more away from its image as a public service provider (public transport).

Technically, the rail sector is slower moving than some of the competing sectors such as the car industry. It is not immune to change though, and as mechanics and informatics increase in importance, these technical skills become higher in demand. An expert points out that this trend, in combination with the aging of the workforce, means that the ambassadors and trainers of the rail sector may not be geared up to attract young pupils who are often demographically different, due to a generation gap. This does not only relate to IT used for the work itself, but also in training students.

7.1.5 Examples of good practices

In order to make the sector more interesting to those with technical skills, the NS is making these jobs more visible through the website [nstechwerk.nl](http://www.nstechwerk.nl)⁹¹ to present vacancies at the NS. Specifically for students in vocational education there is the TechniekFabriek (Technics Factory)⁹². The TechniekFabriek is a NedTrain company teaching institute that links into an existing educational institute providing vocational training. Students of the vocational education institute ROC Twente who study 'Mechatronica' can choose to do this classroom study in conjunction with specific practical experience provided in the TechniekFabriek. After completion of this two year study students are offered a permanent contract as a mechanic at NedTrain, the NS branch which is responsible for maintenance of trains. Besides

⁹⁰ http://www.intermediair.nl/carriere/een-baan-vinden/bedrijven/Whitepaper-de-50-populairste-werkgevers-van-2015?policy=accepted&utm_referrer=

⁹¹ <http://www.nstechwerk.nl/>

⁹² <http://www.nedtrain.nl/technieklab/home/>

providing students with practical skills and the outlook of a permanent contract, it also functions as a shop window. Students visit the TechniekFabriek on 'in-house days' in order to present the work as attractive. Interviewees point out there has been a lot of positive media interest in the TechniekFabriek. The Railinfra Opleidingen (RIO) institute (Rail infra training) which is more affiliated with the maintenance of the rail infrastructure (ProRail and subcontractors) is preparing to create a similar institute. The construction of the institute is due to start in 2016. The institute – called 'Railcenter' - will serve four distinct functions for the railinfra sector:

1. Develop craftsmanship: the institute will offer teaching for all skill levels, will facilitate peer-to-peer knowledge learning and will use state-of-the-art technologies;
2. Testing and simulation: the institute will provide an environment that allows the testing and simulation of new infrastructure and systems;
3. Promotion of the railinfra: the institute will be promoting work in the railinfra through a shop-window function by organising presentations, tours and expositions. A specific aspect that will be highlighted here are improvements and innovation. The aim of this is to increase the attractiveness of the sector on all skill levels;
4. Meet and inspire: the institute will serve as a platform for exchanging knowledge and experience, and to this end will host the 'Innorail', a platform that aims to enhance innovation in the rail infrastructure.

Besides this institute, the RIO has been financing 'Rail tech' (Railtechniek): an elective course at the Hogeschool Utrecht (higher education/ higher vocational training) in which students learn, for example, how to build a track switch. This course is offered in cooperation with ProRail and its subcontractors.

7.2 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

7.2.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

Working conditions are largely determined through collective bargaining. In the Netherlands in general trade unions and employers together agree on a *cao* (collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst: collective labour agreement). Generally these *cao*'s are renewed every few years, but if negotiations fail repeatedly the old agreements could be in force for longer. *Cao*'s exist on the sectoral and company level. One could split the rail sector in three parts, each with different applicable *cao*, although in practice there no big differences between these three:

1. The NS has its own company-wide *cao*, but also falls under a multimodal *cao* for all organisations transporting passengers.
2. ProRail has its own companywide *cao*.
3. ProRail's Subcontractors fall under a sectoral *cao*, but may also have their own company-wide *cao*. Negotiations on the sectoral railinfra *cao* have stalled and this means it runs a risk of falling behind others in the rail sector where there is no companywide *cao*.
4. Companies transporting freight will generally have a company specific *cao*, but for some this may still be based on the old pre-liberalisation *cao*.⁹³

7.2.1.1 Pay and conditions

Generally, pay and benefits (in the Netherlands: secondary working conditions) in the whole sector are good. There is attention for personal circumstances which can be reflected in changes in working times. An example of a general attractive condition is free or cheaper rail

⁹³ In the 1990s the rail sector was fully state-owned and operated as the NS.

travel, in combination with the work place by definition being well connected by the rail network. This makes it easy for people to commute to work without making a lot of costs

Safety is important across the sector. As stipulated in its *cao*, railinfra stakeholders work together and all receive training to benefit their own safety. As part of this a separate institute was set up as per the *cao*.⁹⁴

Conditions on the work floor will vary across professions. For mechanics who have to work at night, working times can be an issue. For older workers who have worked backwards rotating shifts for years, this can have an effect on physical health and well-being. We will elaborate on how this is addressed later.

For conductors and other customer facing personnel, aggression from customers is an issue. There are measures in place to try and minimise this, for example extra police, security personnel and extra staff on high risk routes after a certain time in the evening. However, it is difficult to completely remove this element.

For both conductors and train drivers working times can also be an issue. For conductors and train drivers suicide (attempts) from people jumping in front of trains is a real issue, with some having witnessed this on several occasions. Conductors are by law required to go out of the train and check if they can offer first aid. Aftercare is provided for those that witness a suicide, but each person will deal with it differently and for some the psychological impact could mean the end of their career.

Conditions for office based personnel do not differ significantly from any other office based personnel in other sectors.

7.2.1.2 Company culture

In the past to some extent there was a culture of a rail family, where before liberalisation the sector sat together under one umbrella (the 'old' NS). This 'one rail family feeling' may still apply for some older workers, but generally this is no longer the case. Employees are more organised along other social lines, reflecting their individual interests. The NS, by far the largest organisation, has interest groups for women (Iron Ladies), ethnic diversity (VariationNS), the LGBT community (Trainbow) and young people from higher educations (NS Wisselwerking).⁹⁵

The railinfra has had to deal with a couple of events that may influence the company culture, or at least the public perception of it, although it is not clear to what extent. ProRail was tasked by the government with several budget cuts, leading to a decrease in fte's (full time equivalents) of 600. The cuts may have affected its own company culture. To what extent is unclear. The average score employees gave ProRail in their satisfaction survey was 7.1 (out of 10: 7.5 in 2012). As the subcontractors are dependent on ProRail, this has had an effect on them also. Additionally for employees of some subcontractors where the only *cao* is the sectoral *cao*, the stalling of negotiations between trade unions and employer representatives may not have helped and increases employees' uncertainty.

Measured as 'engagement' (understanding the aims of the company and being enthused by the goals of the company) the NS scores 3.9 out of 6 on average, with some outliers in the positive direction. This shows the perception of company culture is generally positive.

7.2.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

The NS employee engagement survey shows that across departments employees are happy about the level of respect that is shown towards each other in the area where they work (81% company-wide) and attentiveness within the company (also 81% company-wide).

⁹⁴ <http://www.sas-net.nl/>

⁹⁵ <https://werkenbijns.nl/over-ons/diversiteit/>

Relationships with management scores a bit lower, though in general the several aspects still score around 70% (69% on average across this item, across the company).

7.2.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

Five trends can be distinguished, some of which have been already elaborated on. The trends are interlinked.

- a. Ageing of the population and the subsequent increase in pension age: the aging of the workforce means that soon many will stop working. The increase in pension age has only delayed this slightly. As a result employers are urgently looking for younger recruits (see also iii)) and ways to retain their older workers as long as possible.
- b. Mechanisation and digitalisation: work in the rail sector has and still is fundamentally changing. This means that skill demand changes as well: from needing mainly vocational education in more traditional skills there is a shift to higher vocational education and higher education. Without sufficient influx of this profile, retraining becomes important, but with the aging population exiting the labour force retraining alone would not be enough.
- c. Lack of interest in IT and technical studies has meant and will continue to mean that there is a lack of these skills available in the labour market that various sectors have to compete for, while they are needed more. This trend exacerbates the issue brought about by the aging work force: not only will many leave the workforce, the influx of labour with the right skills is too low. This is a wider labour market issue in the Netherlands.
- d. Besides demographic changes in age, ethnic demographics are also changing. The proportion of non-Western immigrants is increasing, especially in the younger age groups. This means that a large part of the immanent influx onto the labour market will fit this profile. Companies in the rail sector do not reflect this. This group, but also young people as a whole have different interests and opinions on work, pay and benefits. Their ideal of work is often more white collar, which is not in parallel with some of the work in the rail sector, further exacerbating the lack of interest in the sector by young people and the need for mechanics and technical specialists.

7.2.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Due to mechanisation and digitalisation in the train sector, all employers in the rail sector are looking for employees with these specialist technical skills. This counts for jobs requiring vocational as well as higher education.

As the pension age has increased, employees will have to keep working for longer. Also as the rail sector's work force is aging, it is in their interest now to keep employees working longer. For this it is important that employees stay healthy: several interviewees indicated their company looked at fitness (or 'labour capacity' as a result of this fitness) of both their new recruits, as well as current employees with the aim of promoting more durable employability.

7.2.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

The NS and ProRail have similar HR strategies that address the issue of the aging work force and the foreseen loss of skilled personnel in the long term. The first part of this strategy focuses on internal mobility, in order to keep employees within the internal labour market. This means investing in internal training programmes, but also collaborating with partners (trade unions, educational institutes).

The second part of this strategy also relates to keeping sickness absence down. In order to keep employees in work for longer, in a sustainable way, they need to keep healthy. For a part this comes from the employer, for example by looking at forward rather than backward

rotational shift or exempting older workers from certain shifts. For another part this has to come from the employee, who needs to take responsibility for their health. Neither of these pieces of the puzzle come easy. To illustrate: in the case of provisions for older workers this can be a double edged sword. When the aging workforce is exempt from nightshifts, these shifts have to be done by the younger workforce. As a result the younger workforce risks 'burning out' sooner, which perpetuates the problem. Additionally, forcing a 'one size fits all' approach of provisions or privileges onto the older worker, removing individual elements, may risk stigmatising the issue: not all older workers want to or have limited labour capacity. Besides these measures that are implemented on the part of the employer, the employee also has a part to play by taking responsibility for their physical as well as mental health. But not everyone is easily convinced of this and for those who will exit the labour force soon, this may not seem like a worthwhile investment.

Furthermore the NS have been looking at the employee journey and mapped their emotions from the moment they consider applying at the NS through to their first year in service. This helps visualise and come up with tangible ideas that make this journey a pleasant one, making recruits want to stay (retain).

7.2.4.1 *Employment for young people*

Companies in the sector prioritise getting more young people in. This prioritisation is realised by focusing recruitment on young people, but also by improving brand visibility with young people. Both ProRail and NS have networks for young people, organise internships and apprenticeships, visit schools, and have graduate programmes for young talent. They also link into national and sectoral initiatives such as the national Girlsday (aimed at getting more girls interested in technical studies and professions) and the Sectorplan OV (OV: Public Transport), which aims to provide work experience for young people.

The NS generally aims at recruiting more non-Western immigrants, but is especially interested in young people that fit this profile. One interviewee points out more than half of young persons under 18 in the Randstad (the most densely populated area in the Netherlands comprising cities like Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam) fit this profile. This group is an important customer potential and will soon make up a large part of the potential labour force. This poses a challenge as typically this group prefers a white-collar status, while the NS needs people with a technical background (often more blue-collar work). In an attempt to get this group in now, the NS has recently started to influence choice of managers by setting them the aim to consider at least one non-Western immigrant in every four short-listed candidates. This means no quotes are being introduced and people are hired based on their competences, while training recruiters to change their perceptions and bias in general. In a next phase the NS will be looking at whether this leads to more non-Western immigrants being hired.

7.2.4.2 *Employment for women*

On a national level, across sectors, there is limited interest from women in work or studies of a technical nature. So while there is attention for participation of women through participation targets and tailored development programmes, companies or lines of business that almost exclusively have demand for technical or IT skills find it difficult to recruit more women. As one interviewee pointed out, this is a macro level issue of perceptions of technical professions and studies.

Looking at the less technical lines of business which can mainly be found at the NS, goals regarding participation of women look positive. Across all lines of business in the NS in the Netherlands, in 2013 26.8 % of employees were women. More specifically, 30 % of senior management was female (against a target of 24 %), 50% of management development participants were women (against a target of 30 %) and finally 60 % of new recruits into the Young Talent Programme were female (against a 50% target). About a third of employees at ProRail are female. 22 % of the top 80 are women, against a target of 30%.

7.2.4.3 Employment for older workers

Older employees have certain provision as stipulated in the cao's of the NS and ProRail, in order to make working conditions more manageable and attractive. However, other than this there are no targeted measures.

7.2.4.4 Employment for less skilled workers

In 2015 the Participation Act came into force in the Netherlands. It aims to improve the participation of people who are further removed from the labour market and often receive social assistance. The Act further distinguishes between a group of people who are able to fully participate on the Labour Market, and a group who can participate to a certain extent. Part of this Act is a Quote. The Quote stipulates 100 000 extra jobs will be created for this group of people who have limited potential to participate on the Labour Market until 2026. The law stipulates each company with more than 25 employees will need 5 % of their employees to have an illness or disability. An additional 25 000 will be provided by the Government. If this target is not reached a quote will be set. Employers not adhering to the quote will be fined. This means employers will have to devise a strategy aimed at recruiting these employees. As the Act only came into force at the start of this year, not much information is available.

The NS has been looking at including this group for longer and recently closed a successful pilot that will be continued as a programme. More on this can be found in at chapter 1.2.6.

7.2.4.5 Job mobility

As previously mentioned, internal job mobility is an important HR focus point for the rail sector at the moment, as it attempts to keep people and skills within the sector. Job mobility has been found to be low in the past. It is currently being improved through retraining, mentoring and analysis of internal processes to create career paths.

7.2.4.6 Recruiting and internal training

Recruitment and training at the moment is very focused on technical and IT skills, as well as durable employment. The NS and trade unions, as part of its most recent cao negotiations, have created a durable employability forum to create a joint strategy that addresses durable employment, creates support on both sides and formulates interventions.

On the topic of skills employers link into existing initiatives and work together with relevant partners in the sector. An example is RIO (Railinfra Opleidingen), a knowledge institute for the railinfra which provides education, but also functions as a forum for stakeholders to come together and exchange knowledge on technical skills amongst others.

7.2.4.7 International cooperation

RIO does not only look at the national market. It is linked in with several international networks, keeps up with international trends and participates in international research (for example with the International Union of Railways (UIC)).

The NS, which also operates in Germany and the UK as Abellio, has a separate department responsible for international travel. NS International is a member of RailTeam, in which it cooperated with providers in other countries. To become a member the prospective member needs to confirm to certain standards, which include multilingual staff.

7.2.5 Identify areas for job creation

Job creation is currently difficult to achieve for the railinfra, where reorganisations due to cuts in funding to ProRail have led to redundancies. Job creation is currently not a topic here, but there is a shift to specific jobs requiring higher vocational training or higher education (technical, IT), away from more traditional jobs.

For the NS, who are also responsible for retail at the stations, there are plenty of vacancies currently available, so job creation is not a priority (except for: see good practices). Areas with most vacancies are technical and IT related jobs. As previously discussed there is a lack of interest from young people in technical and IT related studies. This is a wider labour market problem. Another area with many vacancies is the retail at the stations. These jobs are usually filled by students, which means high staff turnover and a continuous demand for replacement.

7.2.6 Examples of good practices

Two employment strategies that target disadvantaged groups will be highlighted here. These groups are people with a labour capacity limitation, and refugees.

We say labour capacity limitation instead of disability, as the point is that the employee will have certain limitations in his or her capacity to work. In 2013 the NS started a pilot creating jobs providing work experience for people that fit this profile. Instead of offering work experience in temporary jobs, new sustainable jobs were created through job carving, where suitable existing tasks in working areas in the NS were combined and remodelled for people with limited labour capacity. 40 such jobs were created for 10 different limitations. The pilot was found successful in terms of the number of participants who were offered a contract at the end of their work experience. The new *cao* stipulates 200 such jobs will be created in two years. The NS has shared lessons learned with other companies across different sectors. This best practice is very relevant to all companies in the Netherlands considering the requirement of the Quote to create these sort of jobs for people with limited labour capacity.

At the same time another pilot took place, which created four paid jobs with a duration of nine months for refugees with a higher education. Eligibility criteria included being able to speak Dutch and having a work and residence permit. In these jobs refugees are linked to a mentor and during their work are able to gain work experience and become familiar with the corporate culture. They are also provided with transferable skills such as PRINCE2, which is a widely acknowledged project management course. This pilot was also successful: 50% of participants found permanent work at the NS, the other half found work elsewhere. This is now also part of the NS strategy: every year, five of these jobs become available. It is part of the NS diversity and inclusion strategy, but it also acknowledges the added value people who are refugees can bring: they can offer different perspectives, an international focus and possess other competences that are valuable to the employer.

7.3 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

7.3.1.1 Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees

Attractive working conditions which are already present are good pay and benefits. Two aspects that could receive more attention are set out below.

- a. Campaigns focused on the public service providing durable transport and mobility to the nation (partly through working in an interesting technical area) which increases the attractiveness and image of the work and therefore the attractiveness of the work to (prospective) employees;
- b. The focus on nightshifts: with maintenance work almost exclusively being done overnight so trains can run during the day, this takes a toll on employees. While it is understandable that trains need to run during the day, it could be considered whether it is still socially acceptable to have these nightshifts. Alternatively more could be done during the day, with replacement buses and general good alternative services to the customer.

7.3.1.2 Identify effective recruitment and retention measures

Generally, staff retention is focused on keeping older employees in work for longer. This is not because employees want to leave the sector, but due to the fact that the average age of the employee in the sector is quite high. There are no specific sector-wide issues with retaining employees.

Issues in recruitment mainly occur in recruiting people with technical and IT skills. These are often not very visible jobs. In order to bring these jobs more to the forefront and show people that a technical or IT job in the sector is interesting and fun, they open their jobs to prospective students and employees. NedTrain's TechniekFabriek is an excellent example, and the RIO will follow suit with their own institute for the railinfra. ProRail also has 'open house' days. All these initiatives, according to the interviewees, help getting people interested in these jobs. As soon as someone has seen what such a job actually means and the facilities they will be able to work with, they seem to be much interested in a job in the sector.

7.3.1.3 Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

Although generally working conditions flowing from the *cao's* are good (salary, additional benefits), working times are an issue. As discussed previously, it may be worth looking at doing more of the traditionally night-work during the day in order to make it more attractive to employees.

In terms of personnel development, there seems to be enough attention for this. One aspect that could be further explored, specifically concerning younger workers entering the labour force, is targeting and tailoring training more to the interests of this group. As a sector expert points out with the average age of the current employee in the sector being relatively high, there is a clear generation gap between teacher and students. The question is whether this gap is or will stand in the way of the teacher being able to deliver an interesting story that matches the interest of the new generation.

Corporate culture will differ across the different companies in the different areas of the sector. One overarching aspect that could improve corporate culture is the attractiveness in terms of public perception of the work. And currently not enough is being done by ways of a long term marketing campaign to change perceptions. On occasions events happen that change public perception to favourable, but this is not retained. Items for consideration to make a long-term marketing campaign to change public perception work are:

- Getting business in order (reduce grounds for negative publicity), i.e. internal finances, punctuality
- Focusing on train-travel as a durable and sustainable good
- Focusing on train-travel as contributing to mobility of people

7.3.2 Examples of good practices

7.4 Summary SWOT analysis

A one page summary SWOT analysis should be provided. This will present the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of rail companies as employers.

Table 7.1 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Various stakeholders (trade unions, teaching institutes) are working together to address various topics such as durable employability, specific groups, ensuring employer and employee considerations are taken into account ■ Good working conditions and social standards following from cao, which makes it an attractive sector to work in ■ Durable, sustainable services contributing to mobility in the country ■ ProRail, but mainly the NS, have a lot of brand recognition and media attention (easy to reach the public and customer with a <i>(positive)</i> message) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poor public perception of sector as a whole due to various events (management issues, austerity, performance issues) ■ Aggression of customers against customer-facing personnel ■ Job security and working conditions (times) for railinfra personnel working for subcontractors not as good ■ Ageing of the work force, change to more mechanisation and digitalisation, and lack of interest from future employees in IT/technical studies risks future understaffing ■ ProRail, but mainly the NS, have a lot of brand recognition and media attention (easy to reach the public and customer with a <i>(negative)</i> message) ■ Demographic changes and changes in interest in upcoming influx labour market is not yet reflected in current employee base of sector
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing links with social partners offer excellent opportunities to tackle weaknesses and threats identified: most of these are being tackled (durable employability, more non-western immigrants) and have strategies in place, but many still need to be operationalised/implemented. ■ Good brand recognition and media attention for easy 'in' with long-term marketing strategy to improve public perception and subsequently make it a more interesting place to work and helps attract young IT and technical graduates. Aspects used to this end could focus on sustainability, durability (green economy, green jobs), mobility (enabling economy through providing mobility), and public service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working conditions for railinfra personnel working as a result of austerity cuts and stalling cao negotiations ■ Unattractive working time and pressure on railinfra personnel risks young students choosing other 'technical' sectors ■ Risk of future understaffing due to lack of IT/technical personnel will lead to more work pressure on the employee and interruption for the customer ■ Risk of not buying in to new labour market demographic (different interest for different age group and ethnicities) risks losing touch and exacerbating issue of understaffing ■ Abundance of media interest and poor performance due to understaffing lead to further deterioration of image and attractiveness of sector. ■ Generally, risk of understaffing could exacerbate weaknesses already identified.

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- Wim Kuijken (on behalf of the Critical Review Team and Reference Group), 'Sturen aan verbindingen', 2014: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2014/03/28/bijlage-1b-eindadvies-en-advisering-critical-review-team-en-klankbordgroep-ltsa-inclusief-bijlage-positionering-prorail>

Annex 22 List of Interviewees

- Ad Toet, General Director Royal Dutch Transport, KNV
- Eric Steenbakkers, HR Director, NS
- Ernst Cramer, Manager European Affairs, NS
- Esther Miedema, Advisor Employer Branding and Labour Market Communications, NS
- Huub van den Dungen, Trade Union Director for the Rail Sector, FNV
- Jos Gabriëls, Manager Educational Consultancy, RIO
- Justus Hartkamp, Manager Public Affairs, Corporate Communications, ProRail
- Laurens Ohlenroth, NedTrain Head of Communications, NS
- Ruurd Jansen, Reputation Analyst, NS
- Theo de Weert, Manager HRM, ProRail
- Serdar Ucar, Manager Diversity and Inclusion, NS

8 Country report – Poland

8.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

This section assesses both image and attractiveness at individual company and sectoral level based on data analysis, opinion of employer and employee representatives.

8.1.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

Overall **bad image of rail sector in Poland has been gradually improving in recent years**. Many **Poles are not aware of the diversity of rail sector in Poland** and still equate rail in Poland with Polish State Railways (henceforth PKP). Therefore the image of PKP Group⁹⁶ has paramount impact on the perception of rail sector in general.

Back in 2011 the Group PKP was **presented in negative light in media**. The message presented was that the trains are not heated, there is chaos on the stations and they are disgraceful, rail companies are unable to use EU structural funds which were dedicated to modernisation of rail.⁹⁷

Since then the companies in **PKP Group made a priority to improve the customer's comfort and safety**: cleanliness, safety at trains and stations, online ticket sales, Wi-Fi at stations and on trains. Between 2011 and 2015 PKP group improved their performance in: speed of the travel, online ticket sales, rentals of space at stations, net debt was reduced and the number of rail accidents declined. As an effect in March 2015 for the first time in years the number of the passengers increased.⁹⁸

In last two years there was significant **increase in customer satisfaction**. In April 2015, 63% of passengers were satisfied with PKP Intercity (one of the companies in PKP Group) services. This is over 20 percentage points increase comparing with customer statistician measured in 2013. In the past two years from 34% to 56% has also increased satisfaction with journey time. As many as 73% of passengers positively evaluate the punctuality of PKP Intercity trains, which is about 10 percentage points more than in 2013. More and more travellers see improvement in rail safety. 67% of them feel confident when traveling by train (+21 pp increase comparing to 2013). According to 53% of respondents railway stations are safe place (+17 pp increase comparing to 2013). There is a growing number of customers satisfied with the cleanliness at stations, platforms (50%) and trains PKP Intercity (61%).⁹⁹

To communicate this message, in 2015 PKP Intercity **launched media campaign** (TV, radio, press and internet) which aim was **to differentiate the company from other rail companies in Poland and improve its public image**.¹⁰⁰ The representatives of employees mentioned this campaign as step in good direction, changing society's image of the company

⁹⁶ The PKP Group was established in 2001 as the result of the restructuring process of the Polskie Koleje Państwowe [Polish State Railways] state enterprise. The PKP Group consist of several rail companies offering passenger and cargo transport services, managing railway lines, offering services for rail companies or related to railway infrastructure management (e.g. energy, IT, trainings etc.).

⁹⁷ Witold Orłowski, Michał Mazur, PwC (2015), Inwestycja w przyszłość Podsumowanie zmian w Grupie PKP w latach 2012-2015 http://pkpsa.pl/dla-mediow/komunikaty-prasowe/inne/Prezentacja_PwC.pdf?_ga=1.207994768.34383834.1432749201

⁹⁸ Witold Orłowski, Michał Mazur, PwC (2015), Inwestycja w przyszłość Podsumowanie zmian w Grupie PKP w latach 2012-2015 http://pkpsa.pl/dla-mediow/komunikaty-prasowe/inne/Prezentacja_PwC.pdf?_ga=1.207994768.34383834.1432749201

⁹⁹ IBC IQS, Millward Brown (2015), Satysfakcja z podróży pociągami PKP Intercity http://pkpsa.pl/dla-mediow/komunikaty-prasowe/inne/Wyniki-bada-satysfakcji_PKP-S.A.pdf?_ga=1.49233828.34383834.1432749201

¹⁰⁰ Rynek kolejowy, Startuje kampania PKP za 10 mln zł. Zobacz film reklamowy, available at: http://www.rynek-kolejowy.pl/55707/startuje_kampania_pkp_za_10_mln_zl_zobacz_film_reklamowy.htm

and the sector, possibly making it more attractive employer. One of the messages of the campaign 'Look how much we have changed' uses images of bought new trains (e.g. Pendolino) highlighting improvement made by PKP Group.

The **changing image of rail companies are not yet reflected in the rankings prepared by Randstad on the employers' attractiveness**. PKP although widely recognised by Poles is not regarded as a desired employer. Randstad publish only names of first 20 companies considered as attractive employer – PKP is not among them.¹⁰¹ Universum's general ranking of ideal employers does not include any rail companies. The separate rankings do however include rail related companies in engineering (Pesa at 41 place, DB Schenker Logistics at 53 position) and business (DB Schenker Logistics on the 31 place in the ranking).¹⁰²

Interviewees agreed that rail sector **is not an attractive employer due to unattractive salaries, negative image of companies** (bureaucratic, ineffective), **overall difficult working conditions**. The **occupation and the type of company (type of transport and ownership) has an impact** on the level of salaries, the stability of work and working conditions.

8.1.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

The rail companies in Poland can be segmented depending on the type of ownership and the type of market they operate on. Three types of owners can be distinguished in Poland:

- **State owned companies** or companies where the State has majority of the shares are responsible for managing railway lines (e.g. PKP PLK), offer passenger transport (e.g. PKP Intercity) or cargo transport (e.g. PKP Cargo). Couple of years ago all companies in the group have one collective bargaining agreement which is now replaced by separate agreements for each company. Overall conditions and level on salaries in companies in the PKP Group are **similar for the same types of occupations**. There are however huge **differences between occupations**.
- **Rail companies owned by regional authorities** provide passenger transport in the regions (e.g. Masovian Railways) or metropolitan areas. The work conditions in these companies are **similar to state owned companies**. Some regions implement solutions aimed to consolidate some task and this way improve the efficiency – e.g. in tasks of controllers and cashiers are joined. The level of salaries of rail drivers are similar to state owned companies.
- At the moment **private companies** offer only cargo transport (e.g. DB Schenker Logistics). The representatives of employees reported **huge differences between PKP Group and private companies in terms of earnings and working time**. Work at private companies is tasks oriented and remuneration systems are simplified. These employers expect employees to be more universal – e.g. train drivers are also shunters. At private companies usually there are **no collective bargaining agreements**. Private employers are also in favour of simplifying and shortening training programs for train drivers.

At similar positions (e.g. train driver) the cargo companies offer more competitive salaries than passenger transport companies. On the other hand the job security in cargo companies is lower as the companies depend on the market demand and contracts won to transport goods. This type of transport was affected by the global crisis whereas the passenger transport was not.

Table 8.1 summarises the main features of employment at each type of company.

¹⁰¹ Randstad does not provide external bodies (i.e. ICF) the results of particular companies. PKP Group was among 150 companies ranked and the report can be obtained from PKP Group.

¹⁰² Ranking is based on the online survey among 23,000 students from 71 HEIs. UNIVERSUM (2014), Ranking Idealny pracodawca UNIVERSUM TOP 100 <http://www.epageflip.net/i/423806-universum-top-100-poland-2014>.

Table 8.1 Types of rail companies and their attractive elements

	Market:		
	Managing railway lines	Transport of passengers	Transport of goods
State (majority of shares)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on the company health and safety standards as required by law or higher Health and safety standards above law requirements Unattractive salaries for certain occupations comparing to other sectors (e.g. control engineers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High job security Depending on the company health and safety standards as required by law or higher Lower salaries than in the transport of goods Higher work mobility than in the companies owned by regional municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher salaries than in the transport of passengers but lower than in the private cargo companies Lower job security – depended on the market demand Depending on the company health and safety standards as required by law or higher Closer proximity of work than in the private cargo companies
Owned by: Regional municipalities	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate job security Health and safety standards above law requirements Likely lower salaries than in the state owned passenger transport companies (regional variations) 	n/a
Private	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on the company health and safety standards as required by law or higher¹⁰³ Low job security Health and safety standards as required by law Higher mobility of the work than in all other types of companies

Source: ICF based on the interviews conducted

Despite mentioned previously unattractive elements of rail sector the companies **do not have particular problems in finding non-specialist employees**. Stability offered by the state companies and in particular offered full-time employment is attractive for women, young people from rural communities or small cities.

The HR representatives did however report **problems with recruiting specialists e.g. control engineers and train drivers**. For the first group, the salaries offered by rail companies are not competitive. There **is generational gap among locomotive and tractions drivers**. Recently launched training programs aim to overcome this skill shortage problem. Private rail companies' representative as weakness of these programs mentioned

¹⁰³ Some private transporters have company-wide health and safety standards which might be above Polish law requirements.

their length (2 years) during which the trainees receive only minimum wage and its high cost for employers.

8.1.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

Stability of employment, full-time employment and assurance that their employment unlikely will be terminated as immediate reaction to changes in demand for services makes the rail sector attractive for certain groups of job seekers. Who however might not have the looked by employers technical skills.

The Randstad's ranking reveals **factors important to Poles when looking for a job**. The single most important factor when looking for a job for Poles is **salary (24%), job security (17%), financial health (11%), job content (10%) and pleasant work atmosphere (7%)**.¹⁰⁴

- For **women** important are: Job security, working atmosphere, work-life balance and flexible working arrangements.
- **Men** are motivated more by companies offering quality products/services with a strong management and making use of the latest technologies.
- **Young** are typically searching employers that offer interesting job content, training opportunities and flexible working arrangements and that make use of the latest technologies.
- **Older** people value job security and financial health.
- People with a **lower education** degree are attracted by financially healthy companies with a good location.
- The **higher educated** value interesting job content and career opportunities.¹⁰⁵

In 2014 for students the most important aspect of professional career was stabilized employment (65%). 43% of surveyed students declared that they would like to work for at least five years for the first employer after finishing their education. Also important for them is professional development. In recent years work-life balance is gaining importance among students, while the willingness to take on new challenges falls among this group. Students would like to earn 750 EUR at their first job. The most attractive employers for students are companies which are able to provide good career and high salary in the future. The most attractive jobs for students are in media, advertising, financial institutions. Perfect employer is a company enjoying a high prestige, fast-growing and innovative, and at the same time perfectly well-rounded on the market.¹⁰⁶ These conditions are unlikely met by rail companies which can offer them 470 EUR in companies which do not have positive public image.

8.1.4 Comparison with other sectors

The type of occupation has an impact on the result of comparison with other sectors.

Although the average salary in rail sector is above average earnings in Poland. For the technicians e.g. **control engineers the level of salaries** offered by rail companies **are not competitive**, especially comparing to energy and construction sector.

On the other hand **cashier position is more attractive at rail companies than in commerce sector** because it offers full time employment, regular working hours and high health and safety standards (e.g. entitlement to brakes at work).

¹⁰⁴ Randstad Award (2015), Randstad Award <http://www.randstad.pl/o-randstad/randstad-award/o-badaniu/>

¹⁰⁵ Randstad Award (2015), Randstad Award <http://www.randstad.pl/o-randstad/randstad-award/o-badaniu/>

¹⁰⁶ Ranking is based on the online survey among 23,000 students from 71 HEIs. UNIVERSUM (2014), Ranking Idealny pracodawca UNIVERSUM TOP 100 <http://www.epageflip.net/i/423806-universum-top-100-poland-2014>.

8.1.5 Examples of good practices

PKP Cargo provides an example of **programme aimed to rejuvenate workforce**. The company launched Voluntary Leave Programme and parallel training programme for train drivers.

Up to 36 monthly salaries (often more than 24 thousand EUR) PKP Cargo offers to employees who voluntarily leave the company. The company estimates that the total value of the Programme will be approx. 20 million EUR, and it will cover 1,300 employees. The program aims to reduce the number of administrative staff.

The Voluntary Leave Programme is an element of thought-through strategy to rejuvenate the staff. In 2014-2015 PKP Cargo planned to employ 500 people who in next 2 years will be trained as train drivers. The total cost of training will be more than 4 million EUR.¹⁰⁷

8.2 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

This section presents the key employment strategies pursued by rail companies.

8.2.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

8.2.1.1 Pay and conditions

The average **salary offered in the rail sector is slightly higher than the average salary in Poland**. However the interviewees agreed that the level of earnings differ depending on the occupation and position of the employees. The salaries of train drivers makes this occupation very attractive – 3-5 thousand PLN¹⁰⁸ comparing to 4 thousand PLN¹⁰⁹ average salary in Poland. Shortage of train drivers and the length of their training creates **competition over this group of employees between private and public companies**. Since the level of salaries in public sector is fixed and adjusted by the inflation level, the public companies are on a losing position in this competition.

The salaries of administrative staff or cashiers are much less attractive.

Earnings of project manager of infrastructure rail projects were described as competitive to the market or similar sectors (e.g. construction sector).

8.2.1.2 Company culture

Interviewees differed in their responses regarding company culture. The representatives of employers were in position that there is strong company culture – evident in frequent company events and high share of unionised workers. In their view general company **culture might be even dysfunctional for the rail companies** – due to lack of orientation to clients' needs. There are attempts to change it e.g. by **introducing new values like orientation on results** – which is culturally distant to current employees.

On the other hand the representatives of employees shared opinion that company culture and **general belonging to the 'rail family' is being destroyed by management which is not rooted in the rail sector** – rotating and appointed by politicians managers often do not have work experience in the rail sector.

¹⁰⁷ PKP Cargo (2014), Rada Nadzorcza zaakceptowała Program Dobrowolnych Odejść w PKP CARGO <https://pkp-cargo.pl/pl/media/informacje-prasowe/rada-nadzorcza-zaakceptowa%C5%82a-program-dobrowolnych-odej%C5%9B%C4%87-w-pkp-cargo/>

¹⁰⁸ <http://nate.mat.pl/107591.masz-mature-lub-studia-ale-nie-masz-roboty-zostan-maszynista-mlodzi-bija-sie-o-te-prace>

¹⁰⁹ GUS, II quartile 2015.

The segmentation of sector – high number of rail companies – has also negative impact in the sense of belonging to ‘rail family’. The tradition to **wear uniforms, belonging to trade unions and priesthoods cultivate the rail ethos.**

8.2.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

The representatives of employees and external experts mentioned **lack of understanding by management of rail sector.** The managers are recruited from bank sector or are delegated by politicians. According to external expert this has **negative impact on the managed infrastructure projects and in the end the sustainability of financed investments** e.g. new stations are built in sub-optimal locations which will be less attractive for passengers.

For representatives of employees, persons delegated by politicians or ex-bankers do not understand the ethos of rail sector.

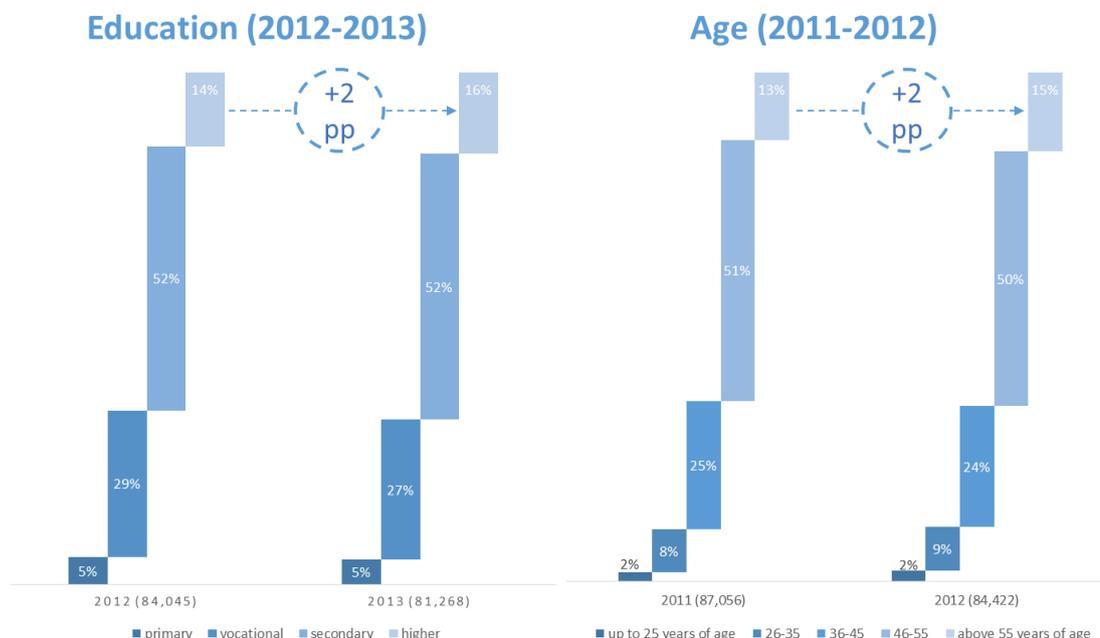
The representatives of trade unions also **criticised the social dialog** in the companies which often is formalised or comes down to informing employees about decisions which already have been taken.

8.2.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

Long break in systematic training of staff – especially train drivers – resulted in **generational gap.** Over half of 17 thousand train drivers in Poland are between 46-60 years old and average age of people is 50 years old. In 2013 it was estimated that shortly there will be **deficit of 3 thousand train drivers** in the sector – assuming current demand for services.¹¹⁰

Since then only one program was lunched to rejuvenate the workforce – previously mentioned program implemented by PKP Cargo.

Figure 8.1 Structure of PKP Group’s employees



Source: Source: PKP Group

¹¹⁰ Główny Inspektorat Pracy (2013), Bezpieczeństwo pracy na kolei, available at: http://rop.sejm.gov.pl/1_Old/opracowania/pdf/material70.pdf

8.2.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Main challenges faced by rail companies is to **rationalise the employment in the administrative operations and rejuvenate the workforce in key occupations and employ or train specialist with skills needed to operate the modernised infrastructure and new trains.**

In 2012 over 33 thousand people were employed in transport of goods (+0.35 pp comparing to 2011) and nearly 25 thousand (-3.66 pp comparing to 2011) in passenger transport.¹¹¹ In recent years the employment level was mainly reduced to adjust the level and structure of employment to their current tasks related to changing market requirements – lower number of passenger transport offered.

Interviewed HR managers in two rail companies in 2014 for the first time in years had to recruit new employees. Apart previously mentioned shortages in the group of rail drivers, additionally interviewees reported need to recruit **train manages, rail traffic controllers, mechatronic engineers, electronics engineers, signalling technicians.** External experts commented on shortages of project managers who are **inexperienced to manage large rail investments and construction projects** because they are recruited from other unrelated sectors.

In terms of training needs **computer literacy** was mentioned by interviewees. However despite investments in this area in staff the results are still unsatisfactory.

For interviewees **staff turnover is not an issue** for Polish rail companies as still work in rail sector is career for life, especially among older workers. The companies themselves cause staff turnover by re-training and promoting some employees.

8.2.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

Interviewed representatives of rail companies – HR managers / directors – did not reported any specific HR strategy which they implement at the moment. There are two tendencies in rail sector. On one side there are attempts to reduce the number of administrative staff e.g. through early leaving programs. On the other hand companies recruit employees without emphasis on particular group of jobseekers.

The companies **do not outsource services or recruit temporary workers on large scale.**

The benefits offered currently are on a much lower level than before the companies were divided. At the moment the **benefits vary across occupations**, and might include:

- 99% discount for tickets
- Additional days-off
- Clothing supplement
- Coal supplement
- Co-financing of children's vacations
- Stock market shares
- Medical care schemes
- Insurance schemes
- Sport cards

Medical care schemes and sport cards are **not popular among employees** who are used to rail medical care which was privatised in recent years. Also age and gender of average employee contributes to lower interest in these schemes. According to HR interviewees benefits **do not play important role for jobseekers** to work in rail sector. The most important assets of rail companies is their stability, high health and safety standards, compliance with labour law and payment on time.

¹¹¹ Główny Inspektorat Pracy (2013), Bezpieczeństwo pracy na kolei, p. 34 available at: http://rop.sejm.gov.pl/1_Old/opracowania/pdf/material70.pdf

Since accident in Szczekociny in 2012¹¹² rail companies started to offer **psychological support** for workers affected by rail accidents. Interviewees were not aware of ETF and CER guidelines to identifying and preventing psychosocial risks at work in the railway sector¹¹³.

8.2.4.1 *Employment for young people*

There are no special programs aimed to increase number of employed young people in the sector. Companies have **internship programs in cooperation with public employment services**. However the programs are not treated as main source of employees.

Additionally to internship programs, in 2011 PKP started **cooperation with secondary schools**. In 2014 PKP PLK dedicated 72,346 EUR for cooperation with schools. Through program 141 students are supported who learn to be rail transport technicians, technicians for the automatic control of the railway traffic. PKP PLK offers grants (from 72 to 120 EUR per month for student, the amount depends on the study level), employment guarantee for best students, **prepares apprenticeships program, provides facilities and qualified trainers**.¹¹⁴

In Poland there are 15 schools offering rail vocational education (Lublin, Malaszewicze, Siedlce, Szczecin, Stargard Szczecin, Warsaw, Lodz, Ostrow Wielkopolski., Skarżysko-Stone, Kluczbork, Żarów, Tarnowskie Mountains, Sosnowiec, Krakow, Nowy Sacz). In addition, PKP PLK has signed letters of intent with further 11 schools which are willing to offer rail education (Leszno, Chorzow, Katowice, Kielce, Bydgoszcz, Białystok, Tarnow, Rzeszow, Łazy, Deblin, Góra).

Until now there are no graduates of launched programme therefore the interviewees could not comment on the results of it and transition of students to rail companies.

One of the HR managers commented that majority of the schools are located in central Poland and **graduates are reluctant to relocate**.

The interviewees reported rather **moderate interest of students in these programmes**. However they do not have first-hand knowledge in this regard.

According to Randstad Award 2015 when looking for a job young people value interesting job content, training opportunities, flexible working arrangements and employers that make use of the latest technologies. Level of pay (c. 2 thousand PLN) and image for rail sector is not attractive for young people. However the type of employment offered maybe attractive for certain groups of young people who value stability. HR managers reported higher interest in work at rail companies by young people from small towns or rural communities.

8.2.4.2 *Employment for women*

There are no special programs aimed to increase number of women in the sector. Occasionally rail companies in cooperation with public employment services or non-governmental organisations implement projects for women coming back on the labour market after maternity leave.

According to Randstad Award 2015 women look for jobs which offer them security, good working atmosphere, work-life balance and flexible working arrangements. Rail sector can offer them these but only in certain occupations (e.g. administrative). HR managers admitted that **administrative staff is highly feminised in Poland**.

¹¹² Two passenger trains collided head-on.

¹¹³

http://www.cer.be/sites/default/files/publication/PSR_RAIL_A_guide_to_identifying_and_preventing_psychosocial_risks_at_work_EN.pdf

¹¹⁴ TSK24.pl (2015), Stypendyści PKP PLK w ZSTM <http://tsk24.pl/szkolnictwo-i-oswiata/9628-stypendysci-pkp-plk-w-zstm>

8.2.4.3 *Employment for older workers*

There are no special programs aimed to increase number of employed older workers in the sector.

According to Randstad Award 2015 older workers look for companies which can offer them job security and are financially healthy. Rail sector can offer them stability but paired with low salaries. In rail companies **the level of pay depends on the number of years worked in the rail sector**. Therefore the rail companies are not attractive employer for older workers with experience in other sectors.

8.2.4.4 *Employment for less skilled workers*

There are no special programs aimed to increase number of employed low skilled workers in the sector. The companies do however **offer training and education support for their employees**.

8.2.4.5 *Job mobility*

In some companies there is tendency to centralise operations e.g. in Warsaw or Katowice and in such cases employees are being offered **small remuneration for re-location**.

In **smaller companies (private) the need for mobility of workers is higher**. Public companies are able to **concentrate employees in regional slots**. Distance to work and whether or not this time is counted as time at work are one of the differences between public and private companies.

8.2.4.6 *Recruiting and internal training*

Since for many years the companies mainly reduced employment, recent experience with recruitment was something new for interviewed HR managers. Main channels to recruit new employees are **job adverts (80%) and referrals by other employees (10-15%)**. Interviewees often mentioned that **whole families work in rail companies for generations**.

Table 8.2 summarises channels used to recruit new employees.

Table 8.2 Recruiting channels

Channel	Usage	Usefulness
Employee referrals	✓ Very often though there are no special referral programs or additional points for employees who were recommended.	↑ High
Job portals	✓ Very often used. To attract certain types of employees (e.g. managers) the official job titles are changed to make them more similar to other sectors.	↑ High
Cooperation with PES	✓ Often used.	↑ High
Company website	✓ Often used. The 'career' section on websites was recently modernised. Employees used to apply for work at local workplace. Nowadays the recruitment is centralised and the application is done online.	↗ Moderate
Internships	✓ Often used. Internship programs run on regular basis. Although some interns are employed afterwards, the internship programs are not treated yet as an important channel to find employees.	↗ Moderate
Scholarships	✓ Program was launched in 2011 and until now there were no graduates.	? Unknown
Facebook	✓ Job offers are also posted on Facebook profiles of companies.	↓ Low or none
LinkedIn	× Not used. The companies do not have professional accounts.	×

Source: ICF based on the interviews conducted

The employees have **easy access to trainings** e.g. in areas where particular skill shortages are faced (e.g. computer competency). State owned companies more often run re-training programs than private companies.

8.2.5 Identify areas for job creation

The EU financed investments and new technologies are main trends influencing recruitment in companies and working conditions. The digitalisation of processes and changes in technology require less manual work and improves the safety at work.

In short and long term perspective the companies **plan to recruit rail drivers, train managers, rail traffic controllers, mechatronic engineers, electronics engineers, signalling technicians.**

Cargo transport is more depended on the market demand, therefore **higher staff turnover** is reported in these companies. The cargo transport was affected by economic crisis. The representatives of employees described the strategy of cargo companies as not well thought through and impulsive.

8.2.6 Examples of good practices

The program of **cooperation with schools** can be considered as a good practice. The program was launched in 2011 with annual budget of EUR 150,000. Annually 300 students from 150 schools receive scholarships. The amount of scholarship depends on study level – from EUR 72 in junior class to EUR 120 in the last year of study.

Additionally to scholarship programme PKP is closely cooperates with 15 secondary schools which train rail transport technicians, technicians for the automatic control of the railway traffic. In these schools PKP PLK offers:

- Scholarships for students,
- Employment guarantee for best students,
- Apprenticeships program,
- Training facilities and qualified trainers.

Interviewees reported problems in securing qualified trainers who will train students and prepare study curricula / materials. Interviewees reported moderate interest of pupils in the programmes.

There are no evidence on the results of the cooperation.

8.3 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

This section presents conclusions and implications from the research based on the work undertaken. It identifies what works well and what works less well in terms of attractiveness for employees and job seekers.

8.3.1.1 Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees

The **stability and security of employment are the main advantages** of employment in the rail sector. Comparing to other sectors in Poland, relatively strong position of trade unions protects employees against radical changes in the level of employment.

General weakness of Polish labour market makes this asset of rail sector especially valuable for jobseekers. Rail companies are reliable partner for employees – they pay on time, comply with labour law and health and safety standards.

Offered benefits are not seen as attractive since they are just residues of what was offered before liberalisation of the sector. Especially since the majority of employees remember the

benefits offered before 1990. Employees are reluctant to further changes in the complex benefit and remuneration system arguing that it will lead to further reductions.

8.3.1.2 Identify effective recruitment and retention measures

Referral programs and internal recruitment are the most effective strategies used by rail companies. However there are advantages and disadvantages of this strategy. On one hand the employees share similar values and ethos of work, on the other hand some inefficient elements of company culture are maintained.

One of the interviewed companies to attract deficit employees changes the **official titles used in rail companies for wording more often used in other sectors** e.g. ‘manager’ instead of ‘head of the unit’.

8.3.1.3 Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

Internal recruitment and re-training programs are being used to address the skill shortages.

8.3.2 Examples of good practices

The following practices can be regarded as examples of good practices:

- Training program for train drivers in PKP Cargo
- Cooperation with schools of PKP PLK
- Using in job offers vocabulary used in other sectors to attract employees with demanded set of skills who might not be familiar with rail sector.

8.4 Summary SWOT analysis

The summary SWOT analysis is provided below. It presents the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of rail companies as employers.

Table 8.3 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improving performance and willingness to change ■ Voluntary Retirement Plans and aging of staff will adjust the level employment to current tasks related to changing market requirements ■ Strong position of trade unions ■ Stability of work ■ High compliance with labour law ■ Collective bargaining agreements ■ Offered employment conditions – full time employment ■ Training and educational programs ■ Cooperation with schools ■ Cooperation with public employment services ■ Programs to rejuvenate staff ■ Media campaigns changing public image of rail companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low level of salaries ■ Low / Lack of impact on unattractive elements of work ■ Lack of employee assessment programs (career paths) ■ Generational gap in some occupations ■ Managers not familiar with rail specificity ■ High mobility of work in some occupation ■ Exposure to stress in some occupations (e.g. suicides, accidents) ■ Difficult working conditions in some occupations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fixed working hours in some occupations 	
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Priority given by EU to rail investments ■ Political will to invest in rail infrastructure ■ Weak labour market, not able to offer full time employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Change in political will to invest in rail infrastructure ■ Appointed by politicians managers not familiar with rail specificity ■ Lack of funds to invest in rail sector

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Annex 24 List of Interviewees

Henryk Sikora (09.07.2015) – trade unions representative: Regionalna Sekcja Kolejarzy NSZZ Solidarność przy Regionie Małopolski w Krakowie

Maarten Gutt (13.08.2015) – trade unions representative: Federacja Związków Zawodowych Pracowników Polskich Kolei Państwowych

Michał Litwin (08.07.2015) – private employers' representative: Independent Union of Railway Companies

Tomasz Kamiński (23.06.2015) – employers' representative: HR Director at PKP Polskie Linie Kolejowe S.A.

Barbara Brzezińska (17.06.2015) – employers' representative: HR Manager at PKP SKM w Trójmieście Sp. z o.o.

Michał Wolański (14.06.2015) – independent expert: Warsaw School of Economics

Annex 25 Employee Surveys

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	5
Negative	13
Neutral	15
Positive	4
Very positive	0
Unsure	1
(blank)	2
Grand Total	40

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	4
Depends on occupation	3
Very positive	0
Quite positive	11
Neutral	8
Quite negative	8
Very negative	4
Don't know	1
n/a	1
Grand Total	40

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	5
Quite positive	16
Neutral	12
Quite negative	4
Very negative	1
Don't know	1
n/a	1
Grand Total	40

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?

No, far lower level	2
No, lower level	4
The same level	5
Yes, a little higher	3
Yes, far higher	7
Unsure	0
Don't know	18
n/a	1
Grand Total	40

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	37
Improve benefits	14
Improve working hours	10
Provide a better work-life balance	10
Improve career opportunities	19

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	7
Quite satisfied	20
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4
Quite dissatisfied	6
Very dissatisfied	1
Unsure	1
n/a	1
Grand Total	40

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	4
Most days	11
From time to time	22
Never	1
Unsure	1
n/a	1
Grand Total	40

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
Job security	22	10	2	3	1	0	1	1	40
A good working atmosphere	23	10	2	1	0	0	1	3	40
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	19	8	4	1	3	1	0	4	40
Overall level of pay and benefits	21	12	3	1	0	0	1	2	40
Pension provision	16	8	7	2	2	1	1	3	40
Opportunity for career development and promotion	12	12	7	1	3	3	0	2	40
Access to training and education	9	11	14	2	1	1	0	2	40
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	8	8	12	3	3	1	3	2	40
My employer providing additional health benefits	6	6	6	5	6	1	7	3	40
International opportunities / working abroad	2	3	4	4	15	6	0	6	40

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	9	19	5	3	3	0	1	40
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	8	7	7	13	3	1	1	40
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	9	5	12	7	6	0	1	40

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	0	4	12	10	9	2	3	40
Benefits	3	13	14	4	2	2	2	40
Working hours	5	15	12	1	3	2	2	40
Work-life balance	4	15	12	3	3	2	1	40
Career development opportunities	0	11	8	10	6	4	1	40
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	1	10	11	7	6	3	2	40

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	18	15	1	3	2	0	1	40
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	11	7	5	4	8	4	1	40
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	10	18	5	3	3	0	1	40
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	9	11	6	10	3	0	1	40
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	3	14	8	8	2	4	1	40
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	6	5	8	10	9	1	1	40
Overall, My workload suits me	7	16	2	8	3	1	3	40

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	3	12	5	10	9	0	1	40
There is a sense of a “railway family”	3	10	13	8	4	1	1	40
My commitment to the company is very high	5	14	8	4	4	2	3	40
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people, older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds	2	9	9	11	7	1	1	40
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	3	6	11	6	11	2	1	40
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	5	12	7	8	5	2	1	40
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of “community”	6	5	12	10	5	1	1	40
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	4	10	10	6	7	1	2	40

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	11	20	4	3	1	0	1	40
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	11	22	3	2	1	0	1	40
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	7	17	7	6	1	1	1	40
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	3	12	7	10	3	4	1	40
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	4	11	9	7	2	6	1	40

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	9	12	3	6	8	1	1	40
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	5	16	5	3	10	0	1	40
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	7	13	7	2	10	0	1	40
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	6	12	5	5	9	0	3	40
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	9	10	12	1	4	3	1	40
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	9	13	9	1	3	4	1	40

Annex 26 Apprentices Survey

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the railway sector in your country?	
Depends on occupation	0
Don't know	0
Neutral	0
Quite negative	0
Very negative	0
Quite positive	1
Very positive	2
(blank)	1
Grand Total	4

Why did you chose to undertake this apprenticeship? (tick all that apply)	
The program is suited to my job/career aspirations	1
Funding was available for the apprenticeship	1
There was a clear link to actual job opportunities	3
I was attracted to a career in the rail sector	3
Other	0

Views about pay, benefits and career opportunities. To what extent are the following factors important to you in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	4
Job security	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	4
Pension provision	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	4
Access to training and education	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	4
Opportunity for career development and promotion	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	4
International opportunities / working abroad	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	4
An employer providing additional health benefits	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	4

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to these factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall level of pay and benefits	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	4
Job security	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	4
Pension provision	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Access to training and education	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	4
Opportunity for career development and promotion	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	4
International opportunities / working abroad	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	4
An employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
An employer providing additional health benefits	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Being part of a "railway family"	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	4

Views about working hours, work organisation, health and safety and maintaining a good work/ life balance. Which of the following factors are most important in choosing an employer?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	4
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	4
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	4
A comfortable place of work	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	4

To what extent do you think the rail sector would meet your expectations in relation to the following factors?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Working hours that fit with my needs	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	4
Flexibility to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	4
A job that allows me to maintain a work-life balance	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	4
A company that promotes good health & safety standards	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	4

To what extent has your experience to date met your expectations in relation to the following factors?

	1	2	3	4	5	Doesn't apply to me	(blank)	Grand Total
Integration into the company and/or in my team?	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	4
Relationship with day-to-day manager / tutor	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	4
Relationship with other workers in the company	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	4

How would you rate the overall image of the railway sector?

Depends on occupation	0
Don't know	0
Neutral	0
Quite negative	0
Quite positive	1
Very negative	0
Very positive	2
(blank)	1
Grand Total	4

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Tick all that apply)

Males	1
Females	0
Older workers	0
Younger workers	2
All of the above	1

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector?

Improve pay	2
Improve benefits	1
Improve working hours	0
Improve the working climate / corporate culture	0
Provide a better work-life balance	1
Improve career opportunities	0
Improve external communication	0
Other	0

Would you recommend the rail sector to others considering undertaking an apprenticeship?	
No	0
Yes	3
(blank)	1
Grand Total	4

9 Country report Slovenia

9.1 Introduction

Slovenian Railways system is operated by one state owned group; Slovenian railways. The group consists of ten companies:

- Cargo transportation company (Tovorni promet, d. o. o)
- Passenger services company (Potniški promet, d. o. o)
- Infrastructure company (Infrastruktura, d. o. o.)
- Slovenian Railways (Slovenske železnice, d.o.o.)
- Towing and technique (Vleka in tehnika, d.o.o.)
- Railway Construction Company (Železniško gradbeno podjetje Ljubljana, d. d.)
- Company for the disabled (ŽIP, storitve, d. o. o.);
- FERSPED
- Transport Institute Ljubljana (Prometni inštitut Ljubljana)
- Railway printing house (Železniška tiskarna Ljubljana, d. d.)

9.1.1 Employment

Slovenian Railways group in total employs 8,069¹¹⁵ employees.

9.1.2 Working conditions

84 per cent of employees are male and only 16 per cent are female. Companies with more than 90 per cent of male workers are: infrastructure, towing and technique and railway construction. Female workers present more than half of the workforce only at Slovenian Railways company, where more administrative, office occupations are represented.

Table 9.1 Share of workers by gender

Company name	Share of workers by gender	
	Male	Female
Cargo transportation	85%	15%
Passenger services	67%	33%
Infrastructure	92%	8%
Slovenian Railways	34%	66%
Towing and technique	96%	4%
Railway Construction	95%	5%
Company for the disabled	62%	38%
FERSPED	57%	43%
Transport Institute	58%	42%
Railway printing house	38%	62%
TOTAL Group Slovenian Railways	84%	16%

Source: Slovenian Railways 31.12.2014

The majority of the employees at Slovenian Railways group is between 40 and 59 years old. Young people present only 8 per cent of the workforce.

¹¹⁵ As of 31.12.2014

Table 9.2 Age profile of workers

Company name	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 -
Cargo transportation	5%	19%	39%	37%	1%
Passenger services	5%	15%	41%	37%	1%
Infrastructure	4%	13%	40%	41%	2%
Slovenian Railways	1%	11%	30%	54%	4%
Towing and technique	5%	15%	43%	36%	1%
Railway Construction	17%	27%	24%	28%	5%
Company for the disabled	2%	8%	31%	56%	3%
FERSPED	1%	22%	32%	43%	3%
Transport Institute	4%	35%	35%	19%	8%
Railway printing house	0%	8%	38%	54%	0%
TOTAL Group Slovenian Railways	4%	15%	39%	40%	2%

Source: Slovenian Railways 31.12.2014

9.1.3 Enterprises

The biggest employers within the Slovenian Railways group are Infrastructure (2,385 or 30 per cent of employees), Towing and technique (2,105 or 26 per cent of employees) and cargo transportation (1,301 or 16 per cent of employees).

Table 9.3 Number of companies / share of all

Company name	Number of employees	Share of employees
Cargo transportation	1,301	16%
Passenger services	622	8%
Infrastructure	2,385	30%
Slovenian Railways	461	6%
Towing and technique	2,105	26%
Railway Construction	360	4%
Company for the disabled	717	9%
FERSPED	79	1%
Transport Institute	26	0%
Railway printing house	13	0%
TOTAL Group Slovenian Railways	8,069	100%

Source: Slovenian Railways 31.12.2014

9.1.4 Infrastructure

The Slovenian railway network is 1,208 km long¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁶ <http://www.slo-zeleznice.si/sl/infrastruktura/javna-zelezniska-infrastruktura/zelezniske-proge>

9.2 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

9.2.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

Slovenian Railways group is currently an attractive company in Slovenia. This is specifically due to the overall profitability of the company. As noted in one of the main Slovenian newspapers Delo¹¹⁷ in 2014 the group operated with profit (€ 14.4 million), for the third consecutive year.

In the past, during the transition period of Slovenian economy after the independence in 1991, the overall image of the company was negative. The company operated with loss, employed too many workers and operated with old technology. Since then, the company underwent restructuring process and around 22,000 workers were laid off. The technology is improving and profitability is restored. But according to one consulted stakeholder, if compared internationally, the infrastructure is still old and the company does not operate with modern PR strategies like in some other European countries¹¹⁸

9.2.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

Slovenian railways are currently an attractive employer in Slovenia. This opinion is shared by all the stakeholders consulted in the framework of the present study. The following were described as the two most attractive elements of working for Slovenian railways:

- Job security: Slovenian Railways are offering contracts for indefinite period and secure contracts to their employees.
- Pay and benefits: Pay and benefits are competitive especially for the professions where lower level of education is required (operational jobs). Employees are entitled to various supplements linked to regulated professions and difficult working conditions. Eurofound 2012 survey noted that in general extra payment compensating for bad or dangerous working conditions is more frequent in Slovenia than in other EU countries.

Based on Human resource department, the Slovenian Railways group has no problems with attracting potential employees. However, other stakeholders also noted that this current attractiveness of the company is mainly due to the weak economy and high unemployment in Slovenia after the crisis. In particular, the collapse of the Slovenian construction sector, temporary contracts and irregular payments in other sectors (e.g. transport carrier) make the rail sector attractive.

But once the economy recovers, the current advantages of the employment at Slovenian Railways could become relatively smaller. In fact, one stakeholder notes, that before the crisis the company had difficulties to recruit in the regions close to Italy, because of the proximity of a more competitive Italian labour market.

9.2.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

See information for sector.

9.2.4 Comparison with other sectors

Stakeholders noted that Slovenian railways are an attractive employer if compared to other sectors, mostly because of job security, pay and benefits associated with regulated professions.

¹¹⁷ Delo 2015, Slovenian Railways group operates with profit for the third consecutive year

¹¹⁸ Stakeholder consultations 2015

9.2.5 Examples of good practices

No specific good practice examples mentioned.

9.3 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

This section is based on what is happening within rail companies in your country. It should analyse opinion of those working within the company and identify the key employment strategies being pursued by companies.

9.3.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

Based on stakeholder consultations, working conditions and social standards of the employees are good. Workers unions are ensuring the social and economic security for workers. They regularly cooperate with the European social partners in railways.

Working conditions and social standards are agreed in the collective agreement which was revised in 2007. Most of the contracts with the employees are for indefinite period and addressed by the collective agreement.

Some stakeholders also mentioned that working conditions are improving in recent years due to better technology (e.g. ergonomics, optimisation of working processes, use of air conditioning).

9.3.1.1 Pay and conditions

The company offers competitive and secure jobs for the type of education needed to undertake the professions. The sector has no problem with retention of the employees and most of the employees expect to be employed by the company for their entire career¹¹⁹.

9.3.1.2 Company culture

No information from interviews

9.3.1.3 Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee

Relationships are good¹²⁰. Intranet is the main communication and information channel within the company. There is also an internal newsletter 'New railway' (*Nova proga*).

9.3.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

No information from interviews

9.3.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

No information from interviews

9.3.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

According to the representatives of the human resource department, Slovenian Railways currently do not have specific overall human resource strategies and measures. After years of recruitment freeze, the recruitment is now focused on replacing retired workers in operational occupations with younger staff.

The company is mainly recruiting low skill occupations (e.g. shunters/switchers and infrastructure workers). A new strategy is to offer a career path for this occupations. The strategy has been implemented since the recession¹²¹.

¹¹⁹ Stakeholder consultations 2015

¹²⁰ Stakeholder consultations 2015

¹²¹ Stakeholder consultations 2015

9.3.4.1 Employment for young people

The overall employment strategy of the group is to recruit younger workers since the majority of current workers at Slovenian Railways group are older workers. However, because of the economic climate and high number of applicants to open positions, there is no specific strategy in place to promote young employment.

According to the collective agreement for the activity of railway traffic in Slovenia¹²² young workers have specific rights: “*young workers have specific limits to working time, rest and breaks*” ... “*They are prohibited of night work, and cannot undertake heavy physical work or work overtime*”¹²³.

9.3.4.2 Employment for women

Only 16 per cent of employees are female. The collective agreement for the activity of railway traffic¹²⁴ states that women have special rights in terms of the length of annual leave, conditions for night shift working and safety working conditions. Those relate to women employees during pregnancy, childbirth and in connection with motherhood.

9.3.4.3 Employment for older workers

The majority of the employees at Slovenian Railways group are between 40 and 60 years old with 50 to 59 age group presenting 40 per cent of the employees. To reduce the effects of the crisis on employees, during the crisis the company promoted measures for early retirement.

The collective agreement for the activity of railway traffic¹²⁵ also foresees special rights for older workers defined in the law for older workers (men older than 55 years and women older than 50 years).

9.3.4.4 Employment for less skilled workers

There is no specific strategy towards less skilled workers.

9.3.4.5 Job mobility

There is no specific strategy addressing job mobility.

9.3.4.6 Recruiting and internal training

Slovenian education system does not provide graduates with skills directly relevant for employment in the railway sectors. As a result, Slovenian railways offers an extensive training course for new starters (cca. 1 year). For some occupations, employees are trained regularly (every 3 years). Trainings are followed by exams.

9.3.4.7 International cooperation

Slovenian railways regularly cooperate with the European railway sector.

9.3.5 Identify areas for job creation

Operational occupations are the main areas of current employment.

¹²² Uradni list RS, št. 95/2007 Accessed at <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=82772>

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

9.4 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

9.4.1.1 Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees

No information from interviews

9.4.1.2 Identify effective recruitment and retention measures

No information from interviews

9.4.1.3 Identify criteria of corporate culture, working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

No information from interviews

9.4.2 Examples of good practices

No information from interviews

9.5 Summary SWOT analysis

Table 9.4 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Permanent employment contracts based on the collective agreement ■ Good working conditions ■ Competitive pay and salaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relatively old technology ■ No links with education institutions – the education system does not equip students with skills necessary to perform occupations ■ Short term strategies based on yearly approved budget from the government ■ No employment and recruitment strategies
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strengthening the strategy to offer career paths within the company ■ Stronger cooperation with the education system (targeting particular schools) ■ A company PR strategy to communicate with the public and potential employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Further budget cuts and pressures to reduce salaries and benefits ■ No budget to upgrade the current technology ■ Losing the competitive edge based on salaries and contract types, once the economy recovers

Annex 27 List of sources

Title	Author and Year	Web Link (if available)
Slovenian railways internal statistics	As of 31.12.2014	
Web-site of the Slovenian railways	Accessed in July 2015	http://www.slo-zeleznice.si/sl/infrastruktura/javna-zelezniska-infrastruktura/zelezniske-proge
Slovenian Railways group operates with profit for the third consecutive year	Delo, 2015	http://www.delo.si/gospodarstvo/podjetja/slovenske-zeleznice-ze-tretje-leto-z-dobickom.html
Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia (Uradni list RS)	št. 95/2007	http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=82772

Annex 28 List of Interviewees

Name	Position	Date
Maja Lemut	HR Department	8 June 2015
Lidija Srakar	HR Department	8 June 2015
Zlatko Ratej	President of Locomotive Drivers' Union of Slovenia	9 June 2015
Franc Zupanc	President of Railway Workers' Union of Slovenia	9 June 2015
Matjaž Skutnik	President of Railway Traffic Union of Slovenia	9 June 2015

Annex 29 Employee Surveys

How positive do you feel that the general public are about the rail sector?	
Very negative	1
Negative	22
Neutral	30
Positive	21
Very positive	2
Unsure	2
(blank)	1
Grand Total	79

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	1
Depends on occupation	2
Very positive	8
Quite positive	23
Neutral	12
Quite negative	28
Very negative	3
Don't know	1
n/a	1
Grand Total	79

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	7
Quite positive	23
Neutral	26
Quite negative	18
Very negative	1
Don't know	2
n/a	2
Grand Total	79

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?

No, far lower level	9
No, lower level	23
The same level	13
Yes, a little higher	4
Yes, far higher	6
Unsure	0
Don't know	22
n/a	2
Grand Total	79

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	59
Improve benefits	25
Improve working hours	21
Provide a better work-life balance	23
Improve career opportunities	31

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	27
Quite satisfied	48
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Quite dissatisfied	1
Very dissatisfied	0
Unsure	2
n/a	1
Grand Total	79

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	8
Most days	21
From time to time	42
Never	5
Unsure	2
n/a	1
Grand Total	79

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?										
Rating	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total	
Job security	43	12	6	9	5	0	0	4	79	
A good working atmosphere	43	14	8	4	6	4	0	0	79	
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	27	23	9	9	5	2	2	2	79	
Overall level of pay and benefits	35	20	10	6	5	3	0	0	79	
Pension provision	42	14	10	5	5	1	2	0	79	
Opportunity for career development and promotion	24	19	18	5	7	4	2	0	79	
Access to training and education	25	24	16	6	1	2	5	0	79	
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	34	22	8	10	1	3	1	0	79	
My employer providing additional health benefits	30	21	13	7	4	3	1	0	79	
International opportunities / working abroad	9	12	13	10	15	6	10	4	79	

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	15	50	4	10	0	0	0	79
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	15	46	7	8	2	0	1	79
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	25	0	7	43	2	1	1	79

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	17	34	17	8	2	0	1	79
Benefits	17	28	19	11	1	1	2	79
Working hours	10	33	21	11	1	0	3	79
Work-life balance	7	39	18	9	2	2	2	79
Career development opportunities	7	24	24	20	0	2	2	79

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	9	33	29	5	1	0	2	79

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	28	0	1	48	0	0	2	79
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	20	42	6	10	0	1	0	79
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	13	48	0	11	0	5	2	79
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	14	43	0	14	0	7	1	79
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	11	36	0	12	0	18	2	79
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	11	32	0	22	0	12	2	79
Overall, My workload suits me	14	45	0	13	0	5	2	79

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	None of the above	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	13	40	9	8	2	7	0	79
There is a sense of a "railway family"	11	44	9	3	1	10	1	79
My commitment to the company is very high	17	47	5	0	1	5	4	79
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people, older workers, disabled workers)	10	39	10	5	4	10	1	79

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	None of the above	(blank)	Grand Total
from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds								
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	5	29	18	3	4	16	4	79
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	11	40	10	2	3	9	4	79
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of "community"	8	31	13	4	5	12	6	79
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	6	33	11	3	6	14	6	79

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	23	39	1	11	2	2	1	79
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	27	42	4	4	0	1	1	79
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	21	39	7	6	3	1	2	79
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	15	44	9	5	2	3	1	79
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	16	43	7	4	2	6	1	79

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	10	41	9	15	2	1	1	79
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	7	31	13	18	4	3	3	79
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	13	28	14	14	4	4	2	79

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	12	29	12	14	6	4	2	79
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	14	35	6	11	4	6	3	79
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	14	35	8	9	4	7	2	79

10 Country report – Spain

10.1 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

The liberalisation of the rail sector, in which a clear separation between the area of infrastructure and operations and the gradual opening of the rail system to competition in freight, has influenced a change in the sector.

The two major problems being faced by the sector are connected to:

- The employees' age average, which at 54 years old, is one of the highest in Europe; and
- The ongoing restructuring process taking place in the company since 2006. This has led to a situation where personnel shortages and recruiting processes are occurring in parallel.

All interviewees agreed that the current situation has been caused mainly because of political reasons and only in a few minor cases due to technological developments. From their point of view, shortages would not be needed if the government would have been more supportive with the public rail sector. In their view, there has been a lack of anticipation to the changes needed and lack of willingness to tackle the problems, probably due to political interests.

The company has recruited new and younger employees to overcome the personnel shortages and to rejuvenate the company. However, the number of new comers is considerably lower than the number of redundancies made since 2006. The lack of employees has had a direct impact in the quality of the service provided, in particular interviewees highlighted the increasing number of customers' claims in some stations.

Over the last years, several business areas have been outsourced to private companies (i.e. publicity, cleaning and on-board services...). Employees who formerly belong to Renfe have been transferred to private companies and many of them have lost their jobs after a short period.

A restructuring process is being discussed in 2015 between Renfe and employees' representatives. The two main objectives of this process are:

- Agreeing fair early retirement packages; employees subjected to this scheme have not reached yet the maximum number of years that would entitle them to a full pension; and
- To receive and to ensure good level conditions for the new comers.

Moreover, employees' representatives have presented additional proposals during the negotiation process, including the need of specific training for certain positions and the reduction of working hours from 40 to 36 hours a week. The later, would allow generating additional jobs.

Ultimately, the employees' representatives pursue to improve the management lack of anticipation to problems in the last years to avoid similar situations in the future.

10.2 External trends influencing recruitment and retention

Most of the interviewees agreed that the economic crisis has not been the main problem for the sector. While the traffic of passengers has increased over the last years, mainly due to the expansion of the high speed rail network in Spain, the rail freight business has decreased its benefits in 50%. In one of the interviewees' view, this has not been caused by the crisis, but by the ineffective management of the company over the last years. The liberalization of this part of the sector would not have had such a bad effect if the management had anticipated the changes needed.

The outsourcing tendency followed by the company in the last years has led to the privatization of certain business areas (i.e.: cleaning services, advertisement...) with the aim to reduce public debt by downsizing public companies.

One of the requests from the employees' representatives during the current negotiation process was to reincorporate in the company those services which had been externalized and to carefully plan a new recruitment process to anticipate the gaps that will result from the early retirement.

A concrete example of areas where workload could be brought back were given by the interviewees. For instance, when a new vehicle is bought by the company, its maintenance is shared by the building company and Renfe while it could be done entirely by Renfe.

Ultimately, interviewees highlighted the lack of agreement between the different company committees and companies. As a public company, every decision needs to be approved by the relevant Ministry and subject to the national budget.

10.3 Skills shortages

While in the past, there were issues to fulfill some occupations, particularly those which required some specific qualification (i.e.: engineers, engine drivers, sales and maintenance), the current scenario is completely different, where well trained young people is available and seeking for a job.

In relation to this, one of the interviewees mentioned the existence of vocational training schools where students are being trained, sometimes by staff from Renfe, in areas which are relevant for the sector. The employees' representatives has proposed the management of the company to bear these schools in mind for future recruitment processes. These resources might be useful in the future and the company should avoid that they are taken by competitors.

10.4 Staff turnover

The staff turnover is not considered a particular issue for the sector. In fact, the company has never had the need to implement retention policies as employees want to stay. The salary level and job security could be considered as retention aspects themselves.

10.5 How attractive are rail companies in the country?

Despite the restructuring process and the recent structural reforms of the Spanish labour market, the rail sector remains very attractive for job seekers for two main reasons:

1. The expansion of the high speed network (AVE) infrastructure and the construction of railway vehicles linked to it, as well as the increasing use of this line; and
2. The job stability offered by the sector; a job in the public sector is very attractive in terms of working conditions and stability, especially in the Spanish unstable labour market scenario.

Despite the wage freeze imposed by the company over the last six years and the decrease of job security offered by the company, all the interviewees believe that the sector is still well considered among employees and job seekers.

10.6 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

The current economic situation of the country and the restructuring process the company has undertaken in the last years have had an impact in the employees perception of what are the most and least attractive aspects of working in the rail sector. The stability offered by the public sector and the salary have always been the most attractive elements of the sector,

and so it remains. As mentioned by one of the interviewees, given the high unemployment levels in the country, the mere fact of having a job has become something to be grateful of.

Another element which has gained great importance in the recent years is the expansion and development of the AVE. Being the longest high speed network in Europe and the second in the world, it is a sector in full development which can offer many career opportunities.

In terms of the least attractive elements of the sector, it very much depends on the business area. For instance, there are certain positions subjected to work shifts, which can result less attractive for some people for the implications it might have in work-life balance.

10.6.1 Pay and conditions

The interviewees agreed that despite the wage freeze from the last years, the salary level can still be considered as good. Although the new comers start with more precarious conditions, for instance, lower salaries and temporary contracts, there is still some assurance that they will become permanent workers with improved conditions in the longer term.

In comparison with competitors, Renfe offers the highest salaries in the sector, however when it comes to competitiveness, other companies win, particularly in the rail freight area. Competitors face lower cost levels, partly because of the lower salaries, which results in more competitive prices to customers.

The welfare package offered by the company is not particularly attractive. Employees are not offered a medical or accident insurance for them and their families or any other type of allowances. The only benefit offered is the possibility of free transportation in the use of certain rail lines and a percentage discount in the high speed and long distance networks.

By collective agreement, the company must allocate some budget to social purposes. In particular, the company launches regular preventative campaigns on certain diseases (i.e.: cancer, flu...) and gives financial aid packages to help employees palliating expenses related to specific diseases, i.e.: financial help to buy glasses or dental prosthesis.

Interviewees also confirmed that there is an important union representation in the company, which is perceived very positively by the employees, making them feel protected. One of the interviewees has flagged up the collective bargaining in the railway sector is well known and has always been taken as an example to follow by other sectors. Trade unions have always managed to get their main objectives and pursue the workers' rights thoroughly.

10.6.2 Company culture

All interviewees agreed that workers personal commitment with the company is low. With all the latest restructuring processes that took place, employees do no longer have the safe and proud feeling of belonging to the company. Although the sector offers the stability that the private sector cannot offer nowadays, the employees' perception has changed.

The company has made several attempts to launch internal campaigns to make employees feel identified with the company values. However, all interviewees noted that from the point of view of the workers, the approach followed by the company was not effective and it did not have the effect expected. In their view, there are not promotion policies or other specific policies in place (i.e.: youth, old workers...) which could play an important role in increasing the workers' personal commitment and hence in their motivation.

The company has not shown special interest in getting their workers' views to improve the situation. Evaluation of employees' satisfaction is not an ongoing procedure in the company, in fact it has rarely been tested by the management team.

Moreover, the ongoing restructuring process that the company has undertaken since 2006 and the decentralization of the company have had an impact on the staff's expectations to

complete their entire career in the railway sector. The strong feeling of belonging to the 'railway family' that employees used to have does not longer exist.

10.6.3 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

The company has not put in place specific policies to help balancing work-life, nor in the case of older workers not in the case of women or young people. For instance, it has been noticed that the increasing average age of workers has had an impact in the absence average for sickness, however, the company has taken any specific measures to help overcome this issue (i.e.: reducing working hours)

In the case of working mothers, there are no special agreements or forms of 'family-friendly' initiatives implemented in the company, apart from the ones stablished by law (i.e.: reducing working hours, breastfeeding leave...).

Annex 30 Employee Surveys

How would you rate the overall image of employment in the rail sector in your country?	
Depends on company	0
Depends on occupation	0
Very positive	3
Quite positive	16
Neutral	19
Quite negative	11
Very negative	3
Don't know	5
n/a	4
Grand Total	61

How would you rate the overall image of your company compared to other rail companies in the sector?	
Very positive	4
Quite positive	18
Neutral	15
Quite negative	10
Very negative	1
Don't know	8
n/a	5
Grand Total	61

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be different in a different sector?	
No, far lower level	6
No, lower level	5
The same level	19
Yes, a little higher	2
Yes, far higher	5
Unsure	0
Don't know	19
n/a	5
Grand Total	61

What would need to be done to increase the attractiveness of the sector? (tick all that apply)

Improve pay	34
Improve benefits	37
Improve working hours	30
Provide a better work-life balance	33
Improve career opportunities	37

How satisfied are you with being employed in the rail sector?

Very satisfied	12
Quite satisfied	29
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Quite dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	0
Unsure	12
n/a	5
Grand Total	61

In a typical week, how often do you feel too much work-related pressure?

Every day	5
Most days	9
From time to time	33
Never	7
Unsure	1
n/a	6
Grand Total	61

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?

	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
Job security	43	12	3	1	0	0	0	2	61
A good working atmosphere	19	30	8	2	0	0	0	2	61
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	19	21	17	2	2	0	0	0	61
Overall level of pay and benefits	31	17	10	2	0	0	0	1	61
Pension provision	18	15	11	6	2	3	4	2	61
Opportunity for career development and promotion	24	14	7	7	6	0	1	2	61
Access to training and education	18	16	15	4	5	0	1	2	61

To what extent are the following factors important to you in your career?									
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know	N/A	(blank)	Grand Total
My employer providing additional social benefits (welfare)	19	15	8	8	5	2	2	2	61
My employer providing additional health benefits	16	18	10	3	3	2	5	4	61
International opportunities / working abroad	9	1	11	7	26	0	5	2	61

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my current role	10	17	9	6	0	0	19	61
Based on my experience I would recommend my company as an employers to friends and family	22	30	8	0	0	0	1	61
I am proud to work for my company and I speak willingly about it to family and friends	15	0	22	23	0	0	1	61

How attractive do you think the sector is for job seekers?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No more or less attractive than other sectors	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Unsure	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	15	26	10	2	2	0	6	61
Benefits	5	23	14	7	3	2	7	61
Working hours	4	26	12	8	5	0	6	61
Work-life balance	5	24	19	7	3	0	3	61
Career development opportunities	3	15	20	10	8	0	5	61
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	1	21	20	6	6	0	7	61

Views about working hours								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My working hours suit me	12	0	20	24	0	0	5	61
The job provides me with the flexibility I need to re-organise my working time if my circumstances change	9	18	14	15	0	0	5	61
The balance between my personal and professional life suits me	10	25	0	8	0	15	3	61
Safety in the workplace is taken seriously (employer promotes specific activities / events / training on the topic)	6	11	0	20	0	19	5	61
The job promotes specific health and safety standards for women	4	16	0	14	0	23	4	61
The company provides a comfortable workplace beyond measures required due to sector rules and regulations	4	13	24	16	0	0	4	61
Overall, My workload suits me	4	21	0	18	0	13	5	61

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company is an organisation that cares about employee welfare	1	5	31	13	7	0	4	61
There is a sense of a "railway family"	1	10	24	17	4	0	5	61
My commitment to the company is very high	9	34	8	3	2	0	5	61
The company actively supports a diverse range of employees (for example: female, young people, older workers, disabled workers) from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds	1	3	26	13	14	0	4	61
There is a culture of sharing ideas as well as discussing and implementing new approaches in the company	4	5	20	13	11	0	8	61
The company is committed to communicating a positive image of the rail sector	5	17	14	9	9	1	6	61

Perceptions regarding company culture and support within the enterprise								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
The company has promoted activities to create a stronger sense of “community”	3	7	23	10	13	0	5	61
The company is trying to create a more modern approach to railway job	4	15	20	8	8	0	6	61

Employee views on relationships with colleagues								
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Immediate colleagues are supportive of each other	8	21	0	11	0	15	6	61
There is a good working atmosphere with my colleagues	6	27	0	13	0	10	5	61
Immediate colleagues are motivated and want to do a good job	5	21	0	8	0	11	16	61
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about working for the company	6	9	0	12	0	18	16	61
Immediate colleagues are enthusiastic about the sector	3	13	0	9	0	20	16	61

Employee views on relationships with day-to-day managers								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
My manager is supportive of my current role and personal matters	2	3	0	20	0	24	12	61
My manager is supportive of my long term career goals, including appropriate life-long learning and training	1	5	0	27	0	22	6	61
I am satisfied with the support my manager provides me	2	9	0	26	0	17	7	61
The attitude of my manager towards me and the team is supportive	1	12	0	27	0	14	7	61
My manager has a positive attitude / is enthusiastic about the company	2	18	0	13	0	21	7	61
My manager is enthusiastic about the sector	4	11	0	15	0	24	7	61

11 Country report – Sweden

11.1 Introduction

The Swedish railway sector can be divided into two main sub sectors: railway operations (i.e. rail transport for passengers and cargo) and rail infrastructure¹²⁶.

In the railway operations sector there are two main firms - SJ AB (passenger transport) and Green Cargo (cargo transport). Both of these were created when the government agency (Statens Järnvägar, SJ), was split into separate and independent companies in 2001. The companies are completely state-owned and operate all over Sweden.

Since the deregulation of the rail market, several large firms have entered the Swedish railway operations market. For example, the private company Transdev, formerly known as Veolia, runs several train lines across Sweden. Other operators include Abellio, Arriva, DSB, Keolis, MTR, Stockholmståg and Tågkompaniet.

Notably, SJ has in recent years lost some of its previous exclusive rights on certain railway lines between major cities such as Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. This has made the Swedish railway market more attractive for competition.

In terms of rail infrastructure, the Swedish Transport Administration (Trafikverket) is the responsible government authority. The Swedish Transport Administration was formed in 2010 following a merger of a number of public transport agencies, including the Swedish Rail Administration (Banverket).

The railway production operations on the Swedish railway system are open to external competition, and a number of companies exists on the market including Infranord AB (state owned), VR Track (publicly owned by the Finnish state), Strukton Rail AB (privately owned), and Svensk Järnvägsteknik AB (privately owned).

11.2 Employment trends

Below we present a brief analysis of employment trends in three of the largest rail companies.

Table 11.1 Employment trends in rail companies (FTEs)

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
SJ	4,541	4,953	4,299	4,041	4,262
Green Cargo	2,002	2,122	-	-	-
Infranord	2,122	2,577	2,682	2,754	-

Source: http://www.sj.se/content/1/c6/17/66/09/SJ_Ars-och-hallbarhetsredovisning%202014.pdf; http://www.greencargo.com/globalassets/documents/hallbar-utveckling/resultat-och-rapporter/qc_2014_sv_30-mars_final.pdf; http://www.infranord.se/Documents/Infranord_AR_2014.pdf

The table above shows a slightly mixed picture with employment increasing or remaining fairly stable up until 2013. From 2013 there has been a relatively significant fall in employment across all three companies, particularly in Infranord and SJ.

In terms of the workforce composition, the overwhelming majority of workers at Green Cargo and Infranord are men, accounting for 87 per cent and 92 per cent of the workforce respectively. The situation is slightly different at SJ where around 40 per cent of the employees are women.

¹²⁶ Infrastructure has been separated from operations since 1988. It was initially handled by Banverket, a public sector agency.

The age structure is a major challenge for many companies within the rail sector. At Green Cargo, for example, 59 per cent of the workforce is aged 50 years or older. The percentage of employees under the age of 30 years was 8 per cent in 2014. Similarly, at Infranord the percentage of employees over 50 years is 55 per cent, whilst only 20 per cent is aged 40 years or younger.

11.3 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

This section assesses both image and attractiveness at individual company and sectoral level.

11.3.1 How attractive are the rail companies in Sweden?

Based on employer ranking surveys, the Swedish Transport Administration, SJ and, to a lesser extent, Green Cargo appear to be the most attractive employers within the rail sector in Sweden. All feature or have featured in the top 100 most attractive employers across a number of ranking surveys conducted by Universum¹²⁷ (see table below). The assessment is based on three criteria:

- **Internal identity:** how well employees believe their employers deliver in terms of reputation and image, job characteristics, people and culture as well as compensation and the opportunity to advance.
- **Satisfaction/ Recommendation:** how satisfied employees are holistically, and how likely they are to recommend to the employer to friends.
- **Loyalty:** how likely employees are to remain with their current employer.

Table 11.2 Employer ranking surveys

Employees 2014 (2013)	The Swedish Transport Administration	SJ	Green Cargo
Large employers (at least 250 employees)	63 (-)	-	-
Professionals 2014 (2013)	The Swedish Transport Administration	SJ	Green Cargo
Engineering	23 (26)	-	-
IT	67 (43)	94 (68)	-
Social sciences/humanities	65 (-)	-	-
Students 2015 (2014)	The Swedish Transport Administration	SJ	Green Cargo
BSc Engineering	25 (22)	58 (65)	- (90 ¹²⁸)
MSc Engineering	38 (28)	68 (101)	-
IT	-	78 (73)	-
Social sciences/humanities	59 (83)	- (74)	-

¹²⁷ <http://universumglobal.com/rankings/sweden/>

¹²⁸ 2013

Source: ICF analysis based on Universum Global employer rankings; NB: for the employer rankings by the employees at least 30 employees have to complete the survey.

Both SJ and Green Cargo are state-owned and were part of the same government agency (Statens Järnvägar, SJ) until 2001. They both have a strong and recognisable brand. The fact that SJ AB shares the name of its precursor has both positive and negative implications. With regards to the former it means that it benefits from a brand that has been established for several decades and that is recognised by the vast majority of the Swedish population. However, as SJ used to have a monopoly on railway operations it also means that SJ AB implicitly gets the blame for many of the problems occurring in the railway traffic, even if it is caused by other railway operators.

None of the companies interviewed report any particular difficulties in recruiting (perhaps with the exception of train drivers) which is indicative of the attractiveness of the rail companies. In fact, SJ and its employees suggest that job opportunities are heavily oversubscribed.

11.3.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

The interviews undertaken reveal that railway companies, particularly the state-owned companies, are generally considered, by job seekers and employees, to be stable and secure employers.

Most jobs within the sector require an upper secondary education as a minimum. Train drivers also have to complete a 44 week compulsory basic train driver training at the higher education level before being considered for employment (of which 20 weeks represents work-based training at a railway operator)¹²⁹. It is also a requirement to have proven knowledge of the Swedish language (and English for train managers). Having the requisite language skills can be a particularly a problem for prospective workers that do not have Swedish as their mother tongue.

Both upper secondary education and higher education are provided for free in Sweden. Students can apply for student grants and loans to cover cost of living expenses during their studies. The compulsory basic train driver training has been heavily oversubscribed in recent years, making it very difficult to get admitted to the training. However, since 2015 students have been requested to pay for their own medical/ psychological tests which are required for admission (together these amount to about 8,000 SEK or around 860 EUR). This has resulted in a sharp drop in applicants. For example, at Järnvägsskolan in Ängelholm, one of the main training providers, the number of applicants fell from 500 to 50 in 2015¹³⁰. Applicants include a wide variety of people, including older people that have had a career in other sectors previously.

Job opportunities are advertised on the company websites, but the railway companies also make extensive use of the Swedish Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen). Careers within the rail sector are also promoted at job and higher education fairs.

11.3.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

The companies and employees interviewed report that the rail sector is an attractive sector, which offers stable and secure employment as well as relatively good pay and conditions.

As such, there are generally no difficulties in recruiting for the sector (although the supply of train drivers is dependent on the number of training places available). The sector also have a very low staff turnover rate which in part reflect the worker satisfaction within the sector.

The attractiveness of the rail sector is particularly strong on the passenger traffic side, especially for drivers. Infrastructure work is, according to the interviewees, also generally

¹²⁹ The training was, until 2015, 60 weeks long, including 20 weeks work-based training.

¹³⁰ <http://www.svt.se/nyheter/regionalt/helsingborg/90-farre-sokande-till-lokforarutbildning>

considered to be attractive, although perhaps less so than passenger traffic. This is in part due to the physical nature of the job, but also a result of the fact that this type of work is less well-known than passenger traffic work. As such, there may be a greater need to promote infrastructure work.

Since the mid-1990s the rail sector in Sweden has experienced very strong growth in passenger traffic compared to other modes¹³¹. By European standards, Sweden also has significant cargo traffic, accounting for 35 per cent of land based transport. This can be compared to an EU average of 17 per cent¹³².

In order to improve the efficiency and continue the growth of the sector, the Swedish government has pledged to invest 745 million SEK in railway maintenance during 2015 and 1.87 billion SEK annually from 2016¹³³. This is significantly higher than in previous years and further highlights the need to promote employment within the rail infrastructure sector.

Despite the growth of, and continued investment in, the rail sector there are some suggestions from the trade unions that the attractiveness of the sector is waning. Part of the reason for this is the increasing incidences of violence and threat (verbal and physical), as well as the intensification of the work due to efforts to streamline and optimise the rail companies.

11.3.4 Comparison with other sectors

Generally, the rail sector (both operations and infrastructure) is considered to have slightly better or comparable pay and conditions relative to other similar sectors. For example, according to the employer organisation Almega, the rail sector is more attractive to prospective employees than the urban public transport sector. Similarly, one of the employees (a train manager) interviewed suggested that the pay and conditions in the rail sector are much better than those that he had when working in the aviation sector. This was based on his own experience of working in the aviation sector.

11.4 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

This section is based on what is happening within rail companies and analyses the opinion of those working within the company and identify the key employment strategies being pursued by rail companies.

11.4.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

Working conditions and social standards in the rail sector are determined through collective bargaining.

There are two main national sectoral collective agreements in place for the rail sector – one for railway operations (Spårtrafikavtalet) and one for rail infrastructure (Branschavtal Järnvägsinfrastruktur). These set the minimum employment standards for almost all workers in the sector.

The railway operations agreement covers around 19,000 workers including train drivers, conductors/ train managers and maintenance staff. The employers covered include SJ, MTR, Green Cargo, Transdev, Stockholmståg, BK-tåg, Tågkompaniet and Roslagståg.

The rail infrastructure agreement covers workers and companies engaged in rail infrastructure projects including redesign, construction, operation and maintenance, service and repair of railways, tramways and subways and associated operations. Examples of

¹³¹ European Commission (2014), Fourth report on monitoring development of the rail market

¹³² Trafikanalys (2012), Godstransporter i Sverige
http://trafa.se/PageDocuments/Rapport_2012_7_Godstransporter_i_Sverige.pdf

¹³³ <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2015/04/framtidsinvesteringar-for-fler-jobb-och-ett-mer-klimatsmart-samhalle/>

activities covered are those covered by the so-called BEST occupations (rail, electrical, signalling and telecommunications). The agreement has been signed by the Swedish Union for Service and Communications Employees (SEKO), the Union of Civil Servants (Fackförbundet ST), the SACO Transport and Railway Association (Saco-förbundet Trafik och Järnväg – TJ), the Swedish Association of Graduate Engineers (Sveriges Ingenjörer) and the Swedish Association for Managers (Ledarna). Initially, the agreement only covered Infranord.

Elements covered in the both the national sector and local (operation specific) agreements include the following:

- Pay
- Working hours
- Overtime
- Additional hours
- Travelling time allowance, etc.
- Compensation for unsocial and on-call hours
- Holidays
- Sick pay, etc.
- Parental leave
- Leave
- Notice of termination

Notably, there are a number of important differences between the two national agreements. For example, the interviewees suggested that the national railway operations agreement plays a less important role in determining the working conditions and social standards. Consequently, company level agreements have a much more significant impact on working conditions and social standards in the railway operations sub-sector. This also means that there is some variation of working conditions and social standards within the sector (although the conditions cannot be any worse than those specified in the national sectoral agreement). Notably, the importance of company level agreements have increased in recent years.

By contrast, in the rail infrastructure sector the company level agreements has a less significant role in terms of determining working conditions and social standards, the main provisions are determined at the national sectoral level. This means that there is less scope for variation in the terms and conditions of employment within this sub-sector, compared to the railway operations sub-sector.

Workers that are hired temporarily through recruitment agencies are either covered by a special agreement for recruitment agencies (Bemanningsavtalet) or the applicable national sectoral collective agreement. One of the reasons for introducing a collective agreement for temporary workers in 2000 was to protect the workers that are hired through recruitment agencies, but also to reduce the risk of competition in wage and other employment conditions between different groups in the workplace, thus reducing the risk of so-called social dumping. Basically, the agreement is there to prevent workers from being replaced with contracted staff that are cheaper as a result of lower pay and worse conditions.

11.4.1.1 Pay and conditions

The pay and conditions within the rail sector are generally considered to be good. The pay and conditions for train drivers have historically been, and continue to be, higher than for other staff in the rail sector. To a considerable extent, this reflects the limited supply of train drivers as well as the training required.

The pay and conditions for on-board staff and maintenance staff is considered to be relatively good compared to many other service occupations. The progression on the pay scale is also relatively steep, which is not the case in other similar service occupations. As a consequence, very few railway operation staff leave the sector.

According to the trade unions and employees interviewed, pay and working hours are generally considered as the most important areas of the collective agreements.

There has been a number of changes to the pay and conditions in recent years. For example, many workers have had their pension age increased to 65 years (for some of the older workers it remains at 60 years). Many workers have also had their annual leave reduced. This has made the working conditions less favourable relative to other sectors and may also have affected the attractiveness of the sector.

The growing number of potential employers has also resulted in increasing variation of pay – in some cases as much as 20 per cent¹³⁴.

11.4.1.2 *Company culture*

The culture within the sector has changed since the introduction of competition. For example, as more companies has entered the market, the workers have generally become less loyal towards their employer (although not all employers). Nevertheless, most workers tend to stay within the sector but are much more likely to shift employers.

In the rail infrastructure sector, competitive tendering has resulted in more contract based work. This has changed the culture within the sector and has in some cases led to frustration among staff as they feel that the work has become overly bureaucratic.

“Previously, we went through the entire gear when we were out on an audit. All deficiencies were corrected at once while we were there. Now a purchase order is required for us to remedy some faults - and purchase orders are not always issued. We have got a climate where you just do exactly what they get paid for.”¹³⁵

A recent report¹³⁶ also suggests that the company culture has also been negatively affected by the sense of unpredictability felt by employees and, to some extent, the negative expectations regarding the future, including in terms of the quality of the vehicles and service, as well as the financial situation of the companies operating in the sector. For several staff much energy is spent dealing with uncertainty and insecurity instead of focusing on future goals and tasks. These feelings are underpinned by the feeling of not having knowledge of, and not being active in the change process. The findings from this report are, however, a few years old and a number of initiatives have been introduced in the last few years to improve the company culture and communication between management and staff (see next sub-section).

11.4.1.3 *Relationships – management to employee & employee to employee*

A recent report¹³⁷ concluded that a lack of information and communication between the management and the employees has had a negative influence on employees' commitment. In some cases, it appears that there is barrier between the management and employees. Employees feel sidelined and neglected both as human beings and as workers. This highlights the problems around communication as well as the lack of forums for the exchange of information.

¹³⁴ Lindgren Strömbäck, K. (2011) 'Avregleringen har gett sämre anställningsvillkor', in Sekotdningen, nr 4

¹³⁵ <http://arbetet.se/2015/04/07/banarbetare-skeptiska-till-satsningen-pa-jarnvagsunderhall/>

¹³⁶ Nilsson, T. (2008) 'Det nya jämvägsarbetet - En grupp anställdas erfarenheter av och tankar omkring bolagisering inom järnvägen'

¹³⁷ Ibid.

The issues relating to communication between the management and employees have been recognised and measures have also been put in place at some of the workplaces. Such measures include annual employee surveys (such as Infrapulsen), career development meetings and workplace meetings.

Moreover, since the start of 2013, so-called dialogue meetings have become an important element of the internal communications at SJ. The dialogue sessions follow a carefully developed methodology that supports learning and strengthens the company culture. Each meeting gathers around 100-150 employees from different occupations and divisions of the company. The aim is to discuss, in small groups, important current issues and create a greater understanding of SJ as a whole, including its future challenges, as well as listening to and learning from each other. The participants are often given tasks to contribute to the development by SJ. Around six to seven dialogue meetings take place every year. The meetings have resulted in several suggestions for improvement, and thus contributed to the company business plan.

However, not all of the measures being used are considered to be effective in engaging with the employees. For example, some workers report the use of the intranet as a channel for internal communication can be very ineffective as the employees are not given the time an opportunity to review the information on the intranet.

The relationships and communication between employees have also changed in the last few years. This is partly a result of the natural changes occurring due to retirements but also a result of the increasing use of temporary staff (particularly among conductors/ train managers and infrastructure workers). The workers and trade unions report that there is a certain level of mistrust towards temporary staff (in terms of their commitment and their competences). The use of temporary staff is also seen as a burden by other workers. They feel that more time is being used to guide and supervise – benefit of having worked together for a long time is that you know what your individual roles.

11.4.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

There have been several changes in the Swedish rail sector over the last few decades, including, most notably, the deregulation of the rail sector. According to a recent study¹³⁸, these changes have resulted in reduced job security, reduced influence, changing policies against a more authoritarian leadership, lack of information, more rumours and greater unpredictability regarding the future work situation, and fragmentation in relation to both their work and customers. Whilst this study is a few years old, many of the challenges have been confirmed by the interviewees for this study (particularly the trade unions). For example, the trade unions suggested that the deregulation of the sector has resulted cost cutting measures and an intensification of the work, which has affected the enjoyment among the workers. Similarly, the employers admitted that the changes have created worry and insecurity among workers. Nevertheless, the employer side also suggested that the opening up of the railway market has provided employees with more employment opportunities and has intensified the competition for labour.

The structural changes have been particularly noticeable for the state-owned companies which have gone from a monopolistic position to a deregulated market. With increased competition in the market, the demands for productivity has increased and as other operators have won contracts the state-owned companies have had to undergo significant restructuring in recent years – often resulting in significant job losses. For example, in the autumn 2013, Green Cargo initiated an extensive efficiency programme, which aims to establish a new production model and co-localisation of supporting activities. It is expected that the efficiency programme will allow Green Cargo to operate with about 100 fewer

¹³⁸ Ibid.

locomotives and about 600 fewer employees than in 2013¹³⁹. Similarly, at Infranord, restructuring measures have resulted in over 500 employees being made redundant.

However, as the sector is growing, workers that have been made redundant do not generally have any problems getting a job within the sector. This is particularly true for drivers, which has a somewhat inelastic supply of labour.

The structural changes in the rail sector has coincided with the retirement of a significant number of workers, particularly drivers but also other on-board staff.

11.4.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

Given the age profile of the current workforce, there will continue to be a need for workers across a range of occupations, but particularly qualified drivers.

In terms of future skills requirements, there is, just like in many other sectors, a growing trend towards greater automisation and digitalisation. Within the rail infrastructure sector, there will continue to be a need for technicians and engineers in the BEST occupations. In terms of white collar workers, and particularly for more senior positions, there can in some instances be a lack of applicants/ workers with specific rail sector experience. This is, however, not always a negative thing as experience from other sectors may bring new perspectives into the sector.

11.4.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

The main strategies being pursued by the railway companies interviewed are those of restructuring as described above. In recent years, the railway companies have also had to deal with a growing number of retirements. This trend is likely to continue given the age structure of the employees. Indeed, despite a large number of retirements in recent years, the percentage of employees over 50 years old remains relatively high at 59 per cent at Cargo and 55 per cent at Infranord.

The measures introduced to deal with the large number of retirements has been to retain the retirees on an hourly basis. This has particularly been used by Green Cargo but also by SJ. Using retirees in this way is a useful short to medium-term measure to deal with temporary skills shortages and provide a more flexible workforce.

There has also been an increased use of other staff employed on an hourly basis. However, it should be said that the use of temporary staff is still relatively low compared to other sectors. Indeed, according to the employer organisation Almega, only 4 per cent employees are employed on hourly contracts. At SJ, and relating to on-board staff (excl. drivers) the share of temporary staff is around 7 per cent. The use of temporary workers is partly to provide the employers with a degree of flexibility in terms of their overall workforce, but also a result of working time rules which means that it is difficult to maximise the use of the permanent staff, thus resulting in the need for temporary staff to fill the gaps. One employer also suggested that the use of temporary staff is used to provide greater diversity – particularly in terms of the age structure.

Given the significant changes within the sector and relative ease of finding staff there are no real extensive HR strategies being pursued in terms of workforce planning. In fact, according to one of the trade union representatives suggested that workforce planning is no longer as comprehensive as previously. This to a considerable extent a result of the increasing competition in the rail market which makes it difficult to plan beyond the length of the contracts that are already in place.

In terms of the manning of the trains there has been a number of changes in recent years. Not only has there been a reduction of the staff on-board, but the tasks that they undertake

¹³⁹ http://www.greencargo.com/globalassets/documents/hallbar-utveckling/resultat-och-rapporter/gc_2014_sv_30-mars_final.pdf

have also changed. There is now a much greater focus on customer service, including catering and customer information. There is also a trend towards greater digitalisation which means that less staff are required on-board. Reduced manning of the trains is a factor that contributes to a more pressured and precarious work situation. This has also made it more difficult to reduce the effects of stress at work, and to learn something new through the experiences of others¹⁴⁰.

11.4.4.1 Employment for specific groups (young people, women, older workers, less skilled workers)

There are no major initiatives to recruit workers from specific target groups, although the working clothes for women have been adapted in recent years to promote female employment

Apprenticeships/ internships are generally not pursued by the railway companies.

11.4.4.2 Job mobility

Job mobility in the rail sector is relatively low compared to other sectors. This is particularly true for train drivers.

Leaving your job to work in a different sector is likely to have significant impacts on pay and conditions. As pay and other benefits are determined on the basis of the number of years in service, it is unlikely that workers would get similar pay and conditions at an employer outside the sector and/ or covered by a different collective agreement.

According to the latest annual report by SJ and Green Cargo, the staff turnover rate was 6.8 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively.

11.4.4.3 Recruiting and internal training

Following the deregulation of the rail sector, much of the internal training provision has disappeared. For example, SJ used to train all the drivers internally, however, given the increased competition for train drivers this is no longer seen as a good use of resources.

The externalisation of the training provision has resulted in a separation between the supply of training places and the demand for drivers. Consequently, it is much harder for railway companies to influence, and plan for, the future supply of drivers. Indeed, over the last few years there has been complaints that there is not a sufficient number of train drivers graduating from the training programmes.

Railway companies do however work closely with the relevant educational institutions, not least by offering practical training places for those undertaking the training.

The situation for other on-board staff is different. For example, for train managers/ conductors there are no real demands for specific competences, apart from an upper secondary school education and good knowledge of Swedish and English. Internal training is provided for new employees. The internal training for new starters is, however, not as extensive as it used to be. The internal training used to cover three months theoretical training and three months practical training. Currently, only four weeks training is provided to new recruits. This, combined with the reduction in on-board staff, has made it particularly challenging for new recruits.

Most railway companies provide opportunities for continuous skills development and training. However, the focus is very much on improving the safety of the employees and customers, including additional certificates for specific trains or new safety requirements. Many of these are compulsory and determined by the Swedish Transport Agency.

¹⁴⁰ Nilsson, T. (2008) *'Det nya järnvägsarbetet - En grupp anställdas erfarenheter av och tankar omkring bolagisering inom järnvägen'*

In terms of recruiting, the railways companies mainly promote careers within the sector at labour market days/ job fairs associated with higher education institutions, vocational schools and colleges that provide rail sector related courses/ degrees.

11.4.4.4 Identify areas for job creation

The Swedish Government has over the last few years pledged and spent additional money on rail infrastructure, which according to one of the interviewees is said to be 15 years behind where it needs to be. However, the workers and the trade unions do not think that this will have a large impact on the sector. They claim that the way the rail infrastructure sector is organised will mean that only a small proportion of the additional expenditure will result in rail infrastructure improvements and additional job creation.

The need for qualified drivers will be significant for many years ahead. The rail sector will require at least 200 new drivers. Notably, 59 per cent of all drivers (that were employed in 2007) will retire in the period between 2010 and 2025¹⁴¹.

11.4.5 Examples of good practices

Protecting the working conditions and social standards of temporary workers is an important aspect in terms of providing good working conditions for all employees but also to combat any social dumping in the rail sector.

The use of retirees to provide additional cover has been an important strategy to ensure a sufficient number of skilled employees, but also in terms of protecting the competences that these possess.

11.5 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

This section presents conclusions and implications from the research based on the work undertaken in order to identify what works well and what works less well in terms of attractiveness for employees and job seekers.

11.5.1.1 Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees

Clearly, the pay and conditions negotiated through the collective bargaining process play an important role in promoting the attractiveness of the sector. However, many workers also mention the relative freedom and variation in the work as attractive aspects. This is the case for both railway operations and rail infrastructure workers.

Working times are commonly the least attractive aspects of working in the rail sector. For rail infrastructure workers, the work involves a lot of night shifts and work during public holidays. Indeed, maintenance and servicing of the rail infrastructure can only be undertaken when there are no trains on the tracks – usually after 2am.

11.5.1.2 Identify effective recruitment and retention measures

As noted above, there are no real difficulties in recruiting new staff to the rail sector. The main issue is getting a sufficient number of drivers trained. The companies are therefore working closely with the relevant educational institutions. This challenge is likely to increase in the future with 59% of drivers (employed in 2007) expected to retire in the period between 2010 and 2025. In absolute terms this represents over 3,000 drivers. The rate of retirements

¹⁴¹ <https://www.transportstyrelsen.se/globalassets/global/jarnvag/marknadsovervakning/utbildningsanordnare-inom-jarnvagsmarknaden-2012.pdf>

will reach a peak between 2015 and 2019 when nearly 1,100 drivers are expected to retire¹⁴².

Similarly, there are not real issues in terms of retaining staff. Changes to the workforce in recent years have largely been a result of retirements.

Providing practical training for students qualifying as drivers is an effective way of attracting workers but not a guarantee for securing their employment. Indeed, there are concerns that the provision of practical training is not shared equally across the railway companies.

In those instances where it has been necessary to make workers redundant, it has been suggested by the employers that many of the affected workers have been able to find employment elsewhere within the sector. This is in part a result of the fact that the redundancies have been caused by contracts being taken over by other firms within the sector.

11.6 Summary SWOT analysis

Table 11.3 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Favourable working conditions and social standards which makes it an attractive sector to work in. ■ Strong interest from job applicants. ■ High levels of staff retention within the sector. ■ Good working conditions for temporary workers which provide some protection against 'social dumping'. ■ Increasing use of dialogue meetings supporting the exchange of information with staff / involvement of staff in decision making. ■ Typically employees made redundant do not have any significant issues in finding new employment within the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Less job security and greater unpredictability regarding the future work situation as a result of the deregulation of the market. ■ Lack of internal training due to the risks associated with competitors 'stealing' trained employees. ■ Increased bureaucracy has in some instances made the job less enjoyable for employees. ■ A perception of decision making being centralised at high level persists. ■ Some concerns about the competences of temporary staff and employee relations between permanent and temporary staff.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The future of the rail sector is high on the agenda for the Swedish government – additional funding over the next few years has been pledged for rail infrastructure. ■ The sector is growing, and current workforce is ageing, so there should be scope for further job opportunities, particularly for drivers. ■ Possibility of pooled training solutions. Collective responsibility in providing practical training places for students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The age structure of the current workforce will result in a large number of retirements over the next decade – there is therefore a challenge in terms of ensuring that there is a sufficient number of competent workers coming through to replace these. This is particularly important for drivers.

¹⁴² <https://www.transportstyrelsen.se/globalassets/global/jarnvag/marknadsovervakning/utbildningsanordnare-inom-jarnvagsmarknaden-2012.pdf>

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Annex 32 List of Interviewees

- Stefan Zetterlund, trade union (SEKO) representative for SJ employees
- Jörgen Lundström, trade union (SEKO) representative for Infranord employees
- Caroline Frumerie, HR Director, Green Cargo
- Patrik Johansson, Operations Director, Green Cargo
- Beata Hammarskiöld, employer organisation Almega
- Anna Johnsson, Work environment and health strategist HR, SJ
- Peter Blomqvist, HR Director, SJ
- Sanna Naula, HR Business Partner, SJ
- Karin Engelmark, Head of Human Resources & Skills, Infranord
- SJ focus group consisted of two train managers and one driver. Two of them had worked in the sector for a few years (5 years and 2 years respectively), whilst the other has worked at SJ for 34 years. All participants in the focus group were male.

Infranord focus group consisted of six individuals, of which two were women. The group was made up of both office workers and technicians.

Annex 33 Student/Pupil Surveys

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Please tick all that apply)

Males	7
Females	4
Older workers	6
Younger workers	2
All of the above	11

Important factors when looking for an employer

	1 Most important	2	3	4	5 Least important	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
An employer where there are likely to be considerable future job opportunities	5	5	4	3	0	0	0	17
An employer that my family/friends have worked in	10	4	0	2	1	0	0	17
The level of pay and financial reward	2	0	2	1	11	0	1	17
Long term job security	4	7	5	1	0	0	0	17
Good work / life balance	8	8	0	0	1	0	0	17
Opportunities to develop my career	10	4	1	0	2	0	0	17
International opportunities / working abroad	4	7	2	1	1	0	2	17
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	2	5	2	6	2	0	0	17
A good working atmosphere	7	6	1	3	0	0	0	17
Opportunities for training and development / learning new skills	11	4	1	0	1	0	0	17
An employer that provides flexible working time	7	6	3	0	1	0	0	17
An employer that has good health & safety standards	3	6	6	2	0	0	0	17
An employer that provides good pension benefits	4	9	3	1	0	0	0	17
An employer that is close to my home	1	6	7	1	2	0	0	17
An employer that promotes innovation	0	6	5	4	2	0	0	17
An employer with a positive image	1	8	7	1	0	0	0	17
Other	3	6	6	2	0	0	0	17

When compared with other sectors, how do you think the rail sector compares?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No opinion	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	2	11	4	0	0	0	0	17
Benefits	2	10	4	1	0	0	0	17
Working hours	1	8	4	3	0	1	0	17
Career development opportunities	5	8	1	2	1	0	0	17
Work-life balance	0	7	7	2	0	1	0	17
Training and education	2	9	1	3	0	1	1	17
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	3	10	1	1	0	2	0	17

How closely do the jobs in the railway sector match your career aspirations?	
Exact match	5
A somewhat good match	10
Not a good match	0
Poor match	0
Don't know	2
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be higher in other sectors?	
Yes, far higher	0
Yes, a little higher	0
The same level	2
No, far lower level	1
No, lower level	4
Unsure	10
Don't know	0
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
A Short-term one (0-1 year)	0
A Medium-term one (2-5 years)	3
A long term one (more than 5 years)	11
Don't know	3
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Are you aware of any specific initiatives to encourage students or pupils to choose the railway sector?	
Yes	2
No	15
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Were you previously thinking of applying for a job in the rail sector?	
Yes	6
No	6
Perhaps	5
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Are you aware of any recruitment activities?	
Yes	7
No	10
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Did the recruitment activities change your view of the rail sector?	
No	3
Yes, more favourable	4
Yes, less favourable	1
Don't know	9
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
Yes	4
No	13
(blank)	0
Grand Total	17

12 Country report – UK

12.1 Introduction: background to the sector

The UK rail industry employs more than 200,000 people, from train drivers and station staff to those responsible for managing and maintaining the network's 22,000 miles of track¹⁴³. The UK rail network includes more than 2,500 stations and more than 40,000 bridges and tunnels. Every year, there are more than 1.3 billion passenger journeys, including nearly 270 million business trips. A diagram which illustrates the wide number of organisations and their how they work together is shown overleaf¹⁴⁴.

Network Rail is the responsible organisation and infrastructure manager for most of the rail network in England, Scotland and Wales. Network Rail is a 'not for dividend' company limited by guarantee with no shareholders which applies its income to its own purposes. Government involvement in the organisation is through the Secretary of State for Transport who is a 'Special Member' of the company's board of management and possesses additional powers over other members. Network Rail's main customers are the separate and mostly private train operating companies (TOCs), responsible for passenger transport, and freight operating companies (FOCs), who provide train services on the infrastructure that the company owns and maintains. Since 1 September 2014, Network Rail has been classified as a "public sector body".

The TOCs are members of the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC). ATOC's mission is to work for passenger rail operators in serving customers and supporting a prosperous railway. Set up after privatisation in 1993, the Association brings together all train companies to preserve and enhance the benefits for passengers of Britain's national rail network. The main functions of ATOC are to provide:

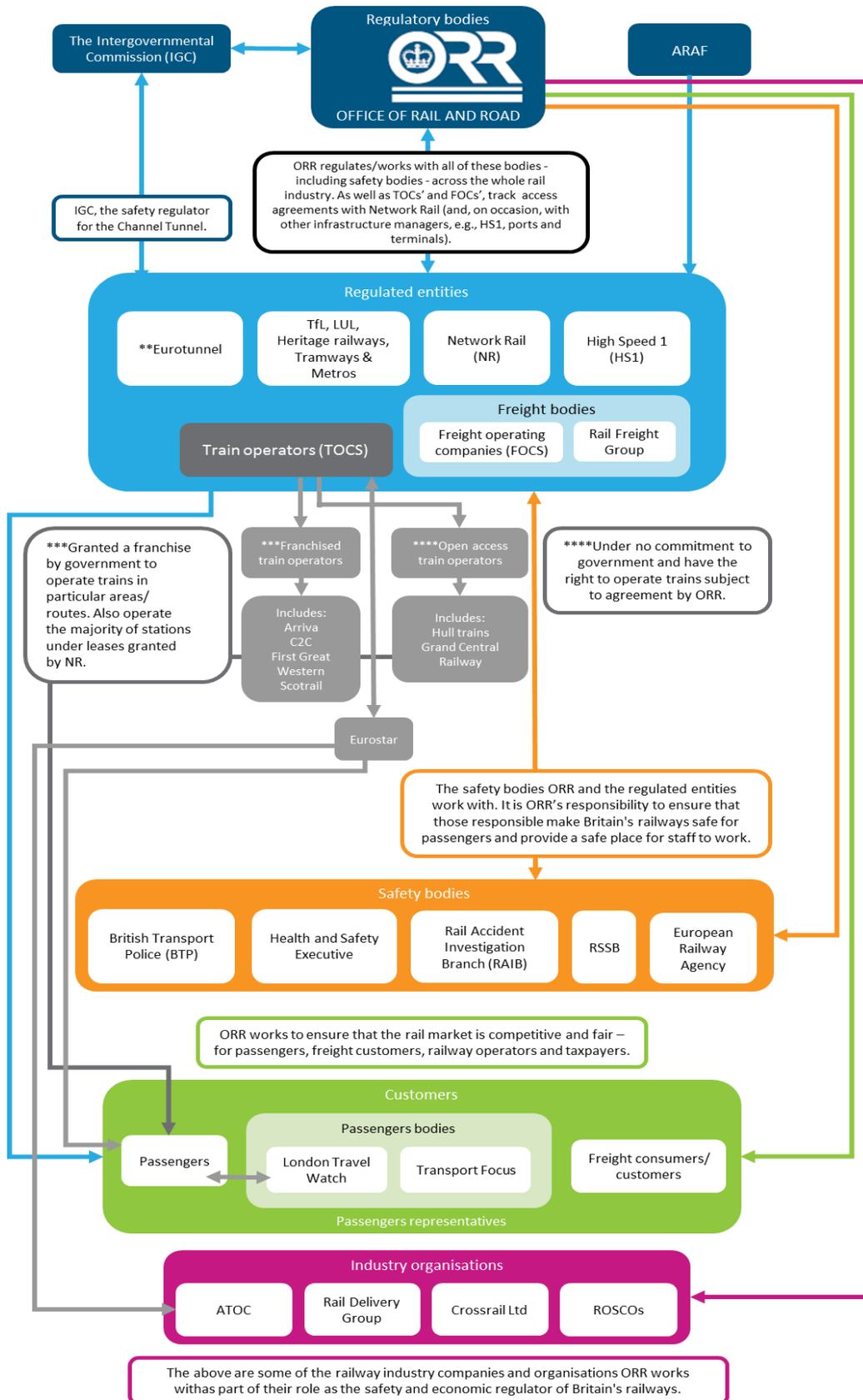
- a central clearing house for the train operators, allowing passengers to buy tickets to travel on any part of the rail network, from any station, through the Rail Settlement Plan
- a customer experience operation, comprising:
 - *National Rail Enquiries*, giving passengers up-to-the-minute information on train times, fares, reservations and service disruption across the country; and
 - Commercial activities, such as a range of discounted and promotional railcards, cutting the cost of travelling by train for groups including young people, families, senior citizens and people with disabilities
- running the rail staff travel service, enabling most staff in the industry to benefit from some level of concessionary travel; and
- providing an operations, engineering and major projects team, that supports delivery of a safe, punctual and economic railway.

Employment in the rail sector in the context of this study mainly takes place in Network Rail and TOCs – as such discussion of the rail sector in the UK involves evidence gathering from these organisations, trade unions and other experts. A list of consultees is contained in Annex 35 to this paper.

¹⁴³ Data obtained from Network Rail for 2016. The main study report uses EU Transport in Figures data from the EU statistical pocketbook to compare with other EU Member States. The most recent year for which data is available from this source is 2014. This source shows the total length of lines in the UK for 2014 at approximately 16,000km.

¹⁴⁴ Taken from: http://orr.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/16379/an-overview-of-the-rail-industry.pdf

Table 12.1 Diagram of the organisation of the UK Rail Sector



Adapted from: http://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/16379/an-overview-of-the-rail-industry.pdf

12.2 Overview of the image and attractiveness of working places in the European railway sector

12.2.1 How attractive are the rail companies in the country?

The attractiveness of the rail sector in the UK is influenced by a number of key factors:

Firstly, the perception of the rail sector in the media: the perception is that trains don't run on time and they are overcrowded. There is also a perception that fares are too high and they are regularly increased (at a rate greater than the rate of inflation). These are commonly reported opinions, particularly in the UK written press.

The perception that the rail industry would be better off if it was state owned. Research regularly shows a majority of the public back a return to state ownership of the rail sector (see for example: in 2014 YouGov pole 68%¹⁴⁵ of the public stated that they were in favour of returning the rail industry to state ownership; The most popular arguments put forward by the public in this regard are that railways would be accountable to taxpayers; rail fares would be more likely to go down; and, it would be more cost-effective overall to run the service¹⁴⁶.

There is also a perception that reliability and industrial action are issues. This is particularly the case in the autumn months with reports of 'leaves on the line' leading to delays frequently met with public anger. Additionally there is a public perception that the industry is more prone to strikes than is the case in other sectors.

All developments and media coverage in the sector have an impact on the public perception of the industry. Differences in public perception of different companies do not appear to be significant in the UK, perhaps this is due to the fact that there is not a single dominant provider as has been the case in the UK in the past – and continues to be the case in other European countries.

Regardless of the issues noted above, overall the image of the sector is still understood to be attractive by those that work in the sector with key issues of relatively good pay and job security being critical to this assessment. Important in this judgement is that the alternatives offer relatively less security (but perhaps in some professions greater pay – for example, the automotive industry).

Improvements that could be made are in pay and conditions for some occupations that have not had significant pay increases in recent years and in increased efforts to improve work-life balance through better and more consistent opening up of flexible working arrangements for all employees.

12.2.2 Characteristics of the companies as employers and selection criteria for job seekers

A common theme noted by interviewees is an increase in the starting age for many entering the sector. Going back 10-15 years (and more), the starting age for people entering the sector would have been 18-20. In more recent years the average age of entry into the sector has risen to 30-35. This perhaps suggests that the employment offer of the sector is more valued (or more understood) by people that have some experience of the offer of other sectors.

It is noted that some companies appear more attractive employers than others, for example; Virgin. This is due to a number of factors, including perception of higher pay and a stronger company image / brand. It is also worthy of note that some newer entrants into companies are often more positive about employment in the companies in the sector. This is understood to be the case because they do not look back at the old *British Rail* pay and conditions – which were more attractive than those of current rail companies.

¹⁴⁵ <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2013/11/04/nationalise-energy-and-rail-companies-say-public/>

¹⁴⁶ <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/05/11/why-do-people-support-rail-nationalisation/>

12.2.3 Assessment of the attractiveness of rail sector in the country

12.2.4 Comparison with other sectors

In general, there are positive aspects that contribute to the attractiveness of the sector as an employer (as mentioned above, for example, security of employment), added to this is an increasing development, that companies are investing more in training to promote the diversity of careers on offer. This is being done as a means of retaining good quality staff that have developed industry expertise.

It is the case that in some occupations other sectors can be more attractive in terms of compensation and identification for certain occupational profiles, such as the automotive industry for engineers. In terms of engineers there are shortages of quality applicants in many sectors operating in the UK. In particular this is an occupation which traditionally struggles to attract female students¹⁴⁷, as a result there are very few women operating in engineering roles in the UK.

This comparison with other sectors varies significantly across regions, another wider issues in the UK labour market. The prevalence of national rail headquarters and depots to be based in the South East means that there is greater competition for labour in that region, by comparison there is less competition in other regions. The result of this is that in occupations which can easily transfer to other sectors, rail companies have adopted different employment strategies. One impact has been increased use of agency cleaners in the South East, both to minimise employment costs but also to minimise recruitment costs where there is high staff turnover.

12.3 Employment perspectives and strategies in European railway companies

12.3.1 Assessment of working conditions and social standards

Desirability of working conditions are understood to vary depending on the role concerned, with some variance between companies. Overall though working conditions and social standards in the sector are understood to be slightly less desirable for new entrants than they would have been 10-20 years ago. When compared with those available in other sectors, however, the overall package available in the sector is understood to be an attractive proposition.

When taking a long term perspective (15-20 years) there have been significant reductions in the overall number of employees in the sector. The franchise model has led to some instances of vacancies not being filled and/or use of temporary contracts and agency workers (one example of which is given above). The nature of the franchise model means that this *approach has been used* for a wide range of occupations toward the end of the term of a franchise in order to reduce franchisee costs and liabilities.

From a Trade Union perspective it is noted that the use of temporary workers (employed through agencies) does not provide the workers employed with terms and conditions, including holiday pay, that are on a par with permanent employees. This has a net impact of reducing the working conditions and social standards on offer in the industry. Furthermore it is noted that there are potentially negative effects for existing staff undertaking similar roles to temporary staff, morale can be diluted.

¹⁴⁷ In 2013 only 14% of engineering graduates in the UK were female, only 4% of professionally registered engineers in employment in 2013 were female.
<http://www.wes.org.uk/sites/default/files/Easy%20Statistics%20Women%20in%20Engineering%202014%20V3.pdf>

12.3.1.1 Pay and conditions

It is understood among all interviewees that a major element of working in the sector not attractive to some job seekers is shift work. This is particularly the case for shifts that take place during evening/nights and weekends – times at which family and friends are not at work or in education.

Positive elements of the pay and conditions in the sector are understood to be the pension available, holiday pay and sickness pay. It is also noted that, in general, the pay rises that have been awarded in the sector have been high compared to other sectors. For example, in the 1980s the average salary for a train driver in the UK was similar to that of a teacher. It is now significantly higher for train drivers than teachers (UK average teacher salary is circa £30,000, compared to UK train driver £35,000 - £60,000, depending on company and routes).

It is widely considered that historically the drivers in the rail sector have been able to negotiate better deals than other occupations in the sector on pay and conditions, with occupations such as office workers in head offices and operational service staff such as cleaners not benefitting from the same level of salary increases. This has led to a split between occupations when it comes to pay and conditions with some occupations feeling less well connected to the industry than others.

Violence from passengers is an issue which impacts on the working conditions of on-board staff. There have been initiatives from train companies to encourage reporting of instances of violence and the threat of violence as well as training measures to assist staff to deal with such circumstances. As a result the extent to which instances are subject of greater reporting or are on the rise is open to debate. The issue remains one which impacts on working conditions for on-board staff in the sector.

12.3.1.2 Company culture & management to employee & employee to employee relationships

Traditionally the rail sector has been male-dominated. In the past this may have led to a male-dominated culture, with men appointing other men to senior positions. The partnership work of the trades unions and rail companies has been positive in promoting employment possibilities in the rail sector to women and in working together to try and enable flexible working conditions to support those in employment.

It is noted that in the context of an industry that has traditionally required a rigid shift system, this change to flexible working has been a gradual one. There has been some natural resistance to this from those in the industry that are used to traditional ways of working with little appetite to implement flexible working. As a result the transition to flexible and part-time working has taken some time to become available in the sector, there is a tradition of shift work that did not usually facilitate flexible rostering. The “normal” 7-9 hour shifts remain most common.

Company culture is understood to vary considerably from company to company. Many new companies have emerged in order to take advantage of franchise opportunities, others are considered to be old companies with a new branding.

12.3.2 Effects of structural and demographic change in the rail sector in European countries

One impact of the current structure of the UK rail industry brought about by the franchise model is that, when franchises are too short, there is an argument that the result has been low investment by franchisees in training. It is also the case that there is “uneven” investment in training – with some companies that are more attractive, perhaps through higher wages or stronger company branding, not being required to invest in training as much as other companies.

As the typical length of service in the rail industry is quite long, there is an aging workforce in the rail sector. The sector provides comparatively good pension terms and conditions, there is therefore a disincentive for those close to retirement age to change their jobs. Further

there are some reports that the final salary pension scheme has had the impact of encouraging those (train drivers) nearing retirement to take on additional responsibilities (management and training) in order to increase their salary immediately prior to retirement – with the priority on increasing the value of their final salary pension.

12.3.3 Current employment and competence profiles with future skills requirement

There have been changes in the way in which customers chose to interact with service providers which impact on the rail sector. For example, customers want to buy online, use smart cards and contactless payment methods. This changes the required skills and competences in the sector, with more marketing and IT professionals required. These trends also have material impacts on the future set up of stations and trains themselves which may take some time to come into effect.

There has been significant discussion regarding driverless trains in the UK in recent years, driverless trains are now used on the Docklands Light Railway in the South East of England. The extent to which the introduction of driverless trains impacts on skills requirements is not expected to be significant in the near future. Widespread use of driverless trains would require significant infrastructure investment and it is not yet clear what public opinion would be towards this development, with safety concerns likely to be raised, particularly on longer, faster routes.

Driverless trains and the associated technological improvements do, nevertheless, represent a longer term challenge and opportunity for the rail sector. Use of such technologies may bring forward opportunities to improve energy efficiency and reduced journey times.

It is noted that other technological advancements may have the overall impact of de-skilling the train driver occupation. For example, automatic breaking of the train to prevent passing stop signals.

There are also some changes that result from rail service providers and manufacturers changing their business models. New trains being introduced in the UK in future may be introduced on a manufacturer “build and maintain” basis. This means that new trains (many of which will be foreign built) will also be maintained by the manufacturer- meaning that the maintenance jobs will not be required in the UK for these companies. The purpose of this to reduce cost and risk to the operating companies, but it will reduce skills held in the UK, potentially with consequences in future.

12.3.4 Human resources strategies and measures used by companies

Companies in the UK rail sector have undertaken significant work in recent years to improve the image of the sector among the general public. This has been undertaken through better communication of a range of issues, including:

- Required maintenance and repair work;
- Punctuality and reliability of services;
- Investment in safety and comfort on existing rolling stock; and,
- Investment in staff safety and training.

There is a strong link between the UK rail industry recruitment and the UK military careers service. The qualifications and aptitudes of those in the military are attractive to the rail industry, particularly in terms of engineers. This has been a positive relationship for the rail sector to attract high quality individuals, and also a positive thing for individuals leaving the military seeking a structure, stable career.

12.3.4.1 Employment for specific groups (young people, women, older workers, less skilled workers)

Outlined below are initiatives aimed at specific groups.

Young people

There are a significant number of apprenticeship schemes in the UK rail sector. The sector has worked with the UK Government as part of the new Apprentice Trail Blazer scheme in order to develop programmes that ensure high standards of training are provided. For example Rail Engineering Operative and Rail Engineering Technician apprenticeships were approved in March 2015.

National Training Academy for Rail

The academy was established in response to a forecast skills shortage of around 8,000 people over the next ten years, caused by factors such as the technological advancement of rolling stock, an ageing workforce, and significant investment and growth in the industry.

An innovative agreement between the National Skills Academy for Rail Engineering (NSARE) and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) with support from the Department for Transport (DfT) has provided half the funds required to build NTAR, with Siemens contributing the other 50 per cent. The 50/50 funding agreement will release 50% of the academy's training capacity to the wider UK industry, with the remainder used by Siemens's own rail sector employees.

NTAR will offer 22,000 man days of training per year and will act as a national 'hub' with regional 'spokes' located at other train care facilities around the country. The bespoke facility, which is located in Northampton, close to the Siemens train care depot at Kings Heath, will combine the use of unique hands-on equipment and workshop facilities in addition to classroom-based teaching, using cutting-edge technology.

Members of the Rail Engineering Apprenticeship Group are also set to make full use of the academy and the first intake of students will include those from train operating company South West Trains.

Female workers

At Network rail 3% of apprentices and 29% of graduate trainees are women, this is an issue that they are monitoring and seeking to promote opportunities to encourage more female candidates. The overall gender pay gap at Network Rail is only 1%, compared with a national average in the UK of 10%.

The position of females in the wider labour market remains an issue which requires organisations to encourage females to study courses to provide access to a greater number of professions. Women made up 45% of the working population in 2011/12, in the transport and logistics sector women make up just 18% of all employees. The science, engineering and technology sectors remain even lower, with women holding just 12% of employment. Only 1 in 7 of those studying engineering are women. Women account for less than 4% of apprenticeship starts in the engineering and driving vehicles sectors, and 2% in construction, electro-technical and vehicle maintenance apprenticeships in 2011-2012.

Network rail has been undertaking a number of activities in order to encourage young people to find out more about the rail industry. This includes a number of presentations to schools, colleges and job fairs by STEM (science, technology, mathematics and engineering) ambassadors and staff network members.

Network Rail staff networks for specific groups

In June 2013 Network Rail launched **three staff networks** which reflected those groups who traditionally are either under-represented in the business or may experience

discrimination. The staff networks are: Archway for our lesbian, gay and bi-sexual and trans-gender staff; Cultural Fusion for our staff from black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds; and Inspire for our women. Each network was sponsored by a member of the executive committee, has a leadership team and has set out their plans for supporting diversity and inclusion. The staff networks have been active ambassadors for us at jobs and skills fairs. The staff networks are open to everyone and have increasing membership across the organisation. They have also been a helpful site for consulting on policy developments and diversity impact assessments. For example, the Health and Safety Executive recently proposed amending the exemption in the Employment Act 1989, so that in any industry, Sikhs who wear turbans would be exempt from the need to wear head-protection. Our safety team realised that there may be potential cultural considerations associated with this issue and so contacted Cultural Fusion. Most members supported the proposal for the exemption to be extended, and recommended that consideration be given to the design of protective headwear to be worn over a turban. During late 2013 we set up the second set of staff networks, one for staff who are carers, one for disabled staff and another for staff of different faiths and beliefs. Following the same approach as the first three the networks are proving a rich source of expertise and feedback for our business and help to test out our messaging.

Women in rail

Women in Rail is a key initiative, set up by Angel Trains to address the under-representation of women in our industry. We joined the steering committee comprised of Bombardier, Clifford Chance, East Midlands Trains, ESG, Northern Trains and the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), to help give greater prominence to women who represent 17.6 per cent of employees in the sector. Women in Rail has a LinkedIn membership, and convenes regular meetings and produces a quarterly newsletter. Following its launch Women in Rail developed three priorities, networking/communications, mentoring and engaging with young women. Women in Rail set up a mentoring working group to establish a mentoring programme for the rail industry. The group facilitated a number of new mentoring pairs of people working in different organisations. Women in Rail is continually developing the programme and there will be further tranches as the membership of Women in Rail increases.

12.3.4.2 Recruiting and internal training

The rail industry in the UK is currently losing a significant number of train drivers each year (approximately 400) to retirement. With planned expansion of the railways (in such projects as HS2 and Cross-Rail) it is estimated that approximately 1,000 train drivers per year need to be recruited. Whilst there is no shortage of applicants for these posts, there is perhaps a shortage of the highest quality applicants. This is therefore an area requiring monitoring in order to adequately meet industry expansion needs.

The result of which is a need to constantly recruit and train drivers. The requirement to train drivers is not shared equally among rail companies, however, with some companies more attractive to drivers not needing to invest in training in order to recruit new drivers.

Additionally it is expected that there will be a need to increase the recruitment of maintenance workers. It is forecast that there is likely to be a shortage of this group of workers in future years. The likely remedy to this is an increased use of agency workers and temporary contracts in the sector.

For maintenance workers there is increasing competition (due to the fall in overall number of workers as a result of retirements) with the road maintenance companies and local authorities. This has resulted in some instances of workers working on a day shift undertaking road maintenance and a night shift for a rail company, with clear health and

safety dangers. This issue is more acute in London than in other parts of the UK (indeed Transport for London has started sharing data on employees with the RSSB in order to try and detect these instances). Nevertheless the issue of competition with the highways maintenance is one which needs to be considered in recruitment for rail companies.

12.3.4.3 *International cooperation*

Not a feature of the interviews conducted

12.4 Sustainable working conditions, personnel development and retention measures

12.4.1.1 *Identify working conditions which are attractive for employees*

It is understood that there is an issue with the industry of the rail sector which is not seen as an attractive one for employees. The fundamental working conditions are attractive though:

- Good pay (relative to the same occupation in another industry);
- Secure job – even when franchises come to an end, the functions are still needed;
- Good pensions – relative to other industries.

If the reputational issues in the industry can be addressed it is understood from interviews conducted that these fundamentals are attractive – more attractive than alternatives open to people that would want to work in the rail sector.

There are also some developments in the rail sector which are attractive to job seekers (particularly younger graduates with engineering backgrounds), namely:

1. Visible large-scale investment in new project (Reading Station, Birmingham New Street Station, Kings Cross Station, London Bridge Station). These developments add up to a sense of critical mass and an industry that is growing.
2. An industry that is “green” with a growing understanding of the importance of sustainable transport solutions and reducing carbon footprint being important to people (personally and professionally);

12.4.1.2 *Identify effective recruitment and retention measures*

One example that was put forward during the interviews was that of the employer branding work undertaken by Virgin Trains in the UK (along with the fact that the company provides competitive pay and conditions) means that the company successfully attracts high quality applicants when recruiting.

12.5 Summary SWOT analysis

Table 12.2 SWOT Analysis summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good salary ■ Job security ■ Safe workplace ■ Satisfaction among existing employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sector not seen as dynamic ■ Traditional shift work the norm ■ Slow to allow comprehensive take up of flexible working opportunities ■ Threat of violence/harassment by passengers
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing government expenditure ■ Increased investment in new technologies ■ Increased targeting of certain groups (young people, women etc.) ■ Adoption of more flexible working arrangements ■ Increase awareness and quality of training opportunities (particularly for apprentices) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demographic change ■ Changing job expectations ■ Other sectors have offer higher salary (automotive industry) ■ Political decisions favouring other transport sectors (decision to allow long distance buses) ■ Decreasing job security in local rail transport through public tenders
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Annex 34 List of Sources

- An overview of the rail industry in Great Britain, Office of Rail and Road. (Available at: http://orr.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/16379/an-overview-of-the-rail-industry.pdf)
- National Skills Academy: Rail (Available at: <http://www.nsar.co.uk/about-us/nsar-literature.aspx>)
- Network Rail Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, 2014
- You Gov: Nationalise energy and rail companies, say public, 2013. (Available at: <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2013/11/04/nationalise-energy-and-rail-companies-say-public/>)
- You Gov: Why the public want to nationalise the railways, 2014. (Available at: ¹ <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/05/11/why-do-people-support-rail-nationalisation/>)
- UK National Training Academy for Rail, (Available at: <http://ntar.co.uk/about-ntar>)
- UK Women in Rail (Available at: <http://womeninrail.org/>)
- UK Women's Engineering Society, Easy Statistics – Women in Engineering.(2014). Available at: <http://www.wes.org.uk/sites/default/files/Easy%20Statistics%20Women%20in%20Engineering%202014%20V3.pdf>

Annex 35 List of Interviewees

- Jack Wheale, Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC)
- Linsey Perry, Network Rail
- Marc Sellis, National Express
- Martin Jones, Unite the Union
- Iain Anderson, TSSA
- Steve Roberts, RSSB

Annex 36 Student/Pupil Surveys

When you think of the railway sector, which types of groups would be most likely to work in the railway sector? (Please tick all that apply)

Males	115
Females	14
Older workers	86
Younger workers	33
All of the above	90

Important factors when looking for an employer

	1 Most important	2	3	4	5 Least important	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
An employer where there are likely to be considerable future job opportunities	29	93	58	18	4	3	5	210
An employer that my family/friends have worked in	97	93	10	4	1	0	5	210
The level of pay and financial reward	0	8	29	65	95	7	6	210
Long term job security	43	129	27	4	2	0	5	210
Good work / life balance	82	93	26	3	1	1	4	210
Opportunities to develop my career	101	75	19	8	2	0	5	210
International opportunities / working abroad	121	73	9	0	0	0	7	210
A meaningful job / meaningful tasks	36	72	64	22	11	0	5	210
A good working atmosphere	112	78	15	1	0	0	4	210
Opportunities for training and development / learning new skills	106	90	8	1	0	0	5	210
An employer that provides flexible working time	80	91	31	4	0	0	4	210
An employer that has good health & safety standards	35	76	63	29	3	0	4	210
An employer that provides good pension benefits	80	79	31	11	5	0	4	210
An employer that is close to my home	50	103	37	13	1	2	4	210
An employer that promotes innovation	17	52	83	33	19	1	5	210
An employer with a positive image	89	89	21	3	1	3	4	210
Other	69	104	23	5	5	0	4	210

When compared with other sectors, how do you think the rail sector compares?								
	Very attractive	Attractive	No opinion	Unattractive	Very unattractive	Don't know	(blank)	Grand Total
Salary	3	25	35	26	0	30	91	210
Benefits	5	21	41	17	0	33	93	210
Working hours	1	19	41	29	4	25	91	210
Career development opportunities	5	31	35	23	4	21	91	210
Work-life balance	1	35	40	14	4	24	92	210
Training and education	6	31	38	15	3	26	91	210
Good working atmosphere/corporate culture	7	35	32	13	5	24	94	210

How closely do the jobs in the railway sector match your career aspirations?	
Exact match	2
A somewhat good match	50
Not a good match	36
Poor match	22
Don't know	9
(blank)	91
Grand Total	210

Do you think that your overall level of job satisfaction would be higher in other sectors?	
Yes, far higher	23
Yes, a little higher	36
The same level	28
No, far lower level	2
No, lower level	6
Unsure	24
Don't know	0
(blank)	91
Grand Total	210

When thinking about the railway sector, would you consider the usual job in the sector to be?	
A Short-term one (0-1 year)	4
A Medium-term one (2-5 years)	31
A long term one (more than 5 years)	62
Don't know	22
(blank)	91
Grand Total	210

Are you aware of any specific initiatives to encourage students or pupils to choose the railway sector?	
Yes	27
No	178
(blank)	5
Grand Total	210

Were you previously thinking of applying for a job in the rail sector?	
Yes	10
No	82
Perhaps	27
(blank)	91
Grand Total	210

Are you aware of any recruitment activities?	
Yes	90
No	29
(blank)	91
Grand Total	210

Did the recruitment activities change your view of the rail sector?	
No	33
Yes, more favourable	11
Yes, less favourable	0
Don't know	71
(blank)	95
Grand Total	210

Are you aware of any organisations that could provide you with additional information?	
Yes	44
No	75
(blank)	91
Grand Total	210