

**Protocol  
for the national implementation of the  
Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and  
an Inter-generational Approach**

The parties (\_\_\_\_\_) inspired by the European Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Intergenerational Approach, signed by the European Social Partners on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, declare that:

1. Italy is the European country with the largest over-65 population share (22.8% in 2019). The percentage of elderly people, in fact, has grown steadily in recent years. The average age of Italians has increased to approximately 46.7 years (Eurostat, 2019). Life expectancy at birth is among the highest in the world, although the later stages of old age are too often characterised by bad health.
2. Demographic changes have already provoked considerable changes in Italian society, and this means that institutions and social partners must make a joint commitment to promote Active Ageing through policies that - as people age – guarantee opportunities for health, participation and social security, in order to improve their quality of life and enhance the potential for society as a whole.
3. Active Ageing policies have an important objective: to increase the opportunities for workers of all ages to work in good health and remain on the workplace until retirement age. The Active Ageing Index, developed by ISTAT (the Italian National Institute for Statistics) together with other research institutes and supranational public bodies to assess progress in these policies in its various dimensions, places our country only 17<sup>th</sup> out of 28 in the European ranking - 2 points below the continental average - with a regression between 2012 and 2018.
4. The Italian government, similarly to other European governments, introduced (in 2011) a pension reform, raising the retirement age of workers. Prolonging working careers and promoting the employment and employability of older workers remains the key to promoting active and healthy ageing for all.
5. Active Ageing promoted on the workplace is therefore one of the cornerstones and a stimulus for an integrated strategy at territorial level, which must involve institutions and social partners in order to guarantee workers and senior citizens health protection, support for participation, social security and inclusion.
6. The female employment rate in the 55-64 age group in Italy reached 44.6% in 2019, however, 20 percentage points below the corresponding male employment rate (64.6%). In this age group, in the same year, female employment is characterized by a higher percentage of part-time jobs (26.6%, against 7.0% for men). That figure can be associated with the higher incidence of the care tasks carried out by employed women of this age group, in particular - and net of childcare - in relation to non-self-sufficient family members (15.5%, compared to 9.1% men in 2018) ( Eurostat, 2019). All this translates, for women aged 55-64, into an average gender pay gap of 8.8% (2019), the highest in

comparison with that of younger employees (which varies between 4.6% and 6.4% between the ages of 25 and 54), and increasing (it was 3.9% in 2010). This factor will inevitably impact the future social security treatment of current senior workers. According to these data particular attention must be paid to reducing gender disparities in Active Aging strategies and policies.

7. In Italy, in the second quarter of 2020, youth employment fell below 40 per cent and in 2019 the incidence of 15-29 year olds who were not employed or in training fell by 1.2 points compared to 2018 to 22.2 per cent (2 million young people). The share of NEETs is the highest among EU countries (ISTAT, 2020). In such a scenario, the intergenerational approach becomes of the utmost importance;
8. The health and social consequences of the pandemic Covid 19 make it even more urgent the need to adopt strategies and policies for active ageing in the workplace involving health and safety, work organization but also the skills and competences management. The acceleration of the processes of digitalization, of remote communication, of mobility of communication tools, as a by-product of the epidemiological emergency, requires attention and the promotion of processes for the acquisition and development of skills, particularly transversal and digital ones without however provoking the exclusion or marginalisation of mature workers.
9. The full involvement of workers, trade unions and collective bargaining in the design and implementation of Active Ageing pathways and intergenerational approach on the workplace is fundamental to initiate participatory, effective and shared processes.
10. The active and positive role of employers is fundamental in order to succeed in prolonging working careers and promoting the employment and employability of older workers while fostering an intergenerational approach. Employers are called upon to promote measures to maintain workers' willingness and ability to stay in work longer, as well as to combat age-related obstacles and promote differences due to age. These initiatives are generally included in the concept of age management.
11. Employers, in collective bargaining, should be supported and encouraged to implement age management interventions and strategies, which involve processes of organisational change.

On the basis of these "premises", the Italian Social Partners intend to promote Active Ageing policies and intergenerational approach on the workplace, contributing to face the challenges posed by population ageing and youth unemployment, by implementing the following "actions":

1. Produce an **official Italian translation of the Framework Agreement, agreed upon by national Social Partners**. This is the prerequisite for the full implementation of the **Agreement** in our country, in fact, the implementation of policies favouring the active participation and the permanence of mature workers in the labour market and of initiatives facilitating the generational transition depends primarily on the joint commitment of the social actors;

2. As active ageing interventions need to be set up well before workers start ageing (e.g. proper ergonomics; work organisation that is attentive to family needs, prevention and screening; promotion of behaviour aimed at maintaining the individual's psychophysical efficiency and recuperating it following problems linked to aging; development and active maintenance of an adequate level of professional skills -lifelong learning also to safeguard professional levels and career paths-,) it is necessary to promote the dissemination of this type of approach in national, company and territorial bargaining, and in second welfare policies.
3. Encourage the adoption of long-term age management strategies, based on a knowledge of the socio-demographic profiles of the workforce for both companies and trade unions, in order to anticipate change and provide adequate responses and protection for workers.
4. Promote recognition, also through political guidelines, of specific thematic mandates regarding the necessary collective bargaining, which, with a view to inclusiveness and intergenerational solidarity, must also pursue objectives of strategic retention of people with experience in order to guarantee that identity heritage is transmitted and not dispersed over time. In particular, it is important to plan, manage and accompany the 'professional transitions' of workers who, due to their age and outdated skills, most risk premature expulsion from the labour market.
5. Promote the full integration of active retention measures referred to above in point 4, as part of the general flexicurity tools: recognise and therefore enhance all the positive results of collective bargaining at local, company and sectoral level that pursue this aim, guaranteeing access to national and sectoral social shock absorbers, inter-professional and bilateral Body funds, and EU instruments (e.g. NextGenerationEU resources).
6. Promote targeted screening campaigns, in national, company and territorial bargaining, supported by the Supplementary Health Funds, for the prevention of pathologies that affect the older classes of the active population.
7. Through collective bargaining at territorial, company and sectoral level (in particular through the economic incentives referred to above in point 5, possible negotiated welfare measures, other possible forms of organised flexibility) promote policies to facilitate the active reintegration of workers that suffer from chronic and/or disabling pathologies, whose partial and/or temporary re-employment on the workplace as a form of "social training" also pursues the general interest in the "full development of the personality" (art. 2 of the Constitution) and health as a form of "collective interest" (art. 32 of the Constitution). This can also lead to a positive macroeconomic effect, with a reduction in direct and indirect social costs linked to labour exclusion.
8. Given that technological innovations are so fast that workers' skills become quickly outdated, it is important to encourage them to undergo continuous training with a view to lifelong learning. Taking into account the specific characteristics and fragility that characterises aging, the parties consider it important to promote actions to support Active Ageing and the intergenerational approach on the workplace, in particular through training programmes and

specific measures supported by Interprofessional Funds, Bilateral Bodies and resources linked to the NextGenerationEU.

9. In the past, funds allocated for the training of senior workers remained partly unused, so it is considered important to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of Active Ageing measures and the intergenerational approach, also through an information campaign for employers and trade union representatives. Particular attention should be paid to actions aimed at enhancing the specific characteristics of each age group on the workplace and to overcoming mutual prejudices and stereotypes, encouraging the transmission and exchange of knowledge and skills in an inclusive climate.
10. The parties, through collective bargaining, undertake to support and monitor experiences that favour intergenerational learning opportunities and mutual exchange and cooperation between workers of different ages, so increasing solidarity and valuing diversity. It is important to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills between generations on the workplace, also through mentoring and reverse-mentoring.
11. Promote the study, development and adoption (through collective bargaining) of 'inclusive' digital platforms to support job shadowing, through which mature workers can support their colleagues by offering their experience, knowledge and advice in activities regarding direct production and/or sale of products and/or services.
12. Considering the great difference, in terms of the possibility to envisage and implement policies promoting Active Ageing and the intergenerational approach, between large companies/groups that can also rely on their own resources and small and medium-sized enterprises, the parties consider it necessary to start a joint reflection aimed at devising solutions which offer specific support for SMEs using public and private resources, also taking advantage of the opportunities related to the Recovery Fund Plan.
13. Jointly urge institutions, especially local ones, to guarantee that the policies adopted regarding active ageing also take place at territorial level through actions developed on the workplace.
14. Encourage and promote social participation among workers, especially the elderly, by guaranteeing flexible working hours and shifts to enable voluntary work in third sector organisations in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 6 of Legislative Decree 117/2017.
15. Monitor the initiatives in favour of mature workers and the generational exchange foreseen in company and territorial bargaining (by including specific indicators in the observatories regarding bargaining promoted by the Social Partners) also in order to acquire and disseminate a shared catalogue of good practices.

The parties undertake to forward this protocol to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, for the requested initiatives to support territorial, company and sectoral collective bargaining, and to include it in the annual report concerning the implementation of the European Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and the Intergenerational Approach, to be forwarded to

the European Social Dialogue Committee (ESD), in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement itself.

Read, confirmed and signed