“The Port of Women. Women in the Port and Maritime Sector why not?” Project’s Photo Exhibition Rome, Italy | From 19 to 23 February 2024

From 19 to 23 February, the Chamber of Deputies in Palazzo Montecitorio (Rome – Sala del Cenacolo in the Vicolo Valdina complex) will host a photographic exhibition dedicated to women’s work in the port and maritime sector.

The exhibition, with photos by Elena Cappanera, is part of the Project “*The Port of Women. Women in the port and maritime sector, why not*?” conceived by Barbara Bonciani – VicePresident of RETE Italy and Councillor for the Port of the Municipality, promoted by the Municipal Administration of Livorno in collaboration with RETE – International Association for the Collaboration between Ports and Cities, the University of Pisa and the Research Institute on Innovation and Services for Development of the National Research Council of Italy with the aim of raising awareness on the work carried out by women in two strategic sectors for Italy.

“We are talking about sectors in which the female presence, in addition to still being underrepresented, is often also invisible,” emphasises Barbara Bonciani.

“Port work, like maritime work, was historically born male. For decades, technological innovation processes have changed the organisation and way of working, making these jobs fully accessible also to women”. However, women in these sectors are still few: in the maritime sector they do not even account for 2% of the global workforce, while in ports they account for 16% of the global workforce.

“In Italy, women working in ports account for 8% of the total workforce. The port of Livorno, explains the Vicepresident of RETE Italia Barbara Bonciani, is one of the ports with the highest female presence. Here, women account for 10% of the total workforce, exceeding the national average. It is just from here that we decided to start in order to make female workers in these sectors visible to a wide public, to make their voices heard, to share the passion with which they live their work, to promote their skills and competences. The Project was also aimed at facilitating a constructive debate among those working in the sector in order to encourage all the actions necessary to remove the obstacles, especially at the cultural level, that still limit women’s access to employment in these sectors”.

The project was applauded by many European and national associations, including the European Transport Workers’ Federation – ETF, the Federation of European Private Port Companies and Terminals – FEPORT, the European Sea

Ports’Organisation – ESPO, and other associations at European and national level. Following the Livorno project, national conferences on this issue were developed and the port of Trieste recruited the first female port workers, thus representing a successful initiative to strengthen the presence of women in the maritime and port sector.

The photographic exhibition will be inaugurated on 19 February at 4.30 p.m. in the presence of H.E. Mrs Laura Boldrini, the Mayor of Livorno, Luca Salvetti, and the Councillor for the Port of the Municipality, Barbara Bonciani. A delegation of port and maritime workers will be present.

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HEAD IMAGE | *Women at work in the Port of Livorno. (Photo by Elena Cappanera).*