

Women of reference: Meeting Paloma Ortiz Martínez



Paloma Ortiz Martínez, country manager of COMSA in Mexico, on the first tour of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec Railway.

Paloma Ortiz is the country manager of COMSA in Mexico. As the company's representative in the country, her mission is to grow the company there, which entails a great **perspective on commercial strategy**, financial management skills and cash management, **as well as team leadership** in different areas and constant relationship with both partners and customers, among many other functions.

Paloma started in the company as Head of Business Development for COMSA in Latam, driving the strategic plan. At that time, she travelled a lot in different countries in Latam: Peru, Paraguay, Colombia, Costa Rica, etc. but the pandemic arrived and all that was suspended. In Mexico, very interesting railway projects began to emerge and, from the Business Development area in the middle of the pandemic, they had to look for partners, set up consortiums and prepare tenders. When she was asked to take on his current responsibility, she accepted immediately.

Throughout these years, she has learnt that **commitment and perseverance at work, together with a positive attitude and continuous learning, help both personal and professional growth**. She has also learnt that adversity always brings opportunities that one must know how to discover and take advantage of without fear.

In her family, Paloma is part of the third generation dedicated to the construction of infrastructures, and since she was a child, she has had contact with construction sites and their world. "My father always told me that this is a profession that has a surprise in store for you every day. You don't know where it will take you

and what challenges it will bring, and that's exactly **what I like and what motivates me most about my work: getting to know new cultures, new countries, different people, different ways of doing the work**, different technologies, etc.", says Paloma.

During these years dedicated to the sector, she has faced numerous professional and personal challenges. From her time at university, where in some courses she was the only woman, to her current management position, where even today there is still a minority of women. "On a personal level, I had to emigrate and change my country of residence four times, dragging my husband and my four children with me", she says. In the professional sphere, she goes on to explain, "I have had to face situations in which I am often the only woman, gaining the respect of my colleagues, especially in countries and cultures where gender equality has not yet reached the levels it has in Europe".

For Paloma, **engineering and construction are exciting, multiple, diverse sectors in which every day there is an increasing participation of women willing to create and build a better world**. "If you are really passionate about what you do, it is possible to combine professional, personal and family life," she says.

"If you have a restless and adventurous spirit, you will find endless experiences in this profession".

Moreover, "if your spirit is restless, adventurous, inquisitive, you will find in this profession an endless number of experiences that will enrich you both professionally and personally", concludes Paloma.