

## **SOCIAL-ECONOMIC ASPECTS REGARDING THE ACTIVITY OF THE PERSONNEL ENGAGED IN THE RAILWAY TRANSPORTATION**

**ION PÂRVULESCU, ROXANA PLEȘA \***

**ABSTRACT:** *The paper presents a synthesis of an analysis made with the personnel of the railway employees in Craiova and Timiș areas, regarding the opinions on various aspects involved in this field. The opinion viewed aspects such as: motivation of the career options for railway activity; advantages and disadvantages of the activities in this field; social security provided; working conditions; assessment of activity from the point of view of its complexity.*

**KEY WORDS:** *motivation; satisfaction; social security; human relations.*

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** *A14; Z10.*

The research was made in the year 2011 and a batch of 542 employees was investigated in the railway system in Craiova and Timiș areas.

As far as the structure by sex is concerned, most of the employers are male (84%), as a consequence of the fact that the workforce in railway is mostly male.

Age wise, employees older than 30 are more than three quarters of those inquired, with a balance between those belonging to the 31-40 and older than 40 years old category. Those younger than 25 years old are only 6.5%, the explanation being that in the last years redundancy programs were applied, with no new employments.

Job experience being an age dependent variable, it is only natural to be dominated by the 11-20 and more than 20 years category, those with 10 years including, with an approximately one third share.

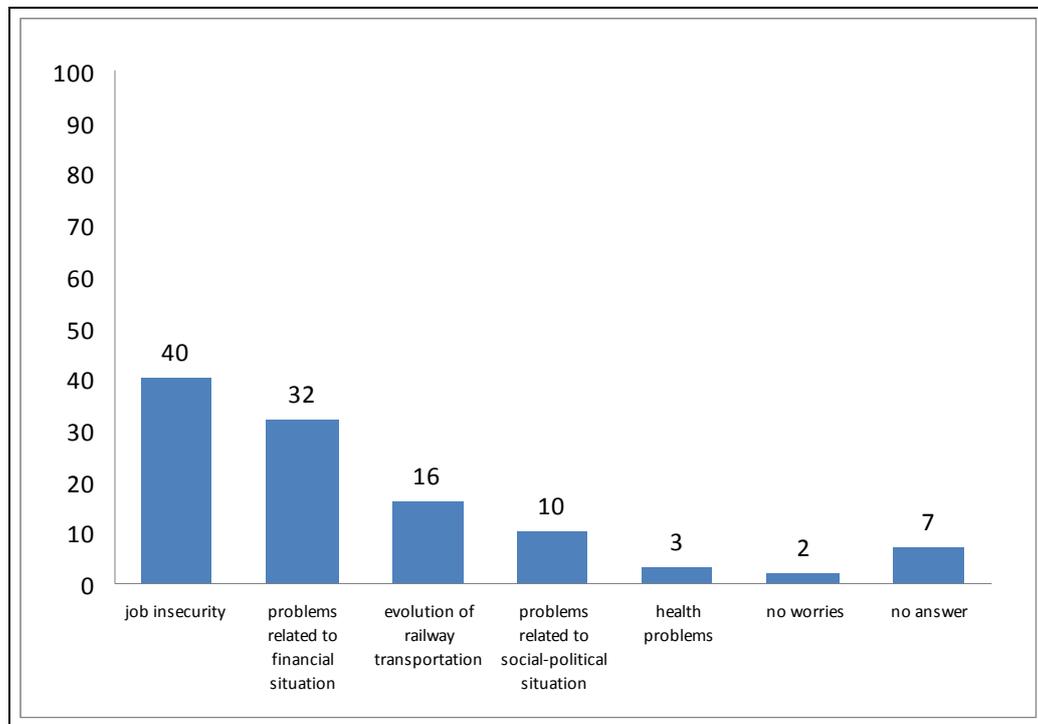
Education is rather high, with only 10% having less than middle school, and those with university education being more than one fifth, the majority being with middle schools.

The opening questions of the inquiry viewed the main issues worrying the employees in the railway system at present, the answers being given in Figure No. 8,

---

\* *Assoc. Prof., Ph.D., University of Petroșani, Romania, [iparvulescu@upet.ro](mailto:iparvulescu@upet.ro)  
Assist. Prof., Ph.D. Student, University of Petroșani, Romania,*

showing that 40% feel insecure for their jobs, for their financial situation, which is obviously connected to the job insecurity, for the uncertainty regarding the evolution of the railway system, which indirectly is also related to the first aspect.



**Figure 1. Problems of concern (%)**

The motivation shows the “inner and/or outer forces leading to the outbreak, direction and persistence of the behaviour”. These motivations that directed the inquired subjects are given in Figure 2.

The answers to the question regarding the motive of the career choice show that the hopes they had when they were employed were greatly annihilated. Whether for more than a half of those inquired (56%) the motive of employment was job security, when the investigation was carried out, their pessimism regarding this aspect was 40%.

The second place in the hierarchy of career choice is the work schedule, with which most of the subjects are satisfied. One third of the employees had in view the income and the prestige of the profession.

Most of the employees (70%), irrespective of their occupation, see their activity as being one with great responsibility, more than a half as being complex, and more than one fifth as being an activity providing a possibility of professional development (Figure 3).

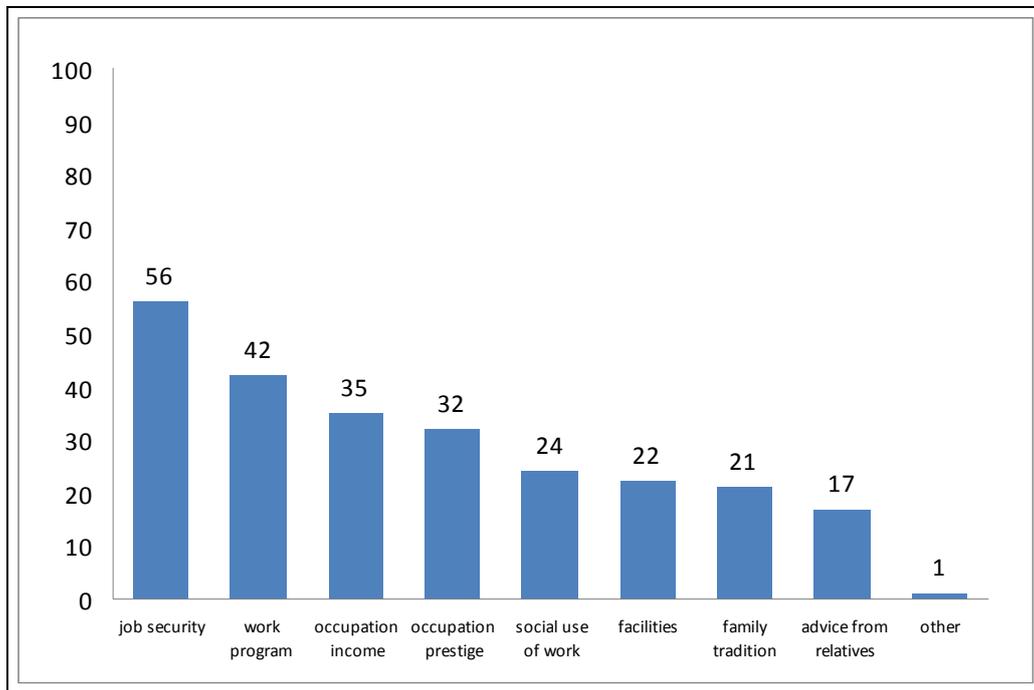


Figure 2. Motive of career choice (%)

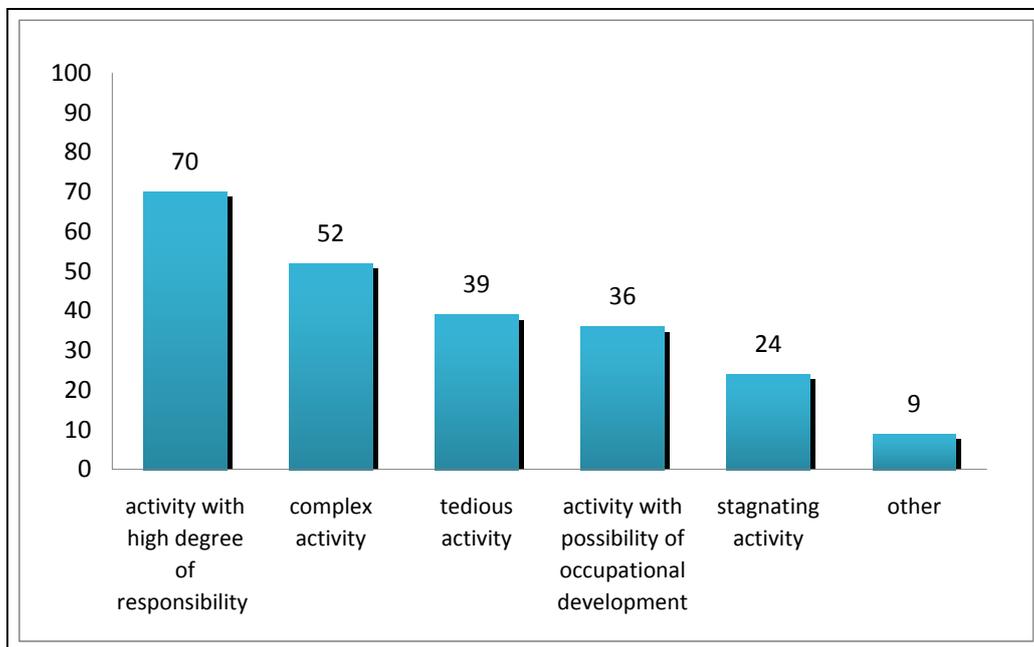
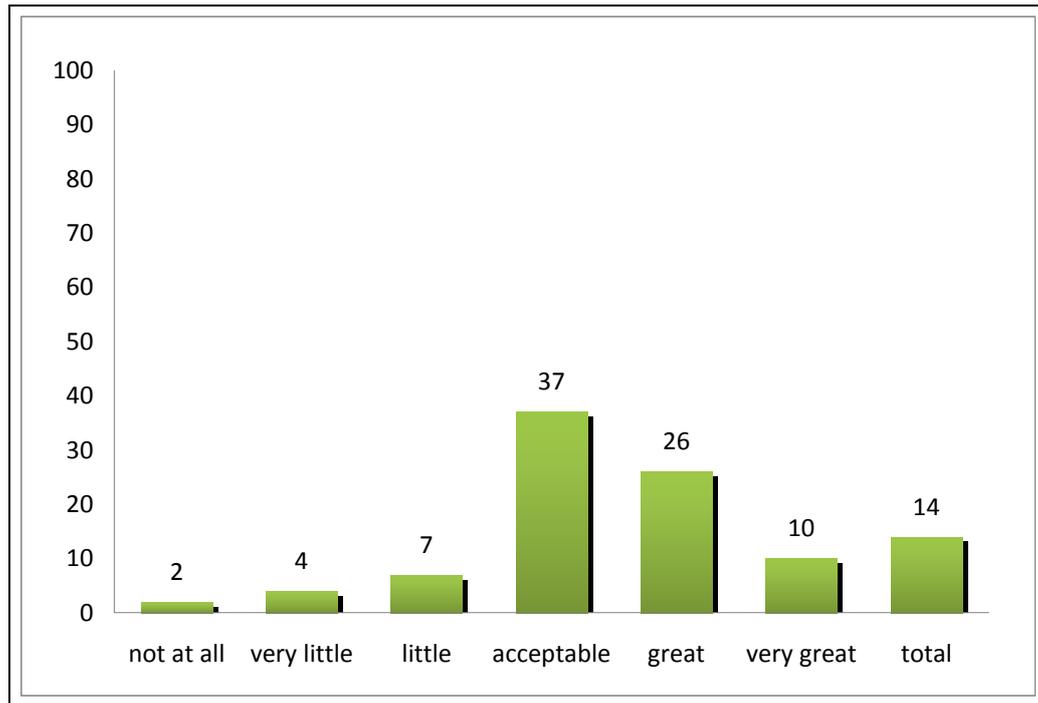


Figure 3. Appreciation for on the job activity characteristics (%)

Activity is seen monotonous by 39.0% of the inquired subjects (one should mention that the subjects had the possibility to choose three variants). The satisfaction for the activity of those working in the railway system (Figure 4) is high, half of those inquired seeing it “largely” and “totally”, only 13% being discontented with what they do.



**Figure 4. Satisfaction with their activity (%)**

Satisfaction is a “positive affective state, of content, shown when a success is obtained, or as a result of fulfilment of a need, of reaching one’s goals, as well as in the increase of one’s action performance and quality”.

As far as occupational safety is concerned, there is a relative equilibrium among those who are sure that they would not have problems and those who anticipate losing their jobs (Figure 5).

Whether in their career choice 56% of those inquired had in view job security, 40% are worried at present for their future in the railway system, where redundancy programs are expected to be implemented.

One of the main motives for their career choice was the income, but at present almost half of those investigated are discontent, only one quarter saying that their expectations were fulfilled (Figure 6).

The psycho-social climate points out the state of spirit of a social group.

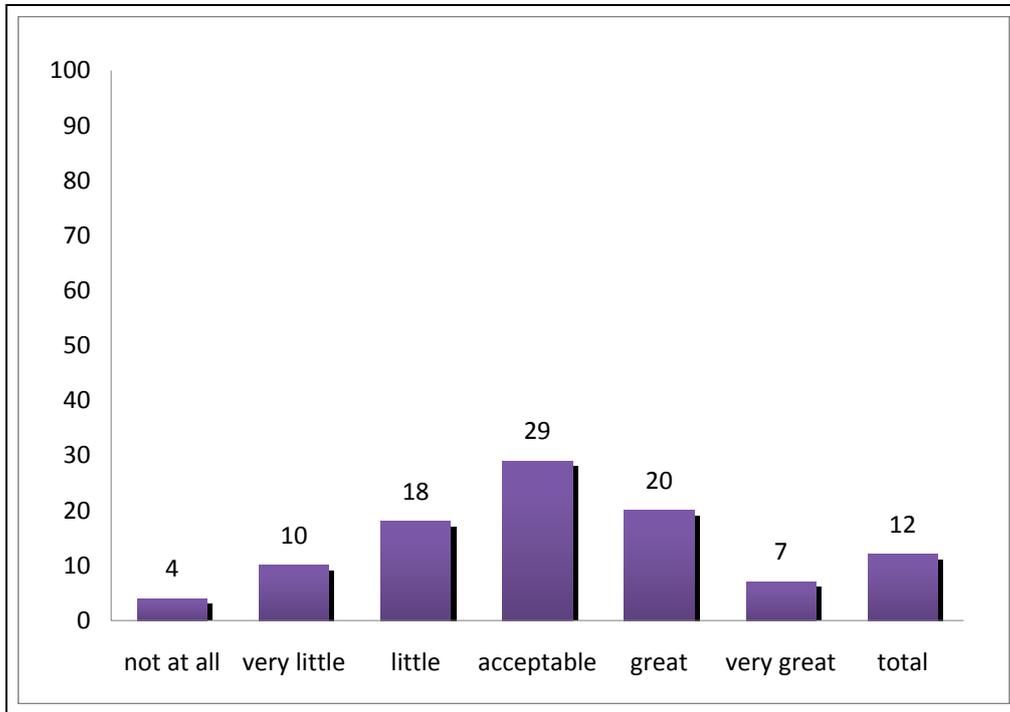


Figure 5. Satisfaction with job security (%)

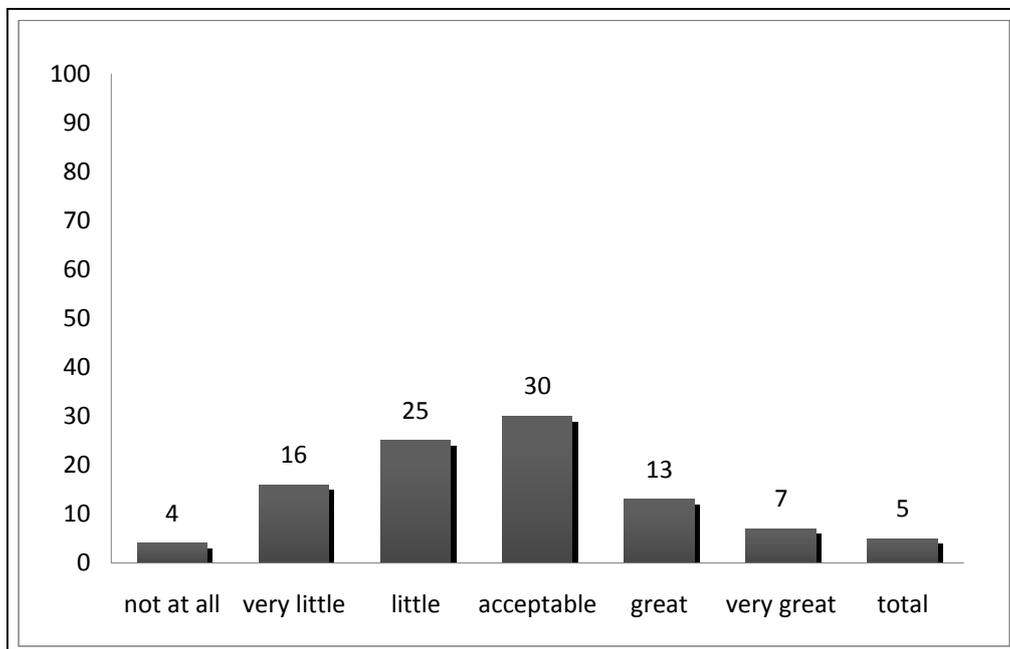
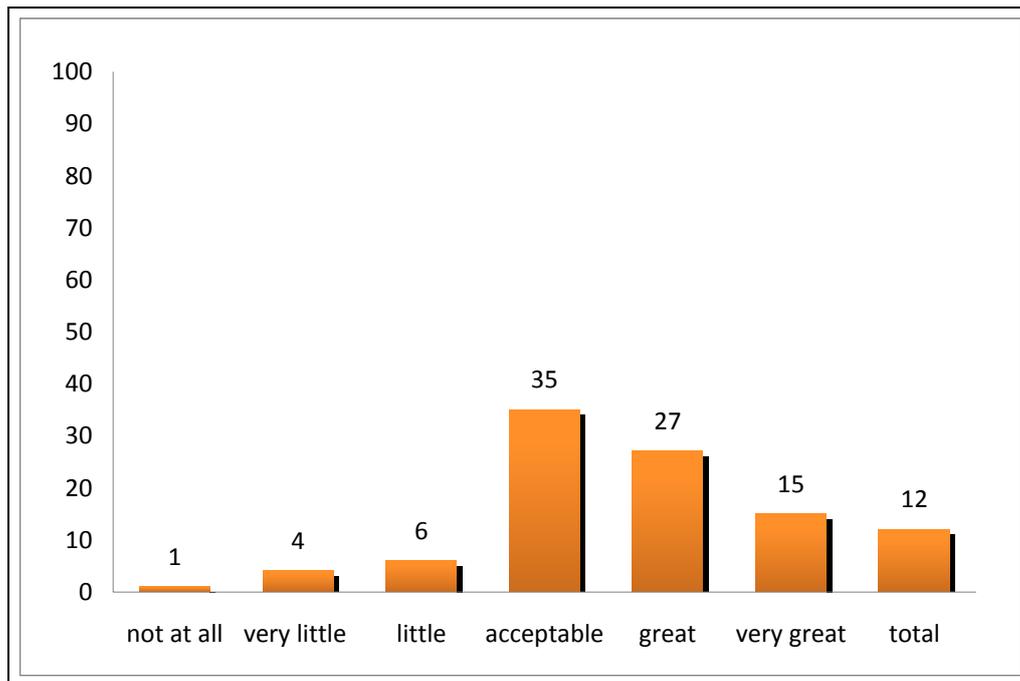


Figure 6. Satisfaction with their income (%)

A positive psycho-social climate at the workplace is an important factor in stress relief in activity, and for the railway employees is quite good, as it is seen in Figure 7 and 8, where only 12% are discontent of the relationship with their superiors, and an insignificant percentage is seen in relation with their co-workers.



**Figure 7. Satisfaction with relationships with their superiors (%)**

One might say that there is a sense of life for those activating in the railway system, and within their professional activity, the „sense of life is manifest in the form of profession ...”.

The expectations before employment regarding work program are exceeded by the satisfaction noticed at present, almost all the employees being more or less content with this aspect (Figure 9). The percentage of the discontent is not significant, the cause being the limited free time.

The applied apparatus and technology requires modernization, only 29% considering it satisfactory.

The gap between railway services in Romania and the EU is very high, almost two third of the employees sustaining that harmonization is limited, measures being required in this sense.

Health and safety insurance in the railway service is precarious, only one quarter of the respondents considering it adequate. Safety in railway transportation on the other hand is seen inadequate.

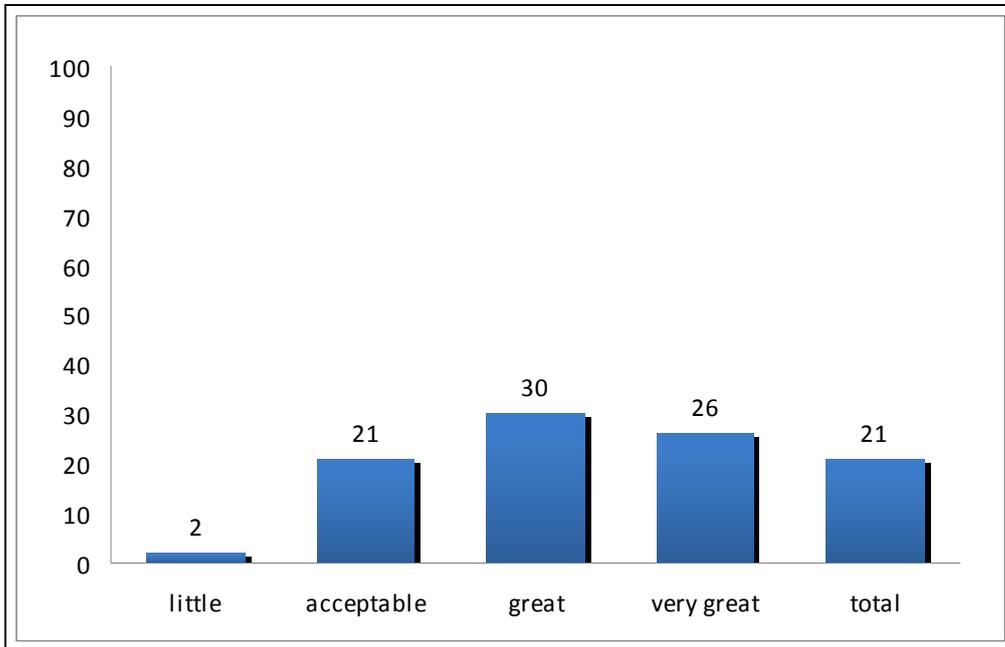


Figure 8. Satisfaction with the relationships with their coworkers(%)

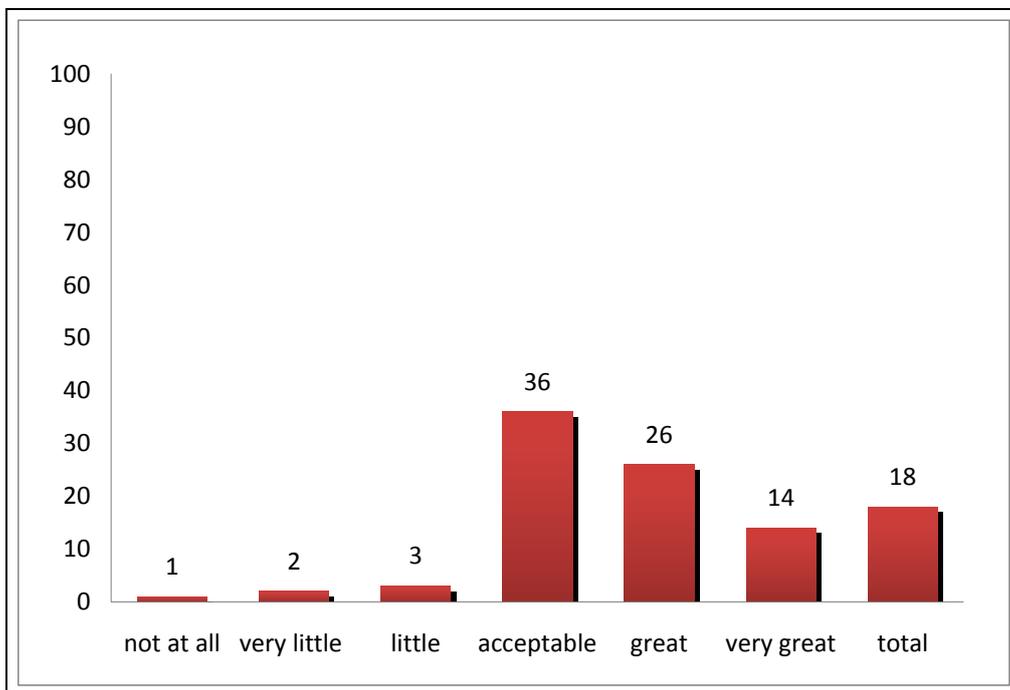


Figure 9. Satisfaction with work program (%)

Flexible activity is seen positively by a little over one fifth, the share of those at the opposite pole being more than one third.

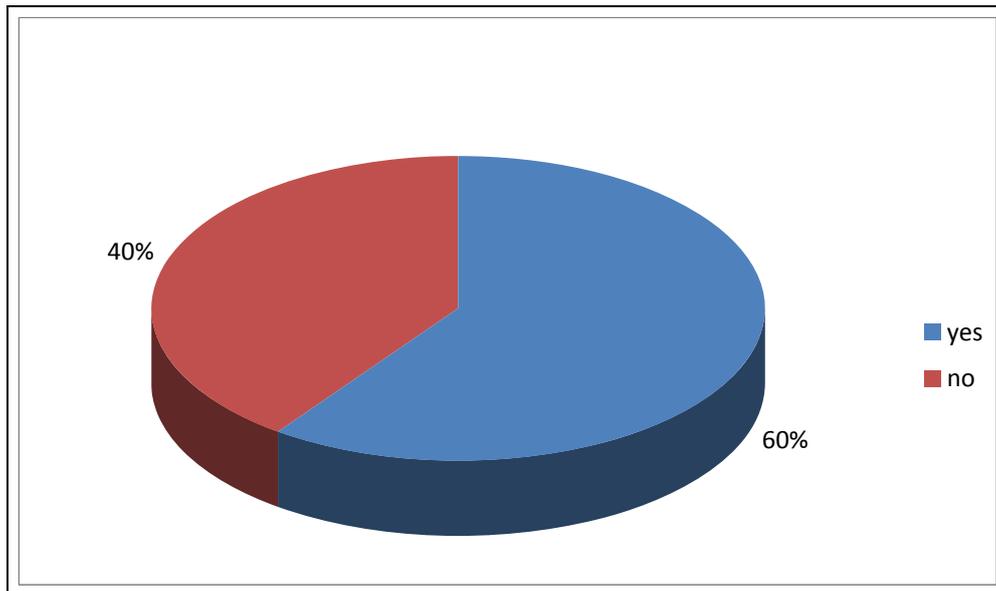
Although we consider that the legislation in the railway system is adequate, only one third of those inquired see it differently, more than one fifth appreciating it as being inadequate.

As far as access to occupational training is concerned, there is a balance between the content and the discontent by this opportunity, approximately one third being on these positions in each case.

Although in general the employees consider that they have access to continuous occupational training, only one quarter of those attended in the last three years a refreshing class, even if they totally agree that such classes are necessary in all fields, either in the country or abroad. Such classes should be mandatory and not left at the employees' preference.

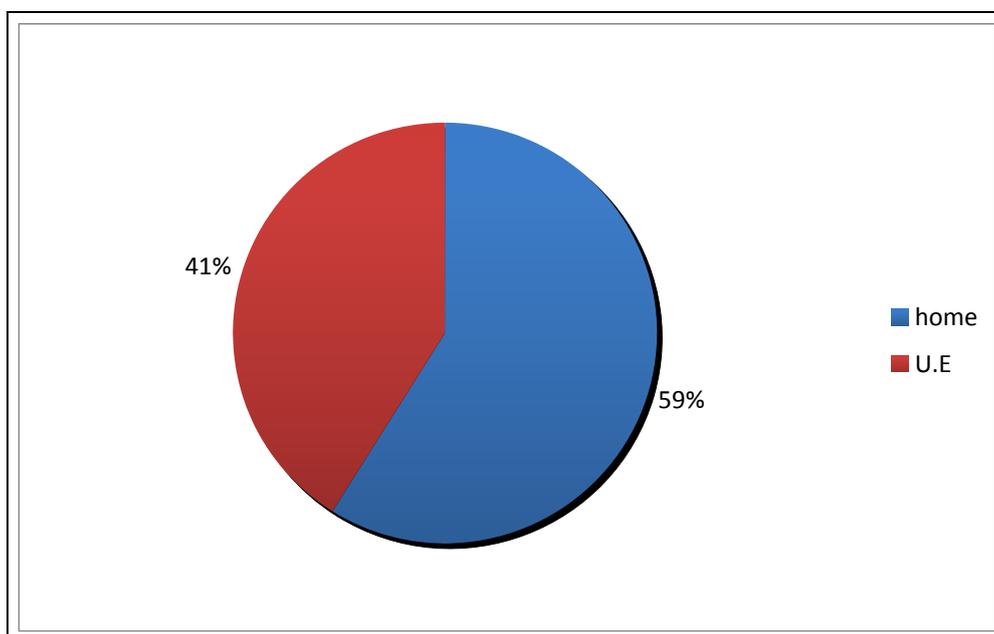
Attending training classes in another EU country obviously requires the knowledge of a foreign language, this being appreciated by more than half of the employees.

Even if a rather low share of the respondents (11%) are dissatisfied with the content of their activity, the dissatisfaction with their working conditions is felt in a higher degree, that is 40% of the respondents.



**Figure 10. Satisfaction with workplace conditions(%)**

Work does not affect family life, the 9% who think otherwise claim the longer work program.



**Figure 11. Necessity of refreshment training for railway employees (%)**

The conclusions drawn from this investigation are the following:

- The main motive in career choice was job security;
- Job insecurity and therefore scarce income is an anxiety among the railway employees;
- The activity is considered with a high degree of responsibility and complex;
- As a consequence of the previous characteristic, the employees feel a high degree of satisfaction with their activity;
- Their income is less than that expected, compared to the importance of their activity;
- Psycho-social climate at workplace is positive, generating satisfaction;
- The existing apparatus and technology requires modernization;
- The gap between Romanian railway services and those in the EU requires their harmonization, so that they would be at the level of those in the EU;
- Work organization flexibility is poor;
- Safety and health insurance of the employees is precarious, therefore working conditions should be improved;
- A stringent requirement is neglected, that is continuous occupational training by refreshment courses.

**REFERENCES:**

- [1]. **Druță, F.** (1990) *Motivația economică*, Editura Economică, București
- [2]. **Hoffman, O.** (1996) *Sociologia muncii*, Editura Hyperion, București
- [3]. **Lefter, V.; Manolescu, A.** (1995) *Managementul resurselor umane*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București
- [4]. **Otovescu, D., coord.** (2010) *Tratat de sociologie generală*, Editura Beladi, București
- [5]. **Pitariu, H.D.** (1994) *Managementul resurselor umane*, Editura All, București
- [6]. **Vlăsceanu, M.** (1993) *Psihosociologia organizațiilor și a conducerii*, Editura Paideia, București