

## 5<sup>th</sup> ITF Annual consultation on gender and transport

Contribution by the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)

### HOW TO MAKE TRANSPORT ATTRACTIVE FOR WOMEN TO WORK IN

- To uncover the real reasons for the low female employment rate in transport and to find out what is needed to make the transport sector attractive for women, ETF launched a large-scale survey in October 2019.
- Around 3000 women transport workers from across Europe responded; respondents came from all transport sectors and represented the whole range of transport professions.
- The survey revealed that women transport workers encounter the following barriers:
  - A dominant culture of masculinity and gender stereotypes
  - Discrimination and unequal treatment at work
  - Lack of work-life balance
  - Deficiencies in provision for women's health and safety at work, including access to decent sanitary facilities
  - High levels of violence and harassment against women at the workplace
- These barriers create a working environment that fails to attract women to the transport professions, fails to support women in doing their jobs well, and fails to retain them in the sector.
- Owing to the highly segregated nature of the transport sector, COVID-19 has had specific, additional adverse effects on women transport workers and is threatening to reverse gender equality gains and thus add to existing inequalities.
- Since women predominantly work in customer-facing jobs (where there has often been a lack of adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment), they face an even higher risk of infection than male transport workers - but also higher risks from having to face aggressive passengers, customers, and the wider public. A worrying development in public transport is that women transport workers have been physically and verbally attacked, abused, and spat at by passengers after requesting them to respect the rules that have been introduced by governments to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- While women transport workers have been playing a vital role as key workers, they have been completely overlooked in the responses to the crisis at the national, European, and international levels. That is why there is an urgent need to break down the above barriers and make the sector fit and fair for women workers.
- How end gender-based occupational segregation?
  - Mainstream a gender-responsive approach into transport policy at all levels
  - Strengthen social dialogue to eliminate discrimination and unequal treatment
  - Promote work-life balance
  - Improve women's health and safety at work
  - End violence and harassment against women at work
- Failing to overcome these barriers is no longer acceptable. The recruitment of women cannot be considered simply as a response to the shortage of transport workers. It has to be seen as a goal that is integrated into a holistic approach.

#### Link for further reading:

- [ETF report and key demands to make the transports sector fit for women to work in](#)