





Did you know that...?

I

Diversity increases the value of our sector and our environment

- Diversity implies a plurality of profiles and points of view and is therefore a source of creativity and innovation.
- Mixed work teams have a positive influence on the working environment, which also has an impact on the competitiveness and productivity of the company.
- Having women on the staff projects an image of the company that is more responsible, fair, respectful and adapted to the new times.
- It facilitates the adaptation of companies to future modifications of European regulations, which are aimed at favouring the awarding of contracts and public aid to companies that promote equality.



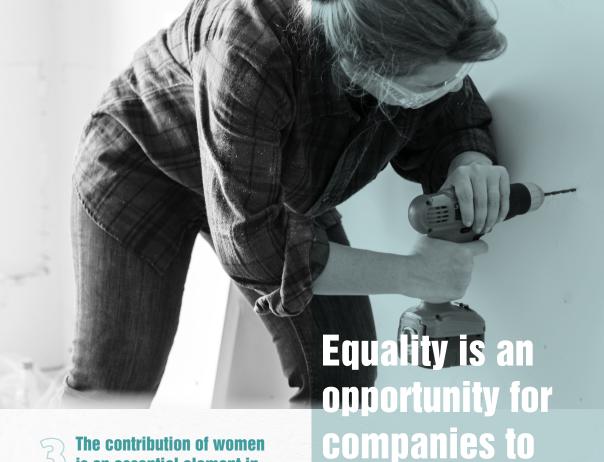
Equal opportunities contribute to the best use of human resources

Being open to the recruitment of women means having access to a **wider range** of labour.

It makes it possible to respond to the shortage of qualified labour through access to the best available **talent**, whether male or female.

The combination of differences between women and men can generate more motivation and competitiveness in the company. Both ways of working, making decisions and seeing reality are complementary, which can bring added value to the company.





The contribution of women is an essential element in client orientation

Customer orientation is a particularly important component of business strategy. Markets are increasingly diverse and differentiated, and the **diversity** in work teams represents a **greater capacity** for the company to respond to market demands.

Having a heterogeneous work team serves to find solutions and approaches to different clients. Having women in the team favours a better detection of the **needs and priorities** of a large part of the final customers of construction products and services (new construction, renovation), who are also women.

improve

What those involved say

We have carried out a study in Spain, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Portugal to find out what is happening so that, in the construction sector, only 9% of the workers are women. We have consulted companies, vocational training trainers in the sector and women building workers. The aim is to encourage a greater presence of women in the construction trades and to achieve a more equal and competitive sector.

Low presence of women in the sector

Main barriers to the recruitment of women in construction

Lack of female candidates for the posts

The sector is not attractive to women

Strength and physical resistance

Lack of necessary experience

Little flexibility in schedules (conciliation)

Lack of professional skills

Influence of gender stereotypes in the recruitment process







| COMPANIES | TRAINERS | WOMEN |
|-----------|----------|-------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | 1 | 4 |
| 3 | 3 | |
| 4 | 4 | 2 |
| | | 3 |
| | | |
| | 2 | 1 |

Based on the fact that women have not traditionally participated in construction trades, do you think they can work in the sector?

 $[\]mathscr{A}$ Yes, with the appropriate training



It is not a question of a lack of professional skills. Everyone believes that with the appropriate training, women can be just as capable as men of performing a trade. Lack of experience can be a barrier, although women perceive it as a more relevant factor than companies themselves.

For companies, the most significant thing is that there are no women candidates for the positions. However, trainers report that their students are recruited quickly and that their female students, while equally competent, do not find employment in the sector as easily. The number of female students in the classroom/ workshop is still much lower than the number of male students, so the sector does not appear to be attractive to women.

Women who are already working in the sector consider that *gender stereotypes* (*) influence their recruitment possibilities.

Physical strength and endurance are cited by employers and trainers as factors that can influence the hiring of women.

^{*} The gender stereotypes are the set of ideas or widespread prejudice useds to explain the behaviourThe characteristics and functions of the that both men like women have or should have. These gender stereotypes operate in the business culture in the belief that certain professional roles are better performed by people of one sex than by people of the other.





Selection processes

Means used by companies in the sector to find candidates







When companies need to hire, they think of



> Characteristics that companies look for when contracting







90%

of the women interviewed have experienced *gender* discrimination in the selection process, that is, it has been harder for them to get a job in the sector because they are women.

79% of the companies consulted do not have specific mechanisms not have specific mechanisms to ensure an objective selection

process. Among those that contemplate measures, they indicate the use of inclusive language in the offers, mixed personnel selection teams and final decision making in teams.

For reflection...

Let us remember that lack of experience has not been pointed out by companies as a very important barrier for women to enter the sector. However, when it comes to recruiting staff, experienced professionals are sought first and foremost.

Most use the advertisements on websites and social networks to search for professionals and spontaneously think of men to fill the company's vacancies. This may indicate that the job advertisements are not aimed at women and therefore use non-inclusive language to define the position, which may be discouraging the attraction of women to the sector.

The search for employment through professional friends and networks is also an ineffective channel for most women, due to their lack of experience in the sector.





Professional skills

Construction is a sector that requires skilled workers. Most employers say they have difficulty in finding professionals.

The majority of companies (60%) consider that women can be as competent as men in the sector, with the appropriate training, while for 28% women can find it difficult to carry out the tasks correctly due to the physical resistance required for some construction trades.

Responses are generally positive towards female construction workers: they are equally valid workers as men and their recruitment also brings advantages to the workplace (mainly complementarity in the team with men, increased creativity and additional motivation).



3 out of 5 trainers

consider that women access to the sector by **vocation**, showing greater **motivation**.

They give women a higher level of precision and quality in the execution of tasks, as well as greater respect for safety standards. In trades, activities related to finishing are especially identified by trainers, as female students excel in the precision and attention to detail that finishing tasks require.

- Main characteristics of the "ideal professional" for companies in the sector
 - 1 Ability to relate and work in teams.
 - Overview of the construction site, regardless of the specific task performed.
 - Quality in the execution of tasks.
 - Respect for standards, in particular health and safety.



For reflection...

Competences have been identified as being:
a) acquired through training and
b) interpersonal (relationships with others)
and intra-personal skills (self-confidence,
self-motivation, etc.). None of the desirable
competences can be associated with
the differential and biological fact of
being a man or a woman. Therefore, the
occupational profile for men and women
should not be biased by stereotypes.

The physical resistance needed for the construction, mainly due to the manual handling of loads, is once again mentioned. Resistance is one of the basic physical capacities, particularly that which allows us to carry out an activity or effort for as

long as possible. The handling of loads in construction is responsible for the appearance of physical fatigue and/or injuries, mainly musculoskeletal. For this reason, the occupational risks prevention establishes the obligation to adopt technical and organisational measures, as well as to provide the appropriate mechanical means (trolleys, forklifts, cranes, etc.) to avoid these risks of injuries in all workers, men and women. Furthermore, the sector, which is increasingly modernised, is giving way to industrialised processes where strength is a minor factor. Naturally there are trades for which a person's physical strength continues to be an issue to be considered in the recruitment.

Action plan

We are committed to change: how do we start?

Nowadays companies are subject to the need to innovate permanently in order to meet the needs and demands of the market, whose fundamental characteristic is its constant evolution. The need to innovate means that companies must continuously modernise if they are not to be relegated to the background and, consequently, become uncompetitive. This innovation not only refers to work processes and techniques, but also to business management models.



Egalitarian business culture

In this context, a new management of the company emerges where human resources are configured as the main asset of the organization and where the principle of equal opportunities becomes the driving force and is introduced as a basic principle of the company's culture.

In this sense, new trends in human resources management and business organisation introduce as fundamental elements, among others, motivation, a good working climate or the reconciliation of family, work and personal life, which become basic factors to improve productivity, but also to attract and maintain qualified personnel.

> Implementation proposals

Company's commitment.

The management of the company must expressly lead and assume the objective of gender equality. To this end, it must have internal policy documents that include it as a basic principle and establish it at the same level as the other principles.

Knowledge of the situation.

In order to know what the real situation is in terms of gender equality, any information on gender imbalances and stereotypes that exist in each area of the company must be collected.



Creation of a mechanism to receive concerns, consultations or proposals from workers, as well as to monitor behaviour that deviates from the equality perspective and analyse motivations.

Assignment of responsibilities.

Since the implementation of a gender equality strategy is not a matter for management alone, the departments and/ or individuals who will be responsible for initiating the change processes must be identified.

Objective promotion systems.

Generating a culture of work by objectives and recognition based on results is the best way to guarantee equal opportunities and make it possible for women to progressively access all levels of the organisation

Planning for internal protocols on gender equality that include:

- A staff development plan that identifies the operational and non-operational skills they will need to cover
- A plan for reconciling family and work life (flexibility, paternity leave, etc.)
- A training plan for internal staff on gender equality

Non-discriminatory recruitment and selection strategies

Recruitment and selection is the practice in human resource management whereby companies seek human resources with specific knowledge, experience, attitudes and skills to fill certain jobs. This procedure seeks to attract applications and select the most qualified people with the best match for the job vacancy, making it essential for companies to meet the expectations created for the job.



Description of the jobs by using a neutral language and determining objective criteria such as technical knowledge, roles and responsibilities, and essential requirements.

Publication of job advertisements using neutral, non-aggressive language that includes both women and men, and detailing only the essential requirements. It is not just a question of the language being inclusive, but of the nature of the messages behind it and its ability to make the job attractive to both women and men.

Recruitment channels ensuring that information on the vacant position is accessible to both women and men in the company, or from outside if it is advertised externally

Objective evaluation of the applications based on the criteria previously defined in the job description, taking into account the training of the candidate.



Interviews and other selection tests to ensure the fairness of the process in terms of gender, focusing on the requirements, capacity and competencies for the position. Those conducting the selection process must have a clear understanding of the benefits of gender diversity.

Selection of the candidate by carrying out an objective assessment of the people interested in the job based on experience, academic and further training, capacities and skills without taking into account the sex of the person. The selection of the candidate must be transparent and based on demonstrable criteria so that there is no room for ambiguity.





Do you need masons, painters, tilers, crane operators, electricians?? Don't be left behind! Many other companies in the sector already have professional women on their staff

Contact us

If you need advice, you can contact us to help you find the most suitable, prepared and potential people for the job.

Project leader (Spain)

Fundación Laboral de la Construcción (FLC).

More information at www.womencanbuild.eu



















