

Young and professional: getting the best people on the trains.

General (background) information

Education is one of the backbones of our Transport industry as it provides youngsters with the knowledge, understanding and proficiency they need to perform their jobs. Education provides the industry with highly qualified staff. The importance of the human factor is underlined by the European Commission in the White Paper 2011 “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area”. Market opening needs to go hand in hand with quality jobs and working conditions, as human resources are a crucial component of any high quality transport system. It is also widely known that labour and skill shortages will become a concern for transport in the future.

Educational systems in the different countries do differ to a significant extent. All vocational courses are integrated into the general national systems. Thus differences in the educational systems will naturally affect the vocational education modes. For this reason, knowledge, understanding and proficiency provided to our youngster may vary from country to country. However, (vocational) education and training could also serve as a tool to recruit more youngster, where shortages are foreseen worldwide for the short term horizon.

This leads to interesting questions; how to make sure that sufficient youngsters choose a career in the railway sector, how to educate them so that they stand out in the job market, how to close the gap between the industry and the education system.

Topic

We would like to mainly pay attention to topic 1: National and International structures for training and education.

Scope and objectives

Since 2011, the STC-Group in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, started offering the two-year secondary vocational education program Train Driver. Over the past few years, we have gained knowledge and experience in attracting youngsters and giving them thorough training. Given the fact that no such secondary vocational education program existed before than in the Netherlands, the STC-Group is providing an answer to the training needs of the rail sector. Reasons for the need for new staff is the large aging in the rail sector and the shortage of staff in the near future.

During the congress we would like to share more information about this public education programs for rail transport in the Netherlands, our efforts to make technical professions attractive, how we operate in the international field and our results so far.

Issues to be addressed contain:

- The educational model of the STC-Group, from theoretical knowledge through software applications and simulation to full practice.
- The role of simulators, specifically our ERTMS simulator.
- The process from commercial training only towards VET education, and the advantages for students and railway companies.

We would like to share our growing experience with these subjects and discuss further possibilities to improve.