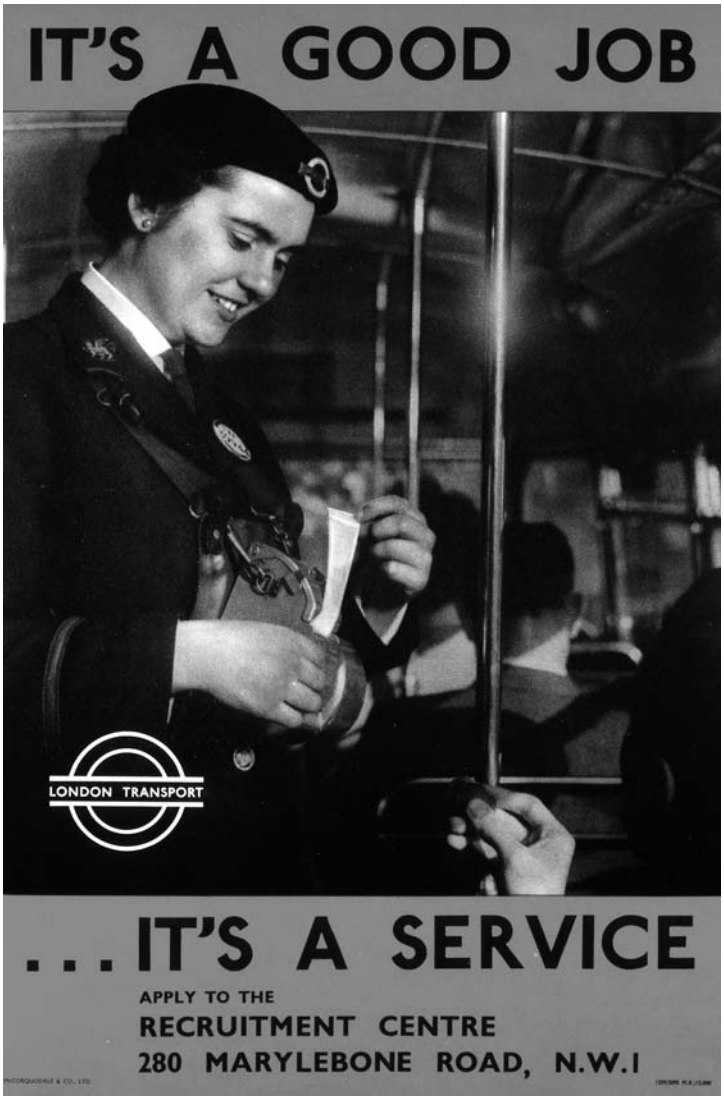
4. The Gendered Transport Sector



Unknown artist 1959, TfL/London Transport Museum

In this chapter, we will look at the structural level of transport policy – or the internal, which is about recruitment, promotion and work organisation at all levels. The structural level focuses on women's and men's participation in and influence on decision-making, planning and policy and on the gender-segregated occupations in the transport sector. As we discussed in chapter 2, the transport sector on the structural level can be understood as a large technological system that is comprised by both public and private institutions and organisations responsible for providing mobility and accessibility. We will here only cover a small part of this large sector and take a closer look at the question of women's participation in decision-making as well as in employment in the transport sector.

4.1 REPRESENTATION IN DECISION-MAKING

In this section, we will look at women's representation in decision-making. The gender mainstreaming literature points to how organisations tend to embody male agency and thus obstruct a gender equality agenda while Polk noted that one of the reasons for the relative failure of the gender mainstreaming efforts in Swedish transport policy was the structural barriers where men are seen as the norm in fulfilling the role of experts and decision-makers. We want to see whether this can be said to be the general picture in European transport politics: is the European transport sector dominated by male decision-makers? First we will examine the EU level – i.e. the parliament and different bodies that advise the parliament and the commission. Next we look at the national parliamentary transport committees in a number of EU countries, and we conclude by having a closer look at one of the countries in the EU that normally scores high on different gender equality indexes – namely Denmark.

4.1.1 EU level

At the EU level, we deal with two kinds of political representation. There is the direct political representation in the European Parliament where much of the work is delegated to committees. And then there is a more indirect political representation in different advisory councils and boards that advise parliament and commission on several aspects.

Political committees

In the European Parliament we will take a closer look at the sex disaggregation of three parliamentary committees, all in some way or the other related to the subject matter of this report: the parliamentary committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN),[2] the parliamentary committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)[3] and the parliamentary committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM).[4] The role of the parliamentary committees is to draw up, amend and adopt legislative proposals and own-initiative reports. They consider Commission and Council proposals and, where necessary, draw up reports to be presented to the plenary assembly. A committee consists of between 28 and 86 members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and has a chair, a bureau and a secretariat. The political make-up of the committees reflects that of the plenary assembly.

The Transport and Tourism Committee (TRAN) is responsible for matters relating to the development of a common policy for rail, road, inland waterway, maritime and air transport, in particular common rules applicable to transport within the European Union, the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the area of transport infrastructure, the provision of transport services and relations in the field of transport with third countries, transport safety and relations with international transport bodies and organisations for matters relating to postal services and to tourism. The Committee consists of 51 members of which 44 are male and 7 are female.

The Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE) is responsible for the Union's industrial policy and the application of new technologies, including measures relating to SMEs, the Union's research policy, including the dissemination and exploitation of research findings and space policy. It is also responsible for the activities of the Joint Research Centre and the Central Office for Nuclear Measurements, as well as JET, ITER and other projects in the same area. Other areas include Community measures relating to energy policy in general, the security of energy supply and energy efficiency, including the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the energy infrastructure sector, the Euratom Treaty and Euratom Supply Agency; nuclear safety, decommissioning and waste disposal in the nuclear sector, and the information society and information technology, including the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the telecommunication infrastructure sector. The Committee consists of 54 members of which 33 are male and 21 are female.

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) is responsi-

ble for the definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures, the promotion of women's rights in third world countries, equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work, the removal of all forms of discrimination based on sex, the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors, the follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women and information policy on women. The Committee consists of 40 members of which 3 are male and 37 are female.

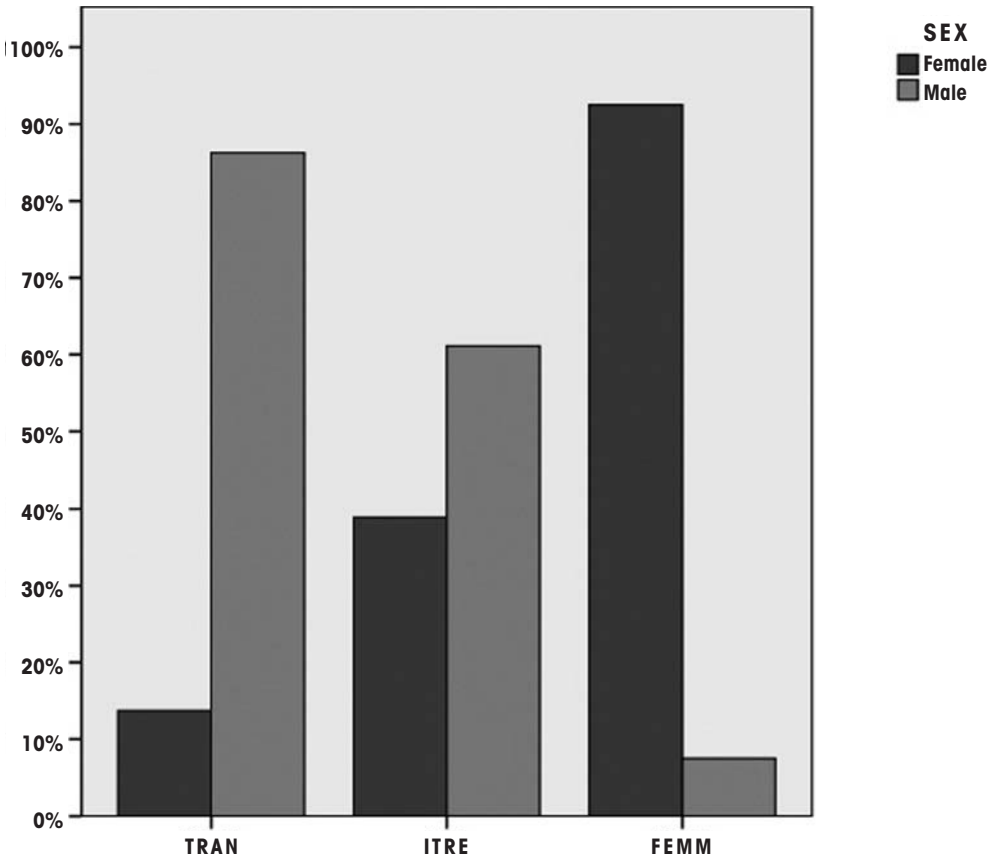


FIGURE 1:

Female and male members of three parliamentary committees in the EU Parliament

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/committees.do?language=EN

As is clear from the diagram above, transport is indeed a masculine area when it comes to EU politics. Just around 14% of the members of the transport and tourism committee are women. This is compared to the composition of the parliament itself where 31% of the members are women (244 of 783 members).[5] When we look at another technical area – that of industry, research and technology – we see that it is still a very male-dominated area with 62% of the members being men. However, this does correspond with the composition of the parliament as such. In the other spectrum, we find that issues of women's rights and gender equality are clearly conceived as women's concerns. Almost 93% of the members are women. Interestingly, TRAN and FEMM are the two committees with the most biased composition. If we take the unbalanced composition of the parliament into account (69% men, 31% women), we can also conclude that issues such as environment, public health and food safety (fifty-fifty balance) and consumer protection (51% women) are issues that interest women – or are offered to women? At the other end of the scale, the committees on legal affairs (82% men), constitutional affairs (83% men) and security and defence (83% men) are predominantly male.

Research and advisory council

Besides the political level there also exist a number of research and advisory councils that seek to influence European transport policy and transport research policy. Here we will take a closer look at the sex disaggregated composition of some of these institutions.

European Rail Research Advisory Council (ERRAC) [6] was set up in 2001 with the goal of creating a single European body with both the competence and capability to help revitalise the European rail sector and make it more competitive by fostering increased innovation and guiding research efforts at European level. ERRAC comprises 45 representatives from each of the major European rail research stakeholders: manufacturers, operators, infrastructure managers, the European Commission, EU member states, academics and users' groups. ERRAC covers all forms of rail transport: from conventional, high-speed and freight applications to urban and regional services. ERRAC focuses on defining and implementing steps to achieve a joint European rail research strategy and on enhancing collaborative European rail research by, among other things, building consensus among stakeholders, improving synergies between EU, national and private rail research and strengthening and re-organising research and development efforts.

The European Road Transport Research Advisory Council (ERTRAC)[7] was es-

tablished to mobilise all stakeholders, develop a shared vision and ensure timely, co-ordinated and efficient application of research resources to meet the continuing challenges of road transport and European competitiveness. ERTRAC members are high-level representatives from all road transport sectors including consumers, vehicle manufacturers, component suppliers, road infrastructure operators and developers, service providers, energy suppliers, research organisations, cities and regions as well as public authorities at both European Union and national level. ERTRAC focuses on providing a strategic vision for the road transport sector with respect to research and development, stimulating increased effective public and private invest-

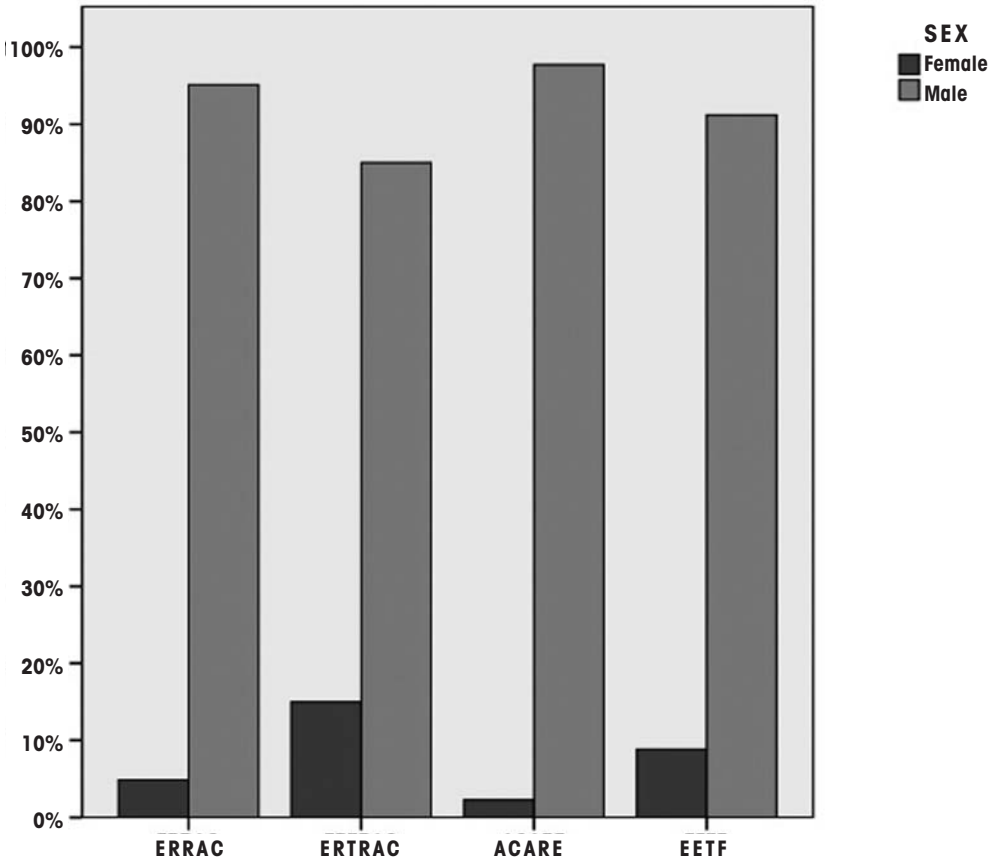


FIGURE 2:

Female and male members of European advisory councils

http://www.errac.org/, http://www.ertrac.org/, http://www.acare4europe.org/, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/forum/index_en.htm

ment in road transport research and development, contributing to improving co-ordination between the European, national, regional and private research and development actions on road transport and promoting European commitment to research and technological development ensuring that Europe remains an attractive region for researchers and competitive industries.

ACARE – Advisory Council for Aeronautics Research in Europe (ACARE) was launched to create an advisory council to develop and implement a strategic approach to European aeronautics research. Its main focus is to establish and carry forward a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) that will influence all European stakeholders in the planning of research programmes, particularly national and EU programmes, in line with the Vision 2020 and the goals it identifies. ACARE comprises about 40 members with clearly defined and commonly agreed upon terms of re-ference, including representation from the member states, the commission and stakeholders, including the manufacturing industry, airlines, airports, service providers, regulators, the research establishments and academia.

The diagram below shows the sex-disaggregated composition of the governing bodies of the three advisory councils:

This diagram clearly shows that the transport research advisory councils like their political counterparts are also a masculine domain. The ERTRAC Steering Group has 72% male membership, the ERRAC Plenary Working Group 95% male membership and the ACARE membership comprises 93% men.

ERTRAC, ERRAC and ACARE are independent of the EU whereas the European Energy and Transport Forum (EETF) is a consultative committee created by the European Commission composed of high-level representatives from a large range of sectors and activities in the fields of energy and transport. This forum is part of the commission's initiative to improve European governance through increased public participation, transparency and dialogue between the commission and the interested parties. The forum's mission is to provide opinions on any commission initiative in the field of energy and transport policy. It also serves as a monitoring centre for energy policy (all energy sources) and transport policy (all forms of transport). It will offer its views on competitiveness and structural adjustments in these sectors, incorporating environmental, social and safety concerns. The forum comprises 34 members covering a wide range of areas of activity within the energy and transport sectors: operators, infrastructure and networks, users and consumers, trade unions, representatives of environmental protection and safety, especially in the field of transport, and academic experts, think tanks. As can be

seen in the above diagram, men also dominate this forum. 91% of the members are men.

4.1.2 National political level

We have also taken a look at the national political level. The below diagram shows the sex-disaggregated composition of parliamentary transport or transport-related

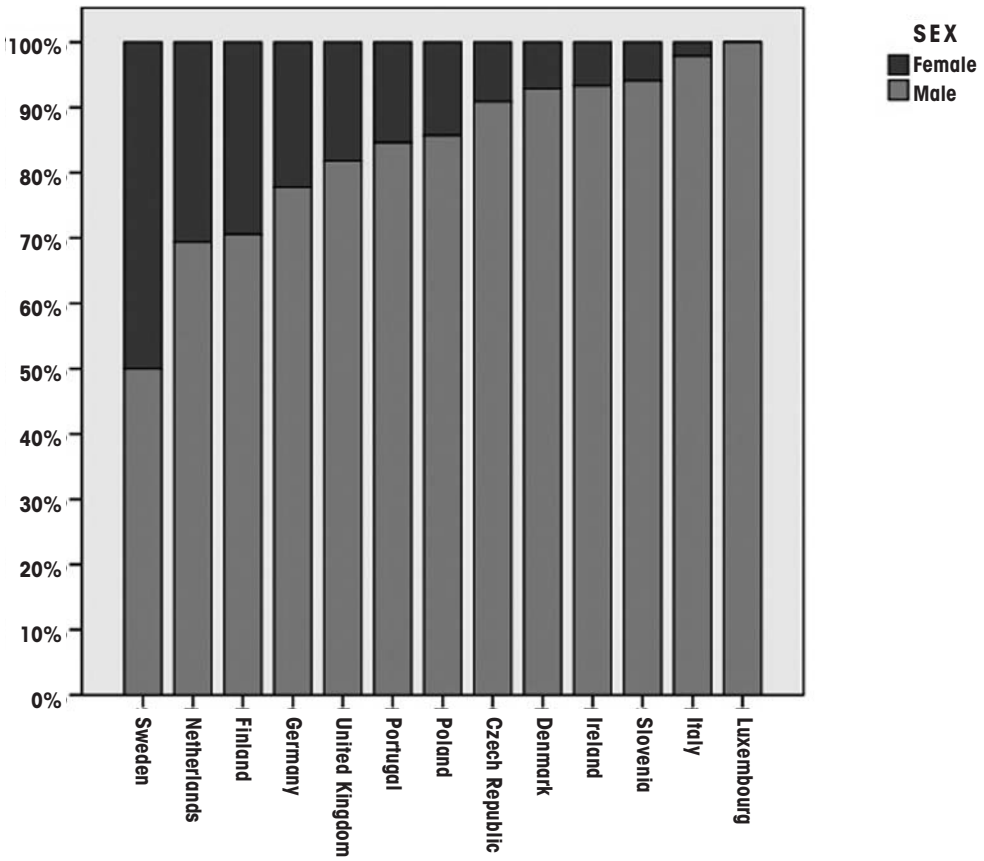


FIGURE 3:

Female and male members of national transport-related parliamentary committees

http://www.riksdagen.se/default____56.aspx, http://www.parlement.nl/, http://web.eduskunta.fi/Resource.phx/parliament/index.htx, http://www.bundestag.de/htdocs_e/index.html, http://www.parliament.uk/, http://www.assembleiadarepublica.pt/ingles/index.html, http://www.senat.gov.pl/indexe.htm, http://www.senat.cz/index-eng.php, http://folketinget.dk, http://www.oireachtas.ie/ViewDoc.asp?fn=/home.asp, http://www.dz-rs.si/index.php?id=69, http://www.parlamento.it/, http://www.chd.lu/default.jsp

committees in many of the EU member states. It has been possible to obtain data from 13 countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom). 5 countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Spain) did not seem to have committees directly dealing with transport issues, and in 6 countries (Austria, France, Hungary, Greece, Malta, Cyprus and Belgium) it was not possible to obtain the required data.

Only two countries, Sweden and the Netherlands, are below 70% male membership of the transport committees. Otherwise, the male percentage ranges from 70.6 (Finland) to 100 (Luxembourg). As in the previous segment, these figures should of course be evaluated in relation to the number of men and women in the national parliament. Here, the United Kingdom has the best correlation between the percentage of women in the transport committee and the percentage of women in the parliament: 18.2% women in the parliament and 18.5% in the committee. For the rest of the countries it is notable that the percentage of women in the transport committees is lower than the percentage of women in the parliaments as such. Except for Sweden. Not only does Sweden have a fifty-fifty balance in the committee; this number is also higher than the percentage of women in parliament which is 45.3%. So with the exception of Sweden, on the national levels the picture is the same – transport is a male-dominated field when it comes to political representation.

4.1.2 A closer look at Denmark

In this section, we will take a closer look at one of the EU countries – Denmark. We will look at the political level and at the research advisory and grant giving level.

Political level

The Danish Parliamentary Traffic committee's work is connected to handling of law proposals and law resolutions and parliamentary control with the Danish government. Its field of responsibility is rail, roads, goods traffic, public transport, bridges, ferries, airports, ports, coast protection, meteorology and mail services.

After the first reading of a Bill in the Chamber, the Bill is referred to a committee. The committee examines the proposal, and subsequently the committee members are free to ask questions. They put their questions to a Minister, normally to the one dealing with the sphere of competence of the committee. The committees may

also ask a Minister to appear in the committees in order to answer questions, i.e. a so-called consultation. Likewise, the committees can institute hearings. On such occasions, experts and others can make committee members share their knowledge about a subject which is of interest to the committee and give their points of view. Hearings are usually public. Other committee meetings are closed but the press is often briefed subsequent to the meetings. When the committee has finished dealing with a Bill, it submits a report with recommendations and eventual amendments.

In addition to reading Bills and proposals for parliamentary resolution, the com-

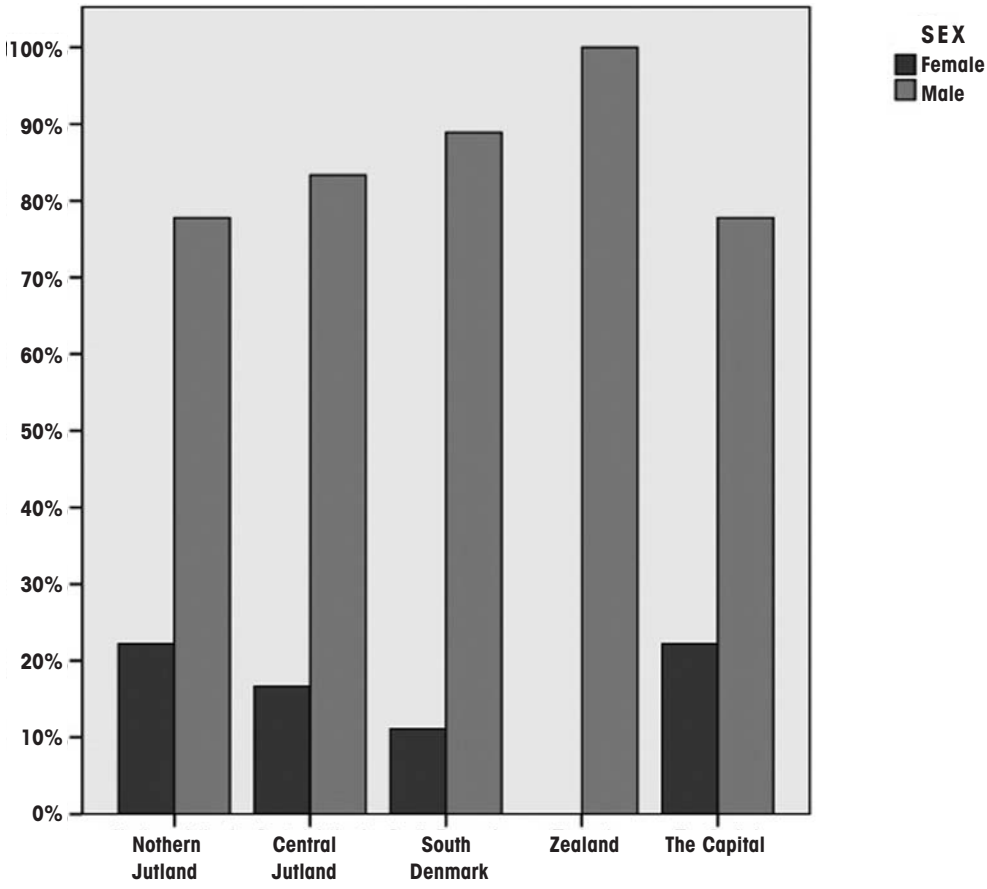


FIGURE 4:

Female and male members of transport-related committees in the Danish regions

http://www.regioner.dk/

mittees can also consider other questions within the area of what is normally referred to as the ordinary part of the committee work. The committee often puts questions to the Minister in order to follow the development within the area in question. The committee also keeps an eye on the Minister implementing the laws in a way which is in accordance with the attitude of the majority of the members of parliament. The committee can also submit a report on a subject of particular political interest.

The composition of the traffic committee can be seen in the diagram above. It holds no surprises: only 11.8% of the members are women compared to the 36.9% women in the Danish parliament.

But transport policy is not only decided in parliament. Denmark is comprised of five regions with elected politicians. The regions are responsible for areas such as health (e.g. hospitals), social services and education (e.g. educational services for people with special needs), trade and industry, nature and environment and regional development and public transport. Thus, the regions have committees dealing with either transport or regional development. As the below diagram shows, these committees also have a majority of male membership. In the regions, transport is also defined as a male domain.

In Nordjylland Region (Northern Jutland) there is a close correlation between the region membership and the membership of the committee. Women make up 22.2% of the membership of the committee and 29.2% of the region council. In the regions of Midtjylland (Central Jutland) and Syddanmark (South Denmark), the numbers differ more radically. The councils have 36.5% and 31.7% female membership respectively, whereas women only make up 16.6% and 11.1% of the committees. However, the regions of Sjælland (Zealand) and Hovedstaden (The Capital) are the ones that show the most interesting figures. In Sjælland, there are no women in the committee on regional development, and in Hovedstaden where women make up 41.4% – the highest percentage of the five regions – of the council, they only count 22.2% of the committee on regional development.

Research and advisory committees

The government has set up a number of committees to advise on matters related to transport and to research. We will look at a number of these below.

The Infrastructure Commission analyses challenges, development potential and Denmark's infrastructural needs in the next 20-30 years as basis for the Danish Government's investments in infrastructure. The Infrastructure Commission analyses

the overall choices and sets up strategies for the handling of challenges and what kind of tools can be used to improve mobility and reduce passable problems as well as the consequences for nature, the environment and traffic safety. The commission comprises researchers within the field of economics and transport economics, representatives from transport organisations and transport users.

The Traffic Safety Commission makes proposals for road safety initiatives to reduce traffic accidents in Denmark and evaluates other proposals connected to the Road Traffic Act and Road Traffic Act administration. The members of the commission are from the political parties in parliament and appointed representatives from

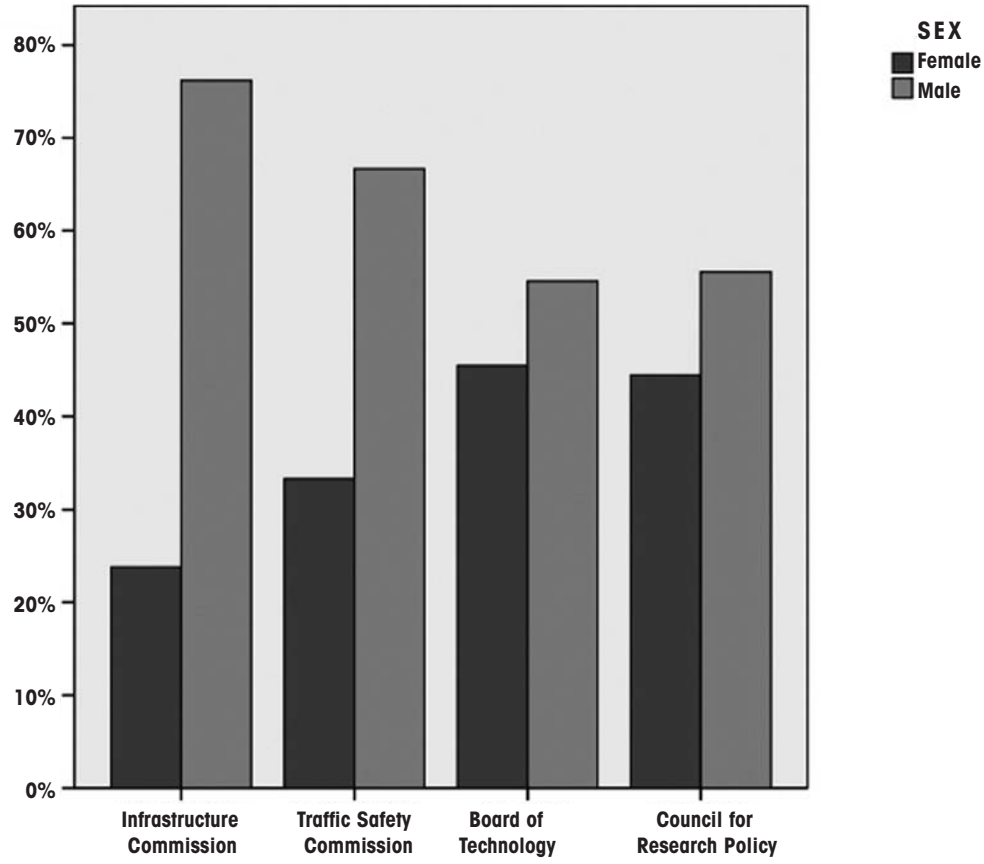


FIGURE 5:

Female and male members of transport-related advisory boards in Denmark

http://www.infrastrukturkommissionen.dk/sw321.asp, http://www.faerdselssikkerhedskommissionen.dk/fsksubject.aspx?type=fsksubject&id=72767, http://www.tekno.dk/subpage.php3?page=forside.php3, http://www.fi.dk

ministries and NGOs. The commission also has a group of permanent experts attached.

The Danish Board of Technology aims to further the technology debate, assess technological impacts and options and advise the Danish Parliament and the Government. The Danish Board of Technology was brought into being in order to disseminate knowledge about technology, its possibilities and its effects on people, on society and on the environment. The Board is supposed to promote the ongoing discussion about technology, to evaluate technology and to advise the Danish Parliament and other governmental bodies in matters pertaining to technology. The Danish Board of Technology is an independent body established by the Danish Parliament. The Ministry of Research is the supervising authority for the Board, and the Parliament's Research Committee is the Board's steady liaison to parliament. The members are appointed by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, trade unions, the employers' association and a number of NGOs.

The Danish Council for Research Policy gives the Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation research policy advice. The Danish Parliament and any minister can also obtain research-related advice from the Council. This advice is given upon request or upon the initiative of the Council. The Council's responsibilities generally include advice on Danish and international research policy for the benefit of society.

The Infrastructure Commission and the Traffic Safety Commission both show the same pattern that we have seen with most of the transport-related committees above – both in Denmark and in the rest of Europe: two-thirds or more of the members are men. The Traffic Safety Committee also has a group of experts. All ten experts are men, thus illustrating Polk's point about men being the norm as fulfilling the role of experts. The Board of Technology and the Council for Research Policy have a more balanced composition with app. 45% women and 55% men. These two institutions, however, have a much broader profile as they deal with a broad spectrum of research areas and not just transport-related issues. It is thus possible to find and appoint women to advisory boards when they do not have an exclusive focus on transport.

This is also the case with the Danish Research Councils that together with the above-mentioned Council for Research Policy are part of the Danish research advisory and grant-awarding system. There are two research councils – one for independent research and one for strategic research. The Danish Councils for Independent Research fund specific research activities, within all scientific areas, that are

based on the researchers' own initiatives. The Danish Councils for Independent Research also provide scientific advice in all scientific areas for the Danish Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, the Danish Parliament and the Danish Government. Furthermore, the Danish Councils for Independent Research strengthen the dissemination and application of research findings as well as participate in international research collaboration. There are five scientific research councils within the independent research area: medical research, natural science, humanities, technology and production and social science.

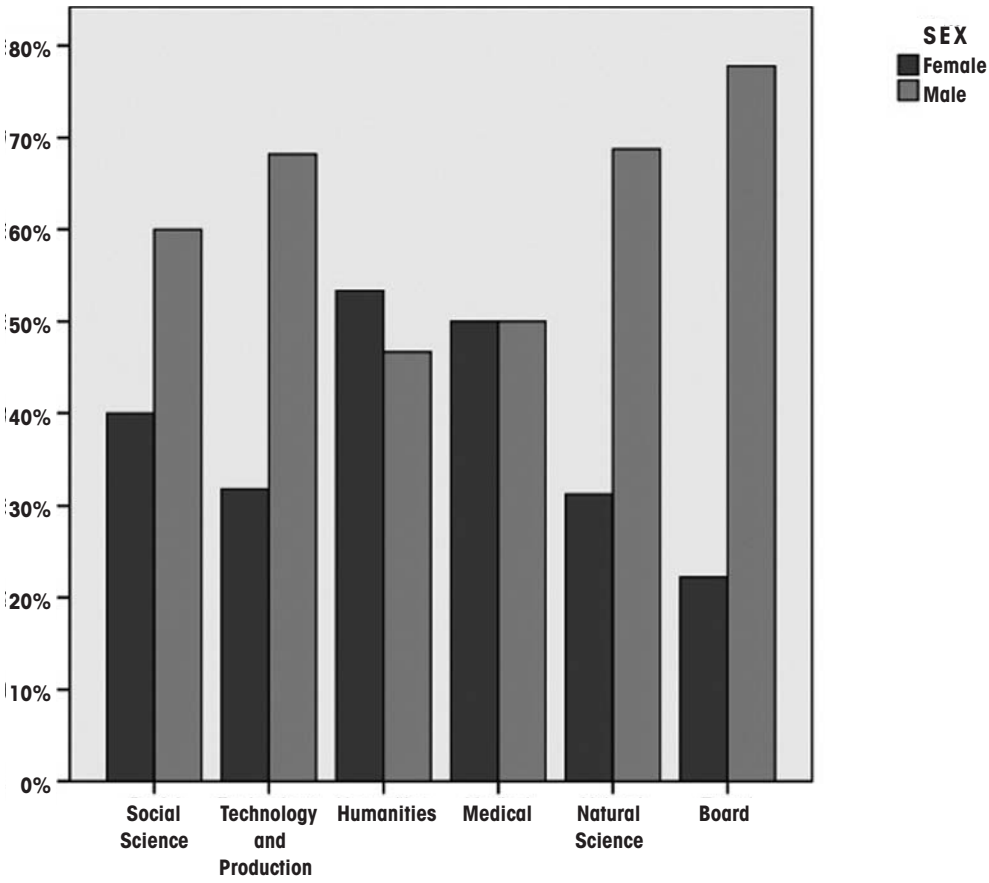


FIGURE 6:

Female and male members of the Independent Research Councils in Denmark

http://www.fi.fk

The social science council and the technology and production council are the two independent research councils most closely related to transport research. The social science council has a 40/60 balance which in some literature is pointed to as the necessary critical mass for women's political participation. The technology and production council is in line with another traditional male-dominated area, that of natural science. They both have less than one-third (31.8% and 31.3% respectively) women on their council. This is interesting compared to the Board of Technology mentioned above where there is a much greater balance in the composition. Only humanities (53.3% women and 46.7% men) and medical research (fifty-fifty) have gender balance in the councils.

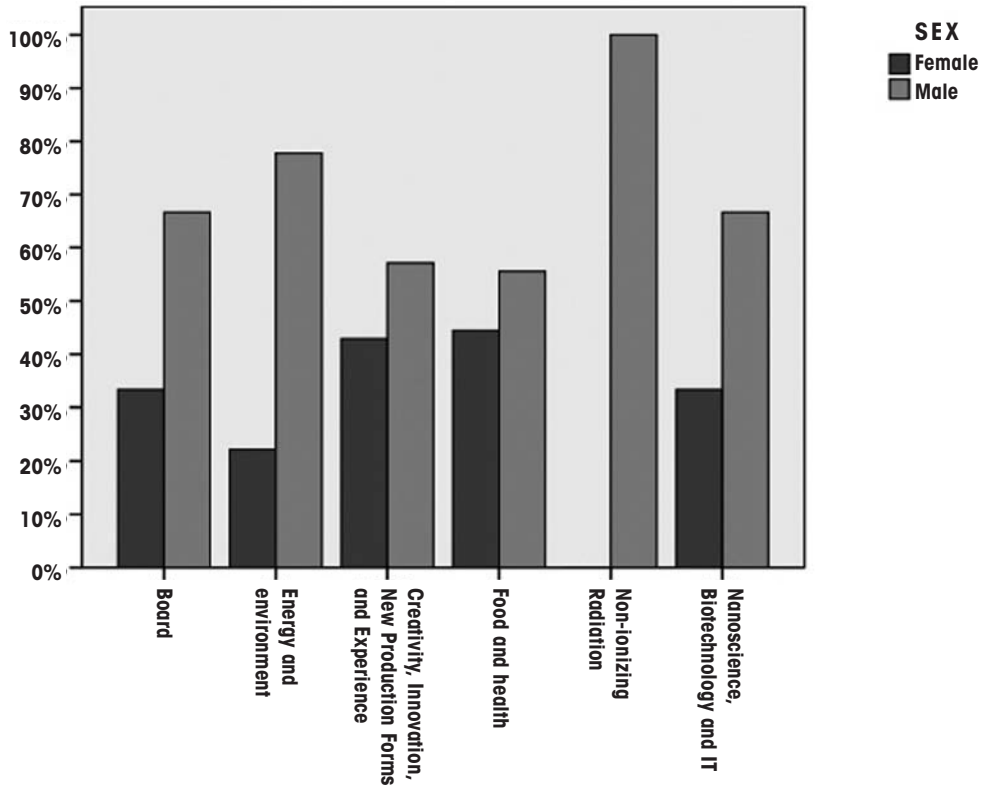


FIGURE 7:

Female and male members of the Strategic Research Councils in Denmark

http://www.fi.dk

The Danish Council for Strategic Research funds research and provides advice within politically prioritised and thematically defined research areas. The Council helps strengthen the interaction between public and private-sector research. The Council also seeks out new research trends and can launch initiatives on this basis. The Board does not have the competency to allocate funding. The Board appoints a limited number of programme commissions with the competency to grant funding or, according to previous agreement, the Board leaves this task to the discretion of a scientific research council. The programme commissions are disbanded once their tasks have been completed. When the individual ministries make research funding available, the Danish Council for Strategic Research approves the allocation procedure and subsequently conducts a research-based assessment of the applications. The Danish Council for Strategic Research also advises the Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, the Danish Parliament and other parties upon request or upon the Council's own initiative.

The programme commissions within the Strategic Research Council most closely related to transport are the commissions on energy and environment and on creativity, innovation, etc. Energy and environment has, besides non-ionizing radiation where there are 4 men and no women, the lowest female/male ratio with only 22.2% women in the commission, whereas creativity seems to appeal more to inclusion of women with almost 43% female members. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that most of the areas covered by this commission fall under the field of humanities which by tradition attract more women (see also the independent research council above). It is also worth noticing that both boards are male-dominated, with more than three-quarters men on the board of the Independent Research Councils and two-thirds in the Strategic Research Council.

4.2 EMPLOYMENT

4.2.1 Gender and employment in the European transport sector

The transport market has an increasing importance in the European Union, and the demand for transport within member states has steadily increased over the last 20 years.

The transport sector is traditionally a male-dominated area. The question is if that is still a clear picture when we look at employment in the sector today. A clo-

ser look at the sex balance in the transport employment shows that it is still the case and that we see the same pattern at the level of transport decision-makers.

The European transport sector has more than 8 million jobs spread out over different areas: land transport (freight and passenger transport via railways, by road and via pipelines), water transport (both maritime and inland waterway transport), air transport and supporting and auxiliary transport, which form quite heterogeneous activities (cargo handling, storage, warehousing as well as employment in travel agencies and the like). In most countries, land transport takes a dominant position, as it employs over 7% of the EU labour force. Though we have not been able to find any statistics about sex balance in employment for the European Union as a whole, we have statistics showing the distribution in each member state.[8] The employment figures used are from 2001.

Land transport, largely consisting of road transport, is dominated by male employment in all member states, having Greece as the country with the highest percentage of male workers with only 3% female employment and Denmark with the highest employment of female workers (19%). The other member states all fall somewhere in between these two extremes.

Female employment in water transport amounts to 18% on Community average. The two countries with the highest female employment are Luxembourg with 43% and particularly Austria with 68%. These two countries only dispose of inland waterways and are without doubt influenced by a relatively high degree of family businesses. It is further important to mention that the total water transport employment in Luxembourg and Austria is limited to very few jobs – 258 and 66 jobs respectively. Another notable high share of female employment in water transport is registered in Finland (36%). In countries with important maritime shipping activities like Greece, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom, the share in male employment is far higher – close to or more than 90%.

Regarding air transport employment, Ireland is the only member state where men constitute a minority, having only 47% male employers. In general, the air transport is the branch with the highest female employment in the transport sector within all member states.

When it comes to supporting and auxiliary transport activities, the member states oscillate around an average of 32% female employers, with the exception of Luxembourg, Ireland and Portugal having a share of slightly over 40% each.

We will now turn to a presentation of the literature presenting gender and transport employment to see whether any research has been conducted to explain the un-

equal balance between male and female workers and problems for women's employment within the transport sector.

4.2.2 The gender, transport and employment literature

The amount of academic literature on gendered employment in the transport sector is not huge. While there are texts regarding most sectors, the bulk of the literature is concerned with women working in the airline industry or with women working with logistics.

The literature can be grouped into four themes. The first theme is concerned with women's career possibilities and women as managers – the so-called glass ceiling where women's chances of promotion are reduced the higher up in the hierarchy they come. Related to this theme are texts about the transport sector as a gendered work space – dominated by masculine values and practices. This gendered work space also influences the way women workers in the transport industry are perceived, constituting the third theme. As is evident, the huge majority of the literature is about women working in a male-defined sector. Recently, however, researchers have also turned to investigating the situation of male workers in the sector, which in this context makes up the fourth theme.

Glass ceiling

Simpson and Holley (2000, 2001) examine the impact of restructuring on the career progression of women transport and logistics managers. Research to date has indicated that restructuring can have detrimental effects on women managers, as middle management levels are reduced through delayering and as the organisation takes on a more competitive and 'masculine' culture. Results from this survey on women transport and logistics managers indicate that restructuring can have positive effects. While women experience longer working hours and increased workloads, they encounter fewer career barriers and a more positive attitude to women managers in the organisation. This may point to greater opportunities for training in a changing organisation and a higher probability of new posts and positions being created, as proverbial dead-wood is shaken out. Perhaps more importantly, the climate of change may help to unfreeze and challenge entrenched attitudes and to create a new meritocracy in which women can compete on a more equal footing with men.

Related to this discussion of the glass ceiling is the debate as to whether women

manage differently from men and whether this may constitute a reason for women's lack of progress to the top echelons of organisations.

Rutherford (2001) locates the sameness/difference debate in a wider analysis of management styles, with particular attention paid to the business function. She suggests that any debate on styles must take place within a feminist theoretical framework which acknowledges inequalities of power, economic and patriarchal interests. Management skills are socially constructed and change according to social and economic conditions. The article shows that business function is the most important influence on management style. The author contends, like others, that even in times of great change, men seem to be able to hold on to the most powerful positions in organisations. The convergence of patriarchal interests with business interests ultimately determines what style is valued. The much vaunted feminisation of management does not mean that more women are to be found in senior positions in organisations. Nor do large numbers of women managers necessarily lead to a more feminised management style. Stereotypes of women still act against their acceptance into positions of power while men's ability to adopt some of the traditionally feminine skills of communication means that women's supposed advantage may have been leapfrogged.

Gendered work space

Davey and Davidson (2000) adopt a poststructuralist feminist approach to investigating commercial aviation and the experiences of female pilots in a large international airline based in Europe. The study aimed to examine critically the difficulties faced by female pilots. The data were collected from in-depth interviews with 23 female and 17 male commercial airline pilots. The article argues that commercial aviation continues to be dominated by masculine values and practices, which results in the earlier stages of women's careers being treated as a 'rite of passage'. The first women to join the airline experienced sexism, harassment, high visibility and isolation. Although the extent of the difficulties has declined over time, the experience of dealing with sexism and adapting to the masculine culture continues to influence the attitudes of female pilots, especially towards gender and equal opportunities. The article challenges the impression created by the aviation literature regarding the degree of acceptance of female pilots in commercial aviation and summarises the recommendations made to management in relation to its equal opportunities policy.

This section details first, the experiences of the first female pilots to join the air-

line (sometimes compared with men); and second, the experiences of those who joined later (again, sometimes compared with men). The results showed that the first female pilots experienced high visibility and harassment from male colleagues which, in turn, had long-term implications for women. Although difficulties seemed to have declined for women starting as new recruits, the results also illustrated that female pilots had not changed the culture, but had had to conform to traditionally masculine values and practices. This was evident in their attitudes towards socialising down route (when pilots stay overnight at their destination before returning one or more days later) and humorous comments from male colleagues. As a result of the culture, there was also a tendency for female pilots to downplay any continuing problems arising from gender and to resist steps to promote equality.

The findings show that the first female pilots were an object of attention by flight crew, both on and off the aircraft. They also encountered flight crew who were nervous with women, made sexist jokes, refused to let them operate the aircraft and behaved in an aggressive or sexist manner. The situation confronting these women was different from that of men, who were accepted more easily by the existing flight crew. It was argued that for male pilots, training functioned as 'a rite of passage' and thus eased their transition into the airline (Davey 1993; Trice and Beyer 1984). Prejudice against women, however, meant that they still had to prove themselves to the existing flight crew. Although women generally managed to rise above the problems because of their high level of competence, and were eventually accepted, the experiences of sexism had long-term implications for female pilots. For example, women continued to feel visible and under considerable pressure to perform well. The findings challenge the impression created by airline representatives and managers that female pilots have been accepted quickly and easily in commercial aviation and that the industry is open to women (Chambers 1984; Laboda 1990). In this respect, the findings confirmed the experience of female pilots working for other airlines and/or the military (Chambers 1984; Daily Mail 1995; Laboda 1990). The findings of the study also confirmed previous research showing that women encounter problems at work due to: first, sexist/aggressive behaviours, ranging from sexist jokes to sexual harassment (for example, Cleveland 1994; Davidson and Earnshaw 1990; Earnshaw and Davidson 1994); and, second, their minority status. These include high visibility, isolation, performance pressure, stereotyping and resentment (for example, Davidson 1995, 1996; Kanter 1977a, b; Marshall 1984; Nieva and Gutek 1985; Schein 1994). The comments from female pilots showed that the situation confronting female pilots had improved since the early days, and

that instances of blatant sexism had declined. Nevertheless, female pilots continued to encounter sexist jokes, derogatory comments about women and, on occasions, aggressive/sexist behaviour from male colleagues and passengers. In addition, a critical examination of the comments revealed that women had not changed the airline culture which continued to be dominated by masculine/military values and practices, but had adapted to it. For example, female pilots reported being treated as 'one of the lads', especially down route when they are expected to go out socialising and drinking. The findings were consistent with other studies of male-dominated industries and professions (Collinson 1988; Spencer and Podmore 1987). Adaptation to the masculine culture was not necessarily a problem for women pilots and, even though female pilots admitted to experiencing some problems, they were generally unwilling to make a fuss. The reason for this was that they were worried about further media attention and being singled out as being different and/or a problem, especially regarding sexual harassment. The reaction of women to sexism is understandable when one takes into account the fact that a female colleague who reported sexist behaviour to management gained a reputation as a troublemaker. It is also consistent with masculine discourses which value the ability to withstand aggressive behaviour and overcome problems without having to resort to help (Kerfoot and Knights 1991; Wolfe 1979).

Sexualised women

Tyler and Taylor (1998) use the Maussian model of 'gift' exchange relations as a possible way of understanding the relations of exchange that underpin certain elements of women's work in contemporary capitalism, particularly those aspects of 'women's work' which demand deployment of 'tacit skills' and assumed capacities of women. In addition to the commodity exchange which takes place in the gendered transaction between flight attendants and passengers, a form of 'gift' exchange operates which is neither remunerated or even recognised and which is essentially 'beyond contract'. One of the ways in which women's labour in this form of 'gift' exchange is managed is through the (largely aesthetic) use of their bodies, a management process which requires flight attendants to learn and practise a whole series of gendered 'techniques of the body'.

Women's work is understood here in de Lauretis' terms as the outcome of the commodification of the specific properties, qualities or attributes that women have developed or have been bound to historically which make them women not men.

Empirical studies of women's work have identified three analytically distinct

processes through which certain properties, qualities and attributes associated with women's labour come to be commodified in the performance of 'women's work'. These are referred to here as essentialisation, feminisation and sexualisation.

The flight attendant is the personification of a labour market process which involves the commodification of sexual difference, of women's perceived difference from men.

The role of flight attendant is defined (by airline management, by cabin crew and by passengers) as 'women's work'; it is deemed to involve skills which women are seen to possess simply by virtue of being women.

The presentation and performance of a female body as feminine is deemed to be a skill which women at work in the airline industry are expected to be capable of deploying. The femininity of women workers are largely perceived in terms of aesthetics; to be woman is to look feminine and to be a flight attendant is to 'care' – physically, emotionally and even sexually – for others.

Whitelegg (2002) explores the recent history of female airline cabin crew in the context of 'emotional labour', whereby women's 'virtues' are first essentialised into charm, pastoral care and sexuality and then turned into a commodity form. Though historically some long-distance carriers employed only men – or mainly men – in the cabin, the job in question has been long-regarded as 'women's work' – centred on performing a commercialised version of the caring and service activities carried out for centuries in the domestic sphere.

The significance of emotional labour as a concept is its specific applicability to women. It should not be thought, for instance, that the struggle for gay rights among cabin crew, or indeed wider issues of job insecurity that affected both men and women, are viewed as less important. Emotional labour is constructed implicitly around the appropriation of sexual difference and is thus by definition not gender-neutral. Women are employed to make use of their 'natural' skills. As Tyler and Abbott argue, "[f]light attendants are required to deploy skills and abilities which they are deemed to possess simply by virtue of their sexual difference from men" (Tyeer and Abbott 1998). Often these 'skills' are deployed outside the formal contractual relations of exchange, yet are indispensable to those relations.

Token men

Although often research on under-representation has been done with women, more recently men in the minority have become a subject of interest as the number of men entering and succeeding in female-dominated occupation has risen. In pursu-

ing this newer line of research, some have questioned how the experiences of a minority of men working with a female majority would compare to those of a minority group of women working with a male majority. Research has shown that they do experience many of the same negative personal and occupational pressures associated with being a token that women experience.

Young and James (2001) show how the male flight attendants were less satisfied with their job and would be less attached to the organisation. Numerically rare male flight attendants perceive themselves to be different from the majority group of female flight attendants, and this perception of group difference significantly affects their attitudes to work through lowered self-esteem, increased role ambiguity and poor job fit.

With sex-typed jobs, organisations should try to decouple the requirements of the job from sex stereotypes about job holders. This would go a long way toward removing the automatic lack of fit for tokens in sex-typed jobs that proved so detrimental for male flight attendants in this study. Actively recruiting to equalise the representation of the sexes within the job would further the goal of removing sex-typing as well as reducing sex as a salient grouping dimension.

4.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has focused on the structural level of transport. The structural level is about gendered recruitment, promotion and work organisation at all levels, as well as women's and men's participation in and influence on decision-making, planning and policy. Obviously this is a huge area, and the chapter focused on gendered representation in the transport sector at policy levels, both in the EU and in selected member states. Further, the chapter presented available data on gendered employment in the sector at EU level and a mapping of research literature in relation to transport. This chapter documents that it is urgent that the structural level of transport is addressed from a gender mainstreaming perspective:

· At political as well as on research level, transport is an overwhelmingly male-dominated sector. At EU level, political committees in the transport sector as well as transport research and advisory councils have a low female representation. This also goes for transport-related committees at national level, with a notable exception. Sweden has a 50-50 balance in the Transport Committee.

· The most recent employment data from the EU shows that transport continues to be male-dominated. The research literature suggests that the transport sector is a gendered work space dominated by masculine values and practices. There is a need for organisations to decouple the requirements of the job from sex stereo-types about job holders. Further, inclusive work environments need to be created to support the employment of more women in the sector.

· There is a need for more data and analysis concerning the gendering of the transport sector at a structural level. Both in terms of basic knowledge drawing gendered representation and employment, but also about organisational processes and cultures and the ways in which the sector continues to be male-dominated. If the transport sector is to be competitive in a context of labour shortage, this is urgent.

NOTES

2. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/committees/allMembers.do?committee=2426&language=EN 18.12.06
3. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/committees/allMembers.do?committee=2424&language=EN 18.12.06
4. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/committees/allMembers.do?committee=2434&language=EN 18.12.06
5. According to the parliament website.
6. www.errac.org/members_1.asp 15.12.06
7. www.ertrac.org/organisation_representatives.htm 15.12.06
8. We could not find newer information about the gender balance in transport employment, which also means that the new member states are not represented within these statistics, but a shorter examination of employment by sex from 2005 shows the same picture.