

European Managers' Review

Building bridges with managers.
Leading for future.

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CEC

EUROPEAN MANAGERS

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European Managers' Review

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About

CEC European Managers is European social partner that represents managers at European level. The confederation gathers managerial trade unions and manager associations across Europe and sectors.

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EDITORIAL

I am pleased to present the second issue of our review for European managers and the organizations that represent them in Europe. Perhaps more than ever, we are becoming aware of the impact of decisions taken, the weight of responsibilities and the fact that leadership is not easy.

We are now fully paying for the choices of decisions taken decades ago, whether in energy or in terms of strategic independence. Some leaders have favoured electoral strategies, some have been convinced by powerful lobbyists, and some have opted for quick cash, as the recent "Qatargate" corruption scandal has demonstrated. Some people probably thought that was the best decision to make.

It is not a question here of criticizing because we know better now. Rather, it is putting into perspective how difficult it is to lead and make decisions, and then to take responsibility for their effects. Yet you, European executives, managers, engineers, experts and professionals, make millions of decisions every day, whether in terms of strategy, finance, human resources, or walking the talk yourself. These decisions shape our world. You, European managers, can inform, enlighten and challenge decision-making.

Let us be aware of this power. Let's act for ourselves, while thinking about the greater whole. Let's encourage our European leaders in remaining ambitious and united in the face of adversity. Let's imagine a future in which Europe, its constituent countries, its employees, its managers and its citizens are free to decide their future.

First, this issue will bring us to Spain. Maria Jose Fraile shares her commitments for a more gender-equitable and united world through trade union action. We will then go to Portugal, to present to you what makes the strength of the first union in the banking sector. Since managers are also actors in society, we will take a look at the role managers played during the pandemic with the example of Italy. Finally, we will talk about the chemical sector and the supply chain challenges it is currently facing.

I wish you a pleasant reading.



Maxime Legrand
President

La alternativa necesaria

XII Congreso Confederal

Presentación del nuevo equipo

Face to face: Maria Jose Fraile Monte



Would you like to tell us something about your career path? What is your background?

I always wanted to be a lawyer. My parents taught me the importance of solidarity and helping those most in need, so I chose to study Law as a way of knowing my rights and being able to defend others from injustice. The book *Roots*, by Alex Haley, had such an impact on me that I started to collaborate with different NGOs, teaching immigrants about the Spanish Constitution.

At the age of 22 I started working for the electricity company Ibderdrola, as an intern, while I was studying for a PhD at University. Since then, my job has been to help my fellow colleague engineers make the best legal decisions and minimize risk, first as legal counsel and now as manager of a team of lawyers.

Training has played an important role in my professional career. I have taken several postgraduate courses in different subjects, and I am a firm believer that if knowledge increases, opportunities appear. That is why it is so important to be open and never stop learning, because it contributes to personal growth and generates collective benefit too, improving the working environment and making the business flourish.

But certainly, if there is one thing I feel fortunate about, it is that I have been able to balance family life with work. National law and my company's work-life balance policy have made it easier, but without my partner's commitment, co-responsibility would not have been possible.

However, achieving this balance sometimes comes at a cost.

Many women have overcome obstacles and broken glass ceilings through countless sacrifices, huge efforts and a lot of organization. And other women don't even make it.

Pressures, unconscious biases, permanent prejudices are still present in the world of work, and there are many managers who question women's capacity for leadership and commitment, especially when you have children.

The presence of women is 18.8% in management positions in Spain, but in middle management positions it remains stagnant at 8.8%. Of the 18.8% of women managers, small companies account for more than 60% of female managers.

It is known that talent has no gender, but women are still required to demonstrate it.

Face to face: Maria Jose Fraile Monte

What motivated you to engage in trade union activities? How has this decision impacted your professional and personal life?

My trade unionist spirit comes from my grandfather and my father. It is in my DNA. I grew up with the message that no one better than us can defend our own interests, and both inculcated in me that the only legitimate way to get a good job, fair pay and decent conditions was through a trade union.

My grandfather was a farmer, and he worked from dawn to dusk in appalling conditions. My father was punished for years because he belonged to a Union. And I was bullied by one of my first bosses just because I was a woman.

So, as soon as I could, I joined the union that best represented me to be more protected, and to do my part to improve my own working conditions and those of my colleagues. I was one of the first female lawyers in the company to be elected as a union representative. Today, there are many colleagues who have taken the same step, aware that united we stand.

After several years of taking numerous courses specializing in gender-based discrimination issues, I felt it was time to go one step further at national level. This happened just as the CCP was looking to incorporate a new Confederate Secretary for Women into its Organization. This is how I discovered, from my current position as Secretary for Equality and Vice-president of the CCP, the way to think about women's rights from a strategic perspective. In this sense, CCP has promoted the inclusion in Equality Plans and collective agreements of measures and resources especially aimed at female employees who are victims of gender-based violence, such as 24-hour psychological support, legal advice, flexible working day and other tools.

My participation, on behalf of the CCP,

in the Working Group on Gender Equality and Diversity set up by CEC European Managers has also been enormously enriching. The discussions held on the benefits of women in leadership positions enabled us to outline objectives and milestones to advance gender equality in leadership at EU and Member State level and contribute to define the European approach to inclusive leadership and management.

From your position as responsible for gender and diversity within CCP, how would you rate the case for gender equality in your country? What policy solutions prove effective?

Spain is one of the countries with the most advanced legislation on equality, inclusion and diversity. In terms of gender parity, paternity and maternity leave (now called birth leave) has been equalised at 4 months. The right of workers to ask for a reorganisation of the working day and even to work remotely, for reasons of conciliation, has also been recognised.

Regarding equality in companies, a regulation has also been approved that imposes Equality Plans on companies with more than 50 workers and it is obligatory to include measures in recruitment, training, promotion and remuneration to eliminate gender discrimination.

Concerning equal pay, the new legislation establishes new objectives and obligations for companies in terms of transparency and pay equity.

Data from various surveys and studies show that Spain is heading in the right direction towards greater gender equality, but there is still a long way to go.

Spain is progressing in political leadership, especially if we consider the global average of female holding parliamentary seats (25.2%) and ministerial positions (21.2%). However, women's share in companies' board of directors is still 22%.

Face to face: Maria Jose Fraile Monte

At CCP we believe that all positive discrimination measures, such as quotas, are an accelerator of real equality. This has been demonstrated by the compulsory electoral quota. Now we need to take the step towards a compulsory company quota for middle and top management.

To achieve gender equality and social justice, female leadership and decision-making must be present in all areas of economy, culture or politics. Cultural change is also essential to close gender gaps in the workplace in Spain.

Some studies have shown that female employees have a 30% lower chance of being called for a job interview. And if they are mothers, the percentage rises to 35.9%.

Women still suffer a double penalty, as women and as mothers, while men benefit from parenthood.

You were mentioning earlier your involvement in the CEC working group on gender equality. How important do you think cooperation and the exchange of best practices can be for a trade union organization? What is for you the value added of the European integration?

It is said that knowledge is the only good that grows the more it is shared. The formulation of good practices in the framework of the European Union allows us to establish comparisons between the good actions implemented in different countries at different levels and to draw lessons from them to contribute to speeding up the process of reaching gender equality in reality.

So, from my point of view, incorporating a knowledge sharing culture is mandatory for organizations to succeed, because it avoids repeating the same mistakes and leads to the most effective and productive way of solving a problem.



Face to face: Maria Jose Fraile Monte

In fact, sharing best practices within the Working Group has allowed me to know and understand successful initiatives launched by other organizations and to learn about other legal provisions adopted at national level. The working group also serves to exchange information about our respective national realities and as a way to identify new fields of action and improvement tools to enforce equality on the.

Many observers point out an increasing lack of interest of younger people to take up managerial responsibilities. Based on your experience, what could be done to increase the appeal of a managerial career before young professionals?

If we think about it, moving up the corporate pyramid does not pay off. More hours, more pressure, more tasks mean less free time and less freedom in the office. And it does not always imply a fair financial reward.

Young people no longer believe in the equation « long working hours + personal sacrifice = hierarchical and economic promotion ». They are aware of the precariousness of salaries, even for managers, and that's why they give more value to the emotional salary; they want to work where they can develop themselves and they aspire to a job that they are passionate about, but that also allows them to enjoy their free time.

In this sense, flexible working and learning opportunities in different areas of the company are magnets for young talent. If you add to this a job that is goal-oriented rather than task-oriented, and the possibility of working on special and challenging projects outside of hierarchies, a management career for young people becomes much more attractive.

In this respect, would you feel sharing some advice with young managers?

If we want young people to take on positions of responsibility, we cannot demand the same kind of demonstrations of effort from them as in our generation. Working long hours in the office or non-goal-oriented tasks can lead to conflict, and worse, to a drain of talent and future leaders.

Understanding generational diversity and leading with an inclusive style that takes advantage of this new culture of work is crucial to getting the most out of young people and motivating them towards a management career.

I would remind young managers that they play a vital role in modern society. They are a great contributor to social progress and justice. And that social awareness will be greater if they join a trade union, because, as Aesop would say in his Fable of the Bundle of Sticks:

"Individually, you can easily be conquered, but together, you are invincible. Union gives strength."



Portrait: SNQTB Portugal

A trade union, but also a service provider

With its 21.000 affiliates in the Portuguese banking sector, SNQTB embraces a new approach to unionism, blending the traditional defense of employees with offering a wide range of tailored services to the individual affiliates and their families.

SNQTB headquarters in Lisbon

As a top manager at a Portuguese bank, Paulo Gonçalves Marcos followed the work of the trade unions in the banking sector in Portugal for a long time, with a particular interest at SNQTB, that stood out from the others, due to its characteristics. In 2015, along with some colleagues, he thought he could lead the organization into a new leadership cycle. Elected later that year, he was fully aware of the challenges that he faced back then: "Our trade union was going through a difficult phase, and I could not ignore the dimension of the challenge. I believed that I had the managing skills and the right team to overcome all those financial and organizational challenges. Fortunately, I was right."

SNQTB was about to enter a new cycle. Under the motto "New Path", the biggest trade union in Portugal, representing more than twenty-one thousand banking employees, made the painful and necessary reforms to remain faithful to its philosophy. "We follow a strictly non-partisan and independent trade union practice. Thus, our accounts must always be balanced, under all circumstances, to preserve our autonomy and independence." That was not the case back then. Seven years later, those days are fortunately, and SNQTB is prepared for the next decade.

are overcome and SNQTB is prepared for the next decade.

More than a typical trade union

The field of intervention of SNQTB goes beyond what is typical to expect from a union. In addition to its relevant trade union intervention, it also manages the healthcare system of its members and families. "In parallel to the Portuguese national health system, we manage a subsystem that complements it. This service is highly valued by our members. More than an insurance, our health subsystem works as a mutuality," explains Mr. Marcos. The union's medical and social assistance service (SAMS Quadros) aims to protect and assist its beneficiaries in illness, maternity, and other related social situations, and this is one highly relevant issue when a worker decides to choose a trade union. SAMS Quadros is, by far, the best healthcare subsystem in the banking sector in Portugal and, therefore, a relevant factor in attracting new members for the trade union.

With its headquarters in Lisbon, SNQTB has thirteen branches across the country, including Azores and Madeira. Moreover, it also has several union teams per bank, thus maintaining a close policy of proximity with their members.

"It makes me proud to be able to say that I personally know thousands of our union members, and sometimes also their families. We are, at heart, one big family" adds Mr. Marcos. This approach is considered essential to respond quickly when problems arise regarding our union members and, therefore, to receive information and feedback as soon as possible.

Moreover, in parallel to the activity developed in the fields of union protection and healthcare issues, SNQTB also develops an intense work regarding culture, sports, recreation, and leisure. "Every year we rent apartments at special prices for our members' summer holidays. In addition, throughout the year, we organize sports activities (golf, padel, futsal, among others), as well as visits to museums, historical sites, or walks in nature" points out Mr. Marcos

As a relevant stakeholder in Portuguese society, the union also has a foundation, through which it supports members in need, as well as NGOs with relevant social intervention. And because we are not indifferent to what is happening around us, this year our foundation mobilized to support the Ukrainian people, sending medicines and nursing supplies.

Trade unionism, more relevant than ever

As in Europe, Portuguese banks are changing. All the problems felt in Portugal were mentioned in a recent joint statement by the European Federation of Managers and Executives in the Banking sector (FECEC), to which SNQTB is affiliated: strong pressure to downsize bank workers, absence or very inadequate salary increases for 2022, and growing pressure for workers to return to offices.

In the last few years, SNQTB has felt the need to take a public stand on a regular basis to avoid violations of labor laws,

to negotiate with the banks the conditions for reducing the number of workers and even to declare a strike last year, something unusual in the Portuguese banking sector.

"Our members know that they can count on us and on our support, both to clarify legal and labor doubts, as well as to provide legal assistance in situations of litigation with banks." Regarding legal disputes, a trade union fund was created to support workers in case of financial need, allowing them to resist pressure to reach an agreement with the bank. Workers, in the event of illegal dismissal, must be able to resist.

In addition, every year SNQTB negotiates salary increases, in the face of strong resistance from banks to raise them. This year, for example, despite high inflation, it has not yet been possible to reach an agreement.

SNQTB values dialogue, but bank managements increasingly seem to ignore their social responsibilities. Something that did not happen a decade or two ago.

Four decades of history

Next year, SNQTB will celebrate 40 years of history. Eight years will have been under the leadership of Paulo Gonçalves Marcos. "If I left tomorrow, I could proudly say that, together with my team, we successfully reorganized our trade union and prepared it for future challenges. It has been an exciting journey, that still has a long path to go" concludes Mr. Marcos.





Panorama: Italian doctors and managers serving the community during the pandemic

Healthcare has played a central role in contrasting the COVID pandemic. To tell the story of the difficulties of doctors and hospital managers during the health crisis, the Italian federation CIMO-FESMED (member of CIDA) has published a book retracing their experiences facing the emergency. This intense book, based on real events, has received a prestigious international literary award.

CIMO-Fesmed is one of the ten professional federations members of CIDA, the Italian confederation of the managerial workforce and founding member of CEC. CIMO-Fesmed represents more than 14.000 doctors and heads of hospital department both in the public and private sectors. During the last two years, CIMO has been on the forefront of the fight against the spread of the pandemic, which resulted into millions of contagions in a context where nobody was prepared to face such a high risk.

Doctors' resilience made up for the lack of human, financial, organizational and structural resources of the Italian health system which, despite the continuous pillage of its resources (to a point that jeopardizes its stability and fairness), remains one of the most envied in the world.

Their emotions, considerations, loneliness but also their strength and uncommon sense of sacrifice, deserve being told. For this reason, the book "I promise not to forget. Tales of doctors in Covid times" was published as a collection of stories of those who have been fighting since day one and still do so, to make sure every personal story has a happy ending.

The 28 stories that compose this book are divided into two parts: "We are not heroes" and "Love your job".

They have been written by doctors (surgeons, anesthesiologists, geriatricians, P&A doctors, pneumologists, etc.) who found themselves overnight fighting together on the frontline against COVID. Their accounts testify the impact of the pandemic, telling their sense of disorientation and fatigue, their fears and suffering, as well as their determination and sense of commitment.

These stories are also the proof of the great humanity demonstrated when facing circumstances of great difficulty in their daily work such as trying to save patients' lives, saying goodbye to them or making an effort to comfort friends, colleagues, members of their families. These words are full of emotions and personal reflections of highly professional people, showing courage and personal daily commitment in the context of a collective tragedy. They come unfiltered, with no pretension of being of a literary nature.

"If you have to face COVID, be it as a patient or as a doctor, you are to go through quite a few challenges. You have to quickly reorganize your commitments, your time-schedule, your work and habits. You constantly need to find new solutions to unexpected and unforeseen problems, and you need to get by with it all by yourself. You always need to find a plan B".

Gloria, 36 years old, emergency doctor.

Panorama: doctors and managers during the pandemic

Or Stefania, who admits: "Even if I didn't want to, I have become a good liar", and Maurizio's, who concedes: "In the first place, we have to come to terms with our fears, our frailties and doubts, and that is rather unsettling". Finally, Giuseppe tells us "as a doctor, it is hard to accept the idea that we can't always offer a solution and master the various events happening to us".

This collection of easy and authentic stories clearly reveals the sense of respect at the basis of any doctor-patient relationship, something that has never really disappeared, but only somewhat weakened during the pandemic. At the same time, it represents a warning for the government to make sure that prevention becomes a founding value not only in a doctor's training, but all decision-makers who share the responsibility of protecting the community they represent. The doctors who have written these stories have promised never to forget. It is a positive and committing promise, along the same line of the Hippocratic oath they took at the beginning of the career.

This book can help policymakers have a heedful look on future generations, considering their commitment to reinforce social cohesion as part of a common political heritage. By openly speaking about themselves, these doctors have left a mark, a testimony of their experience to the benefit of future generations and doctors. At the same time, this work addresses ordinary citizens - those very users of the national health system, whose perception of its functioning is often made inaccurate by the narrative of the media, preferring sensationalism over giving visibility to daily commitment and courage.

This work has been presented last November, in the prestigious hall of the Upper Vestibule in the Royal Palace of Caserta, in the presence of Lisa Clark, representative for Italy of ICAN, Nobel Prize for peace 2017.

Ms. Clark - who had proposed the Italian national health system for the Nobel prize for Peace - awarded Mr. Guido Quici, President of CIMO, the international literary prize "European Award Investigative and Judicial Journalism Evolution 2021" in the section "Social commitment in the fight against COVID 19".

"I am deeply honored by the fact that CIMO was awarded such a prestigious and valued prize", commented President Quici. "This prize is an acknowledgment of the great professionalism and sense of responsibility of all doctors and medical professionals, who have restlessly provided help and support to all Italians during the Covid pandemic".

The sales of the book have been donated to the Onaosis foundation, funding initiatives in support of orphans having lost their parents to COVID.

"We only have one surgical mask. We try to use it again and again, our only barrier against the outside world. I hope I will find a new one tomorrow".

Gabriella, 38 years old, emergency doctor

"I think health practitioners on the frontline can be proud of the dignity they showed during this crisis".

Laura, 41 years old, anesthesiologist.



Guido Quici
President Federazione CIMO-FESMED





Outlook:

Challenges of the chemical sector

Anna Nilsson is the newly elected Chair and head of FECCIA, and under the headline "Fighting for Industries" CEC has asked her what she believes is one of the greatest concerns of the European Chemical Industry at the moment. She does not bat an eye, when she replies with just three words - Lack of Gas!

Anna Nilsson explains that it saddens her, how the discussion on the gas situation mostly seems to evolve and keeps evolving around the fact that the lack of gas may leave us with a European winter, where we shall feel a little cold. She admits that this is an uncomfortable situation and a most undesirable outlook. But a chemical industry with little or no gas shall have a far-reaching effect for us all. An effect that shall last much longer than even the coldest of all winters.

The chemical industry depends on a steady and large supply of gas which is used either to produce energy or as a raw material to manufacture other chemicals. If in the first case, it would be possible, at least technically speaking, to replace this source of energy with another one, to do it in the short term is impossible. As for its second use, when gas is used as a raw material, it seems almost impossible to find substitutes. Without the normal gas supply we will have less ammonia and without ammonia farmers will have less fertilizers to spread in the spring. This will lead to a lower harvest later and higher prices. Medical supplies, food production, diesel additives and aluminum manufacturing are other examples of industries where the lack of gas in the chemical industry will have a considerable effect.



Anna Nilsson, President FECCIA

When you look at the chemical industry, the energy crisis and the lack of the usual access to gas is much more than being cold, when the winter sets in. It is more than a question of being unable to pay the rising bills. For the chemical sector it is about not being able to produce and deliver what is essential for other productions. I worry about this situation, says Anna Nilsson, and adds that she feels a strong need to create more attention to this.

This situation could well lead the major global chemical players, at least for those who can, to relocate production outside Europe, where the price differences in access to energy are the greatest. It must be admitted that this energy crisis has created a particularly unfavorable situation for European chemicals. We see that this is already leading some production sites to partial unemployment, and others to stop very energy-intensive production.

Outlook: challenges of the chemical sector

It is all the more regrettable that in recent years, the covid crisis and the resulting problems, whether of a strategic nature around the manufacture of vaccines or linked to disruptions in global supply chains, have rather pleaded in favor of a certain reindustrialisation in Europe.

The objective is for a sector to be able to operate in an autonomous loop in each of these geographical areas, namely the United States, Europe and Asia.

This is a new awareness, similar to what is happening in the battery industry, where policymakers realize that this production cycle and this ecosystem must start with the production of lithium. If you don't want a whole chain to stop because of the closure of a factory on another continent, you must have all the components, factories and know-how you need in that geographical area. Let's hope that this energy crisis, which mainly and disproportionately affects Europe, will not lead to a loss of production capacity. Because if this were to be the case, it could well lead to regrettable layoffs. The chemical industry relies on a skilled workforce and competent managers. For some, this will mean unemployment, while others will move on to other jobs. Overall, it will be difficult to get back to normal, even after the crisis is over.

Fortunately, this is not yet the case, since most of our major European groups seem to be announcing very good results for 2022, whether it is the Belgian company Solvay, the German company BASF or the French company Arkema. The major players therefore seem to have been able to pass on the increase in energy costs but also the volumes produced.

While reflecting on this, Anna Nilsson points out that on this background she is particular proud of the work being done by FECCIA. For the past years FECCIA has planned, being part of and taking on the implementation of EU funded projects.

In particular on the impact of demographic change on employment, on active ageing and lifelong learning, and on equal participation of women in the European chemical industry. This has insured insights, background and knowledge to be drawn upon in the present situation of crisis.

Through FECCIA and through FECCIA's affiliation to CEC, managers come together in representation with the possibility to find solutions, to raise relevant concerns and participate in the European social dialogue. Anna Nilsson points out that more than ever it is necessary to keep up the work that shall help us to cope with the challenges present and in future. And as an example, she draws attention to the agenda of skills and digitalization.

The digital transformation is one of the main drivers of change in all sectors in the European Union and globally. The chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber, and plastics industry are no exception. To the contrary, production processes and innovations in the sector change at a staggering pace, and on the paths through the present crisis, towards new solutions this speed shall accelerate even further.

Hand in hand with the digital transformation, goes the need for the workforce in the chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber, and plastics industry to develop and be trained increasingly in digital and social skills. It is thus important for companies, workers, managers, vocational training institutions and universities to be prepared and to communicate and teach the specific digital skills that are needed.

This brings us to the question of innovation, which was the basis for the creation of the major international chemical groups. For a long time, the chemical industry based its growth on discoveries, new molecules, then new processes,

Outlook: challenges of the chemical sector

new materials, before perhaps devoting more energy to the financialization of this sector of activity, market consolidation (also through mergers and acquisitions) and cost reduction.

Innovation, inventions and research do exist but have perhaps been relegated to the background. It is in the face of adversity that this sector will once again draw its growth and its future from "innovation". In a way, we can relate the example of the messenger RNA discovered in 1961 and for which it took a crisis situation as exceptional as that of Covid for us to finally dare to take advantage of this discovery. It is perhaps this energy crisis, but also the challenges of climate transition, that will shape and develop the global chemical industry. In any case, there is hope that a European chemical industry will be able to cope with the challenges ahead, to stick to the objectives of European strategic independence, and follow the path to longer-term objectives such as the 2050 deadline for Europe to be the world champion of a zero-carbon economy, and a model of a sustainable economy

I have confidence in our ability to overcome the obstacles we encounter. I hope we will find the best ways to circumvent them while being able to prepare for the needs of the future, says Anna Nilsson.



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