

Dana Iuliana Voicu, Romania

There is still a long way to go!

**Ministry of Transport – Personal Adviser to Deputy Minister**

Dana Voicu has an MSc. in Physics from the University of Bucharest and has been working as a consultant in Business Development Management and Project Management for over 25 years. She is currently a Personal Adviser to the Deputy Minister of Transport and Infrastructure in Romania, though she has worked as an advisor to different ministries since the early 1990s. She is a member of the Management Board of Intelligent Transport Systems and a member of the Romanian Association of Road Transporters.

Could you briefly tell us something about your background, and the area of your expertise in the field of transport with gender and diversity? What field are you currently working on?

I have a degree in Physics, I am fluent in three foreign languages and another two at conversational level, and I am also a qualified teacher, so I have a solid background to understand and successfully tackle areas of transport requiring an integrated multidisciplinary approach such as transport safety management and ITS. Due to circumstances (the needs of my country at a specific time and being the youngest in a newly established institution), I was fortunate to be trained by foreign consultants and to participate in various courses abroad. Over time, I became one of the very few experts able to cover all the areas of integrated safety management, from human factor behaviour, infrastructure and vehicles to enforcement, environment, legal aspects (including insurance) and ITS.

Regarding my experience with gender & diversity, when I started (over 25 years ago), none of my

mentors were women, none of my bosses and/or persons in positions of power that I had to work with (both nationally and internationally) were women with one occasional exception (the Dutch Minister of Transport was a woman on two occasions), and most of my colleagues were also men (with two exceptions: the human factor psychologist and the insurance expert).

Over time, when I moved up to middle management, I had two other women in my team. I never felt that there was any pressure from top management to employ anybody based on gender or any other diversity aspects, nor was I encouraged or discouraged to pay attention to these aspects. I often found myself in situations where I was the only women in the room, sometimes lecturing a large audience, and sometimes even leading those meetings.

Over the years, women started to become more visible in transport in general although, in my specific area of expertise, their numbers have not significantly increased. Though I guess that this is not because of any type of discrimination but

rather because of the difficulty of the domain. There are very few experts in general. In general interactions, at professional level, I did initially feel discrimination, unlike my fellow men, because I had to earn my right to “be taken seriously” time after time. This “right” was never granted to me as I often saw happen with men. There were situations when my expert opinion had to be confirmed by men in order for it to be taken into consideration, or even believed. I was overlooked for promotion more than once.

From your area of expertise - What have been the greatest breakthroughs with regard to increasing gender and diversity in mobility?

There are no breakthroughs about increasing gender and diversity in mobility.

From your area of expertise - What are the biggest challenges to move forward in increasing gender and diversity in mobility?

The biggest challenges to move forward are not solely mobility specific. They are at society level in general. As is the case with all “technical fields of expertise” the problem lies in early education. Girls must be encouraged to develop skills and passions that are not “traditionally” seen as girlish. There is nothing wrong in teaching girls how to use a hammer or a screwdriver or build something manually or repair a toy, for example.

What road maps need to be set out to increase gender and diversity in mobility at national and EU level?

Definitely, educational reform and societal change. I should also state that I am not in favour of “positive discrimination.”



This project received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N° 824349

Disclaimer: This document reflects only the author's view. Responsibility for the information and views expressed therein lies entirely with the authors. The Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) and the European Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.