

**GENDER
DIVERSITY**

FOSTERS EMPLOYMENT

GUIDE

> 10 KEYS TO ACCOMPANYING THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSITION OF WOMEN

TO TRADES TRADITIONALLY
HELD BY MEN

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Erasmus+

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FOR WHOM IS THIS GUIDE?

Employment Support Structures

(employment centers, equal access to employment organisations, associations for women in the workplace, jobcenters, local employment initiatives, etc.)

WHY THIS GUIDE?

Because vocational retraining to trades traditionally held by men is a permanent source of employment for women have few employment opportunities and are often in precarious situations.

Because the employment support structures may feel helpless in assisting female job seekers in their retraining to jobs traditionally held by men.

They may lack:

- knowledge about the successful processes for this type of professional reconversion
- arguments to convince women who have less employment opportunities of the benefits of this type of vocational retraining
- training about diversity in the workplace

This Guide provides keys to support the professional retraining of women job seekers to jobs traditionally held by men.

WHAT IS GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

> Gender diversity in figures

Only 12% of trades and only 3 professional fields (which make up for only 4% of jobs) have an equal amount of women and men.

Women work mostly in only 10 of the 87 professional fields identified by INSEE.

For example in France, **it would be necessary for half of the employees to retrain to achieve actual diversity.**

> The European challenges of professional diversity

In its Europe 2020 Strategy, the European Union says that equality between women and men is a **"lever for economic growth, employment, social cohesion and sustainable development"**.

Numerous studies show that equality and professional diversity are sources of:

- **social justice**
- **human, commercial and financial company performance**
- **growth and employment**

WHY WOMEN IN TRADES TRADITIONALLY HELD BY MEN?

36% of active women in the European Union work in 6 categories of occupation out of 130: sales, assistance and personal care, administrative and other office jobs, catering and housekeeping services. These trades are generally less lucrative, often worked full-time and atypical schedules.

For men, 25% are predominantly from the following categories: **drivers, builders, tradesmen, management of small businesses, science and technology or mechanics.** These jobs are generally better paid, often on a full time basis, and at normal working hours.

The labour market is thus schematically divided between occupations traditionally held by men which are more financially attractive and more promising, and trades traditionally worked by women which are less so.

A study by the European Commission describes the phenomenon of "**Employment segregation**" and "**Gender segregation in the labour market**". A study by the European Commission describes the phenomenon of "Employment segregation" and "Gender segregation in the labour market" (see Francesca Bettio and Alina Verashchagina - Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities).

Women who have less employment opportunities are those who suffer the most from this phenomenon. Because they turn and are mainly oriented towards trades related to the domestic sphere that seem to match "the only skills" they could claim.

Employment support structures have a key role to play in the professional re-training of these women to widen their range of opportunities to trades traditionally worked by men, often more lucrative and less precarious.

> **10 KEYS**

**TO ACCOMPANYING THE PRO-
FESSIONAL TRANSITION
OF WOMEN**

TO TRADES TRADITIONALLY
HELD BY MEN HOMMES

KEY #1

TRAINING IN GENDER EQUALITY AND PROFESSIONAL DIVERSITY

> Objectives

Mastering the issues of diversity and professional equality between women and men, in particular gendered segregation of trades and considering employment.

Become aware of one's own role as an accelerator or a brake to gendered segregation of trades.

> Why?

Understanding the challenges of making job more diverse and the mechanisms and influence of gender stereotypes at work is an essential prerequisite to become an actor of equality and professional gender balance.

It is necessary to be trained in these issues to analyse situations of occupational inequality more efficiently and make changes. We talk about "**putting on glasses of the gender**". The aim here is to change posture to remove the preconceptions about trades and discover trades that would not have been considered before.

> How?

By training on issues of gender diversity and professional equality between women and men.

It is recommended to use a trainer who specialises in the subject.

By participating in meetings on gender equality and professional equality (International Women's Rights Day and the Equality Week organized by the public authorities every year respectively in March and October, Meeting of Aract, CCI...).

By following the work of the High Council for Equality between Women and Men, the Higher Council for Professional Equality between Women and Men, the Hubertine Auclert Center, the school of the gender...

Topics to be tackled in training

- Legislation and public policies on equality and professional diversity in Europe
- Main facts and figures about occupational inequalities between women and men, tackling gender segregation of trades
- The power of barriers to equality and professional mix, in particular gender stereotypes
- ...

KEY #2

MEETING WOMEN WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY RETRAINED FOR JOBS TRADITIONALLY HELD BY MEN

> Objectives

Collect the evidence: experiences of women who have successfully transitioned to trades traditionally held by men.

Establish a local file with profiles of women who have successfully transitioned to trades traditionally worked by men.

> Why?

Learning from the experiences of these women who have successfully retrained to jobs traditionally practiced by men can enrich your own employment support practices.

These meetings allow to:

- discover the motivations of women to convert to jobs where they were not expected
- know the obstacles they have encountered on their path towards transition both in the personal and professional sphere
- understand the key factors of success of these transitions
- deepen your knowledge of the trades worked by these women
- ...

> How?

By getting in touch with structures that are implementing or supporting the retraining of women to jobs traditionally held by men.

For example: CIDFF - National Information Centers on Women's and Family Rights, Regional Councils, DRDFE - Regional Delegations for Women's Rights and Equality,...

By contacting companies that are open to mixed occupations and who hire women in positions traditionally worked by men (see page 14).

By taking part in visits to companies that employ women in trades traditionally performed by men (see page 10).

By taking part in meetings on gender and professional equality, attended by women who work in trades traditionally worked by men.

KEY #3

LEARNING TO GIVE WOMEN ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF RETRAINING FOR A JOB TRADITIONALLY HELD BY MEN

> Objectives

Know and understand the benefits of a professional transition towards jobs traditionally held by men for women with less employment opportunities

Be able to make aware and guide women who have the least employment opportunities to trades traditionally worked by men.

> Why?

Women/men stereotypes on trades affect the structures accompanying employment as well as female job seekers.

Women with the least opportunities predominantly turn to and are oriented towards low-paying and precarious jobs related to the domestic sphere which seem to match "the only skills" to which they could claim.

This is why it is necessary to learn how to argue with women who are furthest away from employment about the benefits of a professional retraining to trades traditionally worked by men.

> How?

By following training.

Educational tools for professionals' trainer are freely available on the project website

www.mixite.eu

It is recommended to use a specialized trainer in professional equality between women and men.

Topics covered in the training

- The causal link between reduction of gender inequality and improvement of women's employment
- The benefits of a professional transition to jobs traditionally worked by men for women with the least employment opportunities
- The arguments to focus on against women's preconceived ideas
- ...

KEY #4

HELPING WOMEN DISCOVERING TRADES THEY HAD NOT CONSIDERED

> Objectives

Expand the range of possible occupations for women with less work opportunities.

Give concrete examples of women holding positions traditionally worked by men.

Provide opportunities to women with the least work opportunities to find interest and aptitude for a promising field that they had not considered.

Connect women who lack opportunities the most with companies open to diversity of trades traditionally held by men.

> Why?

Discovering by oneself is often the best learning.

It is hard to change the mind of people who have always thought that a given job was not for them. They need to see the everyday life in a job, to see that it is possible to do it, to discover an interest they had not considered to change the situation.

The discovery of the trades in terms of diversity brings learnings to every one, women away from employment, women in precarious employment, and companions in employment...

> How?

By organizing company visits.

Theme of visits: Discovery of trades traditionally worked by men by women job seekers.

Company Profile:

- Companies open to diversity In the workplace
- Companies that hire women in trades traditionally held by men.



Download here a methodological guide for the implementation of company visits

By participating in open days in training centres or companies that train or hire women on trades traditionally carried out by men.

By participating in exhibitions that show trades traditionally performed by men.

KEY #5

SUPPORTING WOMEN IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSITIONING TO OCCUPATIONS TRADITIONALLY HELD BY MEN

> Objectives

Ensure the sustainability of the professional reconversion of women away from employment to occupations traditionally worked by men.

Fighting the brakes linked to the gendered segregation of trades throughout the process of reconversion women who are furthest away from employment into trades traditionally worked by men.

> Why?

Most women transitioning to jobs traditionally practiced by men are hampered by both their professional and personal environments (see testimonials below).

This is why it is necessary to accompany women at every stage of the professional retraining process. Support structures for employment have a crucial role to play in ensuring the sustainability of their vocational retraining.

Evidence of successful women transitioning towards jobs traditionally held by men

"When I passed my material handling licence, people thought I would fail. I was the only woman to pass it"

"We must let go of prejudice and women/men representations to believe that a woman can succeed"

> How?

By strengthening support for traditional employment by adding special follow-up for women retraining towards jobs traditionally worked by men, from the moment they choose their part until their onboarding into the company.

Training tools to learn how to identify and remove the barriers that these women can encounter are freely accessible on the project site www.mixite.eu

By entering in touch with structures that lead or support projects assisting the professional retraining of women into jobs traditionally worked by men.

For example: CIDFF - National Information Centres on Women's and Family Rights, Regional Councils, DRDFE - Regional Delegations for Women's Rights and Equality, etc.

KEY #6

DEFINING TRAINING PATHS FOR WOMEN IN TRANSITIONING TO TRADES TRADITIONALLY WORKED BY MEN

> Objectives

Identify the specific training needs of women vocationally retraining to trades traditionally performed by men.

Lift the brakes on the implementation of their training.

Identify support for the financing of their training project.

> Why?

Training is often unavoidable in the process of vocational retraining. It brings the abilities, know-how and skills needed to practice a profession. It gives vocational retraining structure and thus promotes employability on the labour market.

At the beginning of the definition of the training project, women who are converting to trades traditionally worked by men are confronted with numerous obstacles. The communication around training to these trades is often directed towards men, prerequisites required to access training have not been taught in the educational and professional paths mostly followed by girls...

Specific support during the definition of the training project is indispensable to let these women in retraining access the training of their choice.

> How?

By identifying and interacting with local training centers for trades traditionally carried out by men, to present them the projects of women retraining into their trades and to remove possible brakes.

By contacting the regional training and job information structures to identify funding aids of training projects. For example: Challenge Trades Ile-de-France, Aquitaine Cap Métiers, Rhône-Alpes Orientation...

By training to have a better understanding of the obstacles to training during the professional retraining of women towards trades traditionally worked by men. Pedagogical tools for professionals trainers are freely available on the project website www.mixite.eu

KEY #7

SUPPORTING WOMEN THROUGHOUT THEIR TRAINING PROCESS FOR TRADES TRADITIONALLY WORKED BY MEN

> Objectives

Improve women's access to training for jobs traditionally practiced by men

Optimise the chances of success of women in training in these jobs.

> Why?

Key 6 highlighted the obstacles that women may encounter in accessing training that will allow them to reconvert to trades traditionally worked by men. But once admitted in training, these women may face other difficulties.

The content of these courses has indeed been designed for a male audience. Learning methods and equipment are not thought to welcome women. All these factors hamper their integration in these courses and can reduce their chances of success.

This is why it is necessary to support women in retraining towards these jobs throughout the training process.

> How?

By staying in touch with the teams of teachers in local training centers. Carry out specific follow-up with trainers of women in vocational retraining on the visible and invisible problems they may encounter during their training.

By analyzing all the stages of the training process (learning methods, equipment, etc.) with professional equality between women and men in mind. To do so, we recommend that you take a training course in order to have a better understanding of the obstacles women face during their reconversion to jobs traditionally worked by men. Educational tools for training professionals are freely available on the project site www.mixite.eu

KEY #8

DETECTING COMPANIES OPEN TO WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR TRADES TRADITIONALLY PERFORMED BY MEN

> Objectives

Put women in training for occupations traditionally worked by men in touch with local companies open to diversity in the workplace.

Optimise the access to jobs for women in vocational retraining for occupations traditionally worked by men.

> Why?

Directing women into vocational retraining to companies that are not open to female candidates for jobs traditionally performed by men, leads to a definite failure: loss of time, discouragement, devaluation, etc. As access to employment is the ultimate goal, it is much more efficient to start by identifying companies open to diversity and even encouraging it.

> How?

By meeting local companies open to women candidates for trades traditionally worked by men, approaching the networks and clubs of local companies.

By monitoring diversity on networks, events, media... in which companies open to the diversity in the workplace get involved:

- Networks of socially committed companies
- Diversity / Equality Meetings (events organized by the authorities on International Women's Rights Day and during Women's / Men's Equality Week, ICC meetings, etc.)
- Institutional actors
- Local media (articles on socially committed companies, in particular companies involved in gender equality)
- professional sectors whose positions are traditionally held by men (metallurgy, transport, building, etc.), but that are involved in foster gender diversity
- ...

KEY #9

RAISING COMPANIES' AWARENESS OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

> Objectives

Expand the pool of local businesses open to female candidates for trades traditionally worked by men.

Optimizing the chances of women entering vocational reconversion to work in occupations traditionally worked by men.

> Why?

The challenge is to convince local companies to engage a mix of jobs approach, and hence to recruit women for jobs traditionally performed by men.

This is why it is necessary to sensitize human resources departments and managers to the benefits of the mix of jobs for the company.

Afnor (certification of the professional equality label) highlights the following benefits of gender balance and professional equality for the company:

- bears the image of a socially committed organization
- facilitates and supports social dialogue
- enriches the sustainable development approach
- is a source of economic performance

> How?

By identifying the local stakeholders committed to diversity and equality in the workplace, companies that raise the issues of mixed trades.

By informing companies and business clubs about awareness of the mix of jobs implemented by local stakeholders committed to gender equity and professional equality.

By organizing events to raise awareness of the mix of jobs for companies (round table, workshop, corporate theatre, etc.). It is recommended to call upon a specialist in gender equality and professional equality.

By raising awareness on a daily basis companies whose occupations are traditionally worked by men on the benefits of the mix of trades. For this, it is recommended to take a training course on gender equality and professional equality (see key #1, page 7).

KEY #10

RAISING THE MANAGERS' AND EMPLOYEES' AWARENESS TO GREET WOMEN IN TRADES TRADITIONALLY WORKED BY MEN

> Objectives

Encourage a long-term company integration of women in vocational retraining towards occupations traditionally worked by men.

Help local businesses open to diversity of trades to successfully integrate women in jobs traditionally held by men.

> Why?

Companies with a traditionally male workforce are not well prepared for the arrival of women in their teams.

This is why it is necessary to raise awareness among managers and collaborators about the importance of greeting women in teams made of men for them to be successfully integrated.

> How?

By raising awareness among managers and collaborators of women you accompany in their retraining. To do so, you should be trained on the issue. Pedagogical tools for training professionals are freely available on the project website **www.mixite.eu**

By organizing awareness-raising sessions in local businesses about the proper integration of women in activities traditionally carried out by men and therefore by male-dominated teams. Find a gender equality expert to host the sessions.

By encouraging companies to develop an equality policy in recruitment for jobs and internships. Starting the progressive feminisation of the workforce by hiring female trainees can be an hand-on way to raise the staff's awareness to diversity.

THE AUTHORS OF THE GUIDE

This Guide was conceived as part of the project « Gender diversity fosters employment », on initiative of a economic development agency Hauts de Garonne Développement (France) et a gender equality consultant Charline Jambert (France). This project was financed with the support of the European Commission as part of a strategic partnership of educational and vocational training within the Erasmus+ programme.

5 European partners were contributed to the project « Gender diversity fosters employment »:



Economic Development Agency of the Right Bank of Bordeaux (France)

Hauts de Garonne Développement leads 4 major missions:

- Support to the development of companies: Development of networks, Emulation / networking, Human Resources / Diversity and Gender Diversity.
- Studies / Engineering: Observatory, Incubator, Business Hotels.
- Support for the creation of companies: thematic workshops, animation of the network of actors of the creation of companies, reception / personalized advice.
- Support in the transfer and takeover of companies: detection and guidance / accompaniment of assignors.

www.hdgdev.com

Charline Jambert (France)

The project benefits from a specific guidance in gender equality issues with the participation of a specialised consultant, Charline Jambert. She advised public and private organisations for years to design and implement a gender equality approach. She initiates and participates in Erasmus+ partnerships in the field of educational and vocational training. She is particularly involved in the issues of gender diversity in professions and addressing gender stereotypes. These partnerships aim to design learning tools in the form of e-learning, videos, serious games,... She is member of the Erasmus+ developers network.

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Chamber of commerce and industry (Bulgaria)

The CCI–Dobrich is the most important business support organization at regional level, part of the network of Bulgarian CCIs. The goals of CCI are to increase regional economic growth and prosperity, to stimulate international trade and investments, to encourage international exchange and to promote the interests of member companies at local, national and international levels. CCI is a host structure of Enterprise Europe Network.

www.cci.dobrich.net



CIAPE (Italy)

CIAPE carries out training activities to develop and validate soft skills, as well as competences required in the future labour market. CIAPE is a train-the-trainer organisation, recognised expert in Work Based Learning at European level, with high qualified experience in EU, national and regional projects management. CIAPE deals with didactical innovation, develop innovative ideas to ensure the accessibility of learning to a wide range of target groups, such as students, seniors, professionals and groups at risk. CIAPE is the coordinator of the “European Network for Quality Apprenticeships”, and an active member of CEDEFOP "European Qualifications Framework - Credit Transfer In VET" and of the "Quality Assurance in VET" communities.

www.ciape.it



Guimel (France)

GUIMEL is a French company acting on social link. The team of GUIMEL has a large experience in European projects as they worked on more than 80 EU projects for 15 years in the field of EQUAL and LLP, as coordinator or as partner. GUIMEL is engaged in ERASMUS + projects (Gender Equality, ICT, Sports, Healthcare). Guimel is also involved in the research project ECVET Development, CEC.

www.guimel.eu

For further information about
the project « Gender equality fosters employment » :

www.mixite.eu