

PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT AND QUALITY OF WORK IN THE EUROPEAN RAIL SECTOR



The Voice
of European
Railways

Closing Conference

19 April 2016

Residence Palace, Brussels



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Welcome address, Rolf Lutzke, Managing Director EVA Academy

The Conference was opened by Rolf Lutzke. He presented the project background and the aims. He mentioned that it is important for company and trade union representatives to use the possibilities they have to design good working conditions in the rail sector.

Keynote of the European Commission, Olivier Onidi, Director DG MOVE, European Mobility Network



Olivier Onidi gave his opinion to the results of the executive summary of the project study. It will be important for the social partners to work on the topics attractiveness, personnel development and working conditions. The measures taken by the European Commission aim to promote the sector's efficiency.



Keynote of the Committee on Transport and Tourism of the European Parliament, Ismail Ertug, MEP, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats

The future of the European railways is significant for the economy and for the environment taking into account the predicted growth rates. The lack of investments is a disadvantage of the railways vis-à-vis road transport. The European Commission intends to increase the competitiveness of the rail sector with technical and structural reforms in the 4th railway package. “EU legislation is driven by enthusiasm for liberalisation, but tends to overlook a significant factor that will determine whether the transport sector will be successful in the long-run: the workers, which keep the engines, vehicles, infrastructure and therefore economy running every single day.”



The European rail sector will be able to remain competitive only with a qualified, motivated and robust workforce. Fair, stable and binding social and work standards are essential to ensure an effective and forward-looking work force. Sufficient opportunities for training and professional education are key to an attractive workplace especially for younger generations, as well as the right to strike.

The Socialists and Democrats of the EP want to prevent a race to the bottom. “Indeed, the S&D group supports the efforts to encourage competition, but this should not result in the erosion of workers' rights.” Strong EU rules are needed that require operators to respect representative collective agreements and to grant fair working conditions in case there are no obligatory social minimum standards on the national, regional or even local level.

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Photo: During the Conference Chair and Vice Chair of the European social dialogue **Matthias Rohrmann** and Guy Greivelding hand the “joint opinion of CER and ETF on social aspects and the protection of staff in competitive tendering of rail public transport services and in the case of change of railway operator” and the “Rail Freight Declaration” to **MEP Ismail Ertug** and **Olivier Onidi**.



Opening address, Matthias Rohrmann, Chair European Sectoral Social Dialogue Rail

Matthias Rohrmann spoke about the experiences and results of the social partner project. The social partners have realised during the project that the railway sector has several strengths as an employer and is attractive for workers. It is crucial that the strengths are mainly known within the sector and are not visible outside the sector. It will be the task of the social partners to spread them to the public. Joint activities can be a chance to strengthen the image of the sector.

The project itself did strengthen the social dialogue. The joint work on topics and solutions in the workshops contributed to a better understanding of positions and to a fruitful exchange of views. The relaunch of the social dialogue on European level is one current measure to develop topics and demands of the sector. Findings of the project will be included in the discussion.

One result of the research is that job security has a high relevance for the attractiveness of the rail sector. This is relevant also in the opinion of the generation Y. This knowledge will have to lead to better framework regulations for rail companies and will be included in employment strategies.

All companies experience a demographic shift and have problems in recruiting personnel for specific occupations. Good working conditions are relevant for the attractiveness of the sector. These are job security, good working conditions, development opportunities, a positive working environment (railway family), a meaningful and sustainable occupation, the variety of employment opportunities, the diversity of the sector and modern and partly international jobs.

One important conclusion is that more traffic on rail will be the best protection of employment. The social partners have current concrete suggestions for the improvement of framework conditions: the “joint opinion of CER and ETF on social aspects and the protection of staff in competitive tendering of rail public transport services and in the case of change of railway operator” and the “Rail Freight Declaration”.

**Opening address, Guy Greivelding, Vice Chair European social dialogue rail**

Guy Greivelding emphasized that social dialogue is playing an important role especially in the rail sector. For years Europe experiences a high unemployment rate. Employment declined in many sectors, on the one hand due to new technologies bringing some rationalisation in business, which is also the case in the railway sector, but also due to the intention of many employers of all branches to increase their profits through the reduction of their workforce.

The railways will be a valuable asset in advancing sustainable development. Ecologically they have the best environmental balance. They will be necessary



to protect the environment and to protect our planet. To meet the challenges related to sustainable development, railway companies must have the necessary staff in the different branches, but above all also qualified and motivated personnel.

Good working conditions are relevant to attract people to work in the sector. The railway family still exists, but is endangered by liberalisation. The sector must be attractive for women, it must offer career perspectives for all accompanied by vocational training and provide employment security in the event of change of operator.

Guy Greivelding also said that “the ETF continues to oppose against any dismantling of the sector. Such politics would be contrary to our project.” He therefore hopes that the social partners will join in this opinion. And he also hopes that the recommendations of the joint project will be taken to both European and national level and they will strengthen the industrial relations.

Presentation of the study “Promoting employment and quality of work in the European rail sector”, Tina Weber, Richard Smith, ICF International

ICF presented the main findings of the project research. Interviews and a survey have been conducted within the project framework in whole Europe. One of the results is that the image and attractiveness of the rail sector and efforts to promote employment and the quality of work in the sector in the European Union are impacted by policy, technological and socio-economic developments. The attractiveness of the sector as an employer is influenced by public perceptions of the quality of service provision, an insider outside split exists and more positive perceptions by young workers are encouraging.

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It was perhaps surprising to find that for all groups job security is the most important factor in terms of the attractiveness of the sector, a factor which may be undermined by policy developments. Collective agreements have an important role to play in ensuring high standards and comparability in terms and conditions between companies.

Significant efforts have been taken by many rail companies in the European Union to increase the attractiveness of the sector, so far these have mainly focussed on young people and recruiting women, less on older workers and other measures such as work-life balance or attractiveness of working conditions. Opportunities remain for social partner at different levels to take further actions.

The significance of European social dialogue for developing the future of employment, David Dion, Head of Unit, Social Dialog, European Commission

As the Head of the Unit Social Dialogue in the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion David Dion addressed the participants of the Conference. He welcomed the joint activities in the rail sector and expressed the opinion that the social partners are very active to design the sector.



Initiatives of the European institutions shall include social obligations. Part of the work of the European Commission should be to consult the social partners and to take into account their opinion. David Dion emphasises that his unit supports the implementation of social partner agreements.

The relaunch of the European social dialogue on the level of the European Commission shows its importance for the European institution. The relaunch of the dialogue between the social partners of the rail sector on European level points in the same direction.

The projects organised by the social partners give relevant impulses to the European but also to the national level. They support the work of the stakeholders.

David Dion recommended the audience to take part in the public consultation on the pillar of social rights.

How to promote the attractiveness of the European rail sector as an employer: Recruiting and personnel development – good practice examples and future expectations

Strategic Recruiting at Deutsche Bahn AG, Michael Bütow



Deutsche Bahn is very active in recruiting people to the company. Young people live online and share their personalities in social Networks. For pupils a feelgood climate, terms and individual fulfilment are the most important drivers of the employer image.

One pillar of DB's corporate strategy "to become a top employer" is to recruit and retain qualified employees who work with enthusiasm for DB and its customers. HR marketing, developing the employer brand and designing a communication strategy are important tools

to reach the aim.

For developing a DB employer brand three steps have been taken: the analysis, the strategy and the external execution. In all the steps it is important to involve employees. The involvement of employees give Deutsche Bahn an authentic face and illustrate the variety of our jobs. The activities for talent acquisition show first good results.

Discover Jobs at SNCF through an innovative way of communication, Barbara Grau

SNCF has launched a new advertising concept: 30 seconds short movies are shown on TV at prime-time. They are produced on the day of their transmission or the day before. They shall look more like journalistic movies than advertisements. This guarantees authenticity and quality.

SNCF wants to show the commitment and successfully met challenges by SNCF employees on a daily basis for its customers. The employees function as "actors" and they explain their work in their own words. All occupations



have been involved in the campaign. SNCF's divisions provided the subjects but employees can make remarks and suggestions on an internal forum « e-changeons.sncf.fr »

A qualitative test has shown that the campaign is well received by customers. It has strengthened the relationship with clients. The customers are aware of SNCF's commitment and skills and the variety of tasks and missions.

Training at Trenitalia, Claudio Guaitoli

Trenitalia has initiated several measures to present the Group, the positions and job opportunities.

Career-guidance days at the Group's target universities aim to develop excellence training to meet business needs. These are a Master Course in Railway System and Infrastructure Engineering, a Master Course in Homeland Security, a Master Course in Procurement Management at 'Tor Vergata' University and a Master Course in Economics and Management of Transport (MEMIT) at 'Bocconi' University.



Another aim is to bring the university supply closer to Company demand. Specialist and career-guidance seminars are offered and business contributions in degree courses. Ad hoc projects and events in universities (e.g. F.I.G.I., "A cocktail with the CEO", etc.) are organised. Special partnerships exist with degree courses in engineering fully taught in English.

Trenitalia wants to create value for the company and the youth through an osmotic bond between corporate and university know-how for the development of theses on innovative topics. A focus is put on the quality of internship projects and selected, strongly motivated interns.

To reward the best students and graduates to promote research and innovation Trenitalia organises business games and university competitions: 'competitions of ideas'. This aims to receive more PhDs for apprenticeships.

To attract young people and HRs of interest a "Work for us" web section has been launched. The company profile is published on other web channels dedicated to the labour market.

Integration of Migrants at Nederlandse Spoorwegen, Serdar Ucar

Diversity and the integration of migrants into the company have a social and a business aspect. On the one hand it will strengthen the social cohesion in the Netherlands. On the other hand it strengthens the identity and public image of Nederlandse Spoorwegen. Thus a proportional share of the labor market is represented and the company will have a stronger



performance through inclusion.

Former refugees are often ordinary people with extraordinary experiences who want to make a new start. The initiative of NS and the trade unions started in 2014. It was a pilot with the Foundation for Refugee Students (UAF estb. 1948) with 4 former refugees in 2014/2015. It is a chapter of the collective labour agreement 2015-2017 under the sponsorship of the CFO.

For the former refugees the initiative is a chance to have a network to find a job, to gain necessary soft skills, to gain relevant work experience and to achieve a good language level.

Nederlandse Spoorwegen benefits from people with attributes like perseverance, resilience, innovative strength and good work ethic. These are qualities the employer can benefit from.

Aspects of good working conditions at European rail companies, Sabine Trier, ETF



Sabine Trier expressed the position of the European Transport Workers' Federation ETF regarding the research results and demands for good working conditions. ETF is convinced that the railway sector is a good sector to work for. It offers a huge variety of professional and career development opportunities, there are still stable jobs for most of the employees and there are still relative good working conditions. People can identify with a meaningful job working for the society, they deliver public service which is good for the environment.

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Trade unions care because they are concerned that in several countries already today problems exist to attract staff. Due to the high average age in the sector more problems are expected in the future, even in countries in which there are no problems today. A concern from a trade union point of view is that understaffed departments increase work intensity and pressure to work overtime. This increases stress and jeopardises health and safety.

The study survey showed that 63% of railway workers answering the questionnaire are satisfied with their job. That is a high score but 37% are not or less satisfied. It seems that less satisfaction is clearly among those workers whose jobs are characterised by unsocial working hours, harsh working conditions and exposition as front line/office workers to aggressions and harassment: train divers, onboard personnel and customer service. This gives a clear indication on which topics employers have to make greater effort.

A strong characteristic of the sector is that all people working in the sector had a strong feeling of belonging to a railway family, from blue collar worker to manager. This created a feeling of solidarity and high level of motivation. This feeling of "railway family", although it still exists, is fading away. Reasons are restructuring, concentration on the core business, outsourcing of activities and splitting up the company.

For the development of working conditions collective bargaining remains important. The high unionisation in the rail sector is a strength and not a threat. With it social dialogue can achieve good



results. But the railway sector also needs the right regulatory framework and the monitoring and enforcement of the rules in a competitive environment. The sector consists of more than the incumbent companies.

Panel discussion: “Future challenges and solutions for the attractiveness of the railway sector in Europe”

Participants in the panel discussion have been

- Sigried Caspar, Social Dialog, DG Employment, European Commission
- Stephen Schindler, European Federation of construction and wood workers
- Matthias Rohrmann, Chair European Social Dialogue Rail
- Guy Greivelding, Vice Chair European Social Dialogue Rail
- Dr. Libor Lochman, Executive Director CER



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The panel discussed the Conference topics and added information of other sectors. Sigried Caspar emphasized the tasks and chances of the social partners to work on joint topics and to find conclusions for the sector. She underlines the words of Mr Dion that the unit Social Dialogue of the Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion offers support to the social partners.

Experiences in the promotion of the attractiveness of the construction and wood workers sector have been formulated by Stephen Schindler. Good working conditions and recruiting measures are necessary to attract new staff. He highlighted as one of the big problems for the attractiveness in the construction sector the lack of career opportunities within the sector and that social partners are working on developing new career paths.

Libor Lochman spoke about the relevance of the railway transport for the European society and the environment. Good working conditions shall be part of the company policy, but also the framework conditions are essential for the sector.

Matthias Rohrmann highlighted the relaunch of the European social dialogue and the effects which are to be expected.

Guy Greivelding emphasised the ETF position on the improvement of working conditions in the sector, the relevance of the functioning of social dialogue on national and European level and framework conditions in favor of the railway sector.



The Conference and the panel discussion have been moderated by Burkhard Weituschat, EVA Academy.

Conference Languages: English, French, German, Italian, Czech

